

Task Force to Coordinate Ecumenical and Interreligious Work
May 14, 2019
Zoom meeting

MEMBERS AND STAFF PRESENT: Eugene Sutton; David Simmons; Jaime Briceño; Sharon Alexander; Walter Baer; Scott Hayashi; Kate Bellam; Bill Franklin, chair; Denise Yarbrough, Vice Chair; Lucinda Mosher, Technology Officer; Marisa Tabizon Thompson, Secretary; Margaret Rose; Richard Mammana; Chuck Robertson

MEMBERS ABSENT: Luz Montes

OPENING: The meeting opened in prayer by all, using the following which was distributed with the agenda:

*God of hope, from you come every blessing and all peace: Show us that, in the midst of our struggles, you are with us. Give us the abundance of your grace that we may do the work you give us to do and that we may be for the world a sign of your presence; through Christ, the Way and the Truth.
Amen.*

AGENDA: Bill Franklin outlined the agenda for this meeting that was sent in advance and asked for any changes. None were suggested. Lucinda Mosher moved to accept the agenda and Sharon Alexander seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

MINUTES: Margaret Rose asked that the historic episcopate reference in the March minutes be modified to add” as locally adapted”. The minutes were then approved as amended.

STAFF UPDATES/ACTIVITIES:

- We are in the second week of the month of Ramadan and staff at the national church center are attending various related activities.
- We have been active with the World Council of Churches.
- Instrumental delegation with the UN Status of Women conference
- +Mark Eddington was consecrated in Europe.
- National Workshop on Christian Unity (chaired by David Simmons)
- National Institute on Civil Discourse Learning
- Meeting in Toronto between TEC, ELCA, ACC, and ELCIC to discuss theological education, which included presentations by 2 theologians from each denomination. Also continued the work of moving toward full communion of all four entities
- ARCUSA met in St. Louis
- UMC group met in Austin, put forward resolution to move on recognizing one another. Necessary to do now because of timeline of respective church body governance calendars. An effort since 1939.
- Robina Winbush, former Ecumenical Officer of the Presbyterian Church USA, died
- CUI (Churches Uniting in Christ) meeting in Montgomery, Alabama, next month

SUBCOMMITTEES: The four subcommittees/working groups each offered a status update.

1. General Convention, structure, and governance (David Simmons, chair):

- a. The last convention made it easier to change canons when talking about agreements with other churches. This may not change the “why” process of discussions but it does unify the “how” piece. The relevant work is found in Canon 20.
 - b. If the ELCIC Memorandum of Understanding passes, it would need to be added to Canon 20.
 - c. Something formal on full communion is needed with the Church of Sweden.
 - d. There are issues with Title IV application that need to be addressed.
- 2. Theology (Denise Yarbrough, chair):
 - a. The 2009 Interreligious statement was discussed. Does it need to be updated? That is the discussion for the next meeting.
 - b. Discussion of tool kit for authentic interreligious encounters
 - c. With ecumenical relations, there is a need to bridge the gap between knowledge and experience.
 - d. Should we add a rubric (instead of or in addition to the Chicago Lambeth Quadrilateral) as a guideline for ecumenical efforts?
 - e. Great concern about communication and transparency. Things on the web need to be simplified and more accessible.
- 3. Anglican Communion, the Convocation of Churches in Europe, & related (Eugene Sutton, chair)
The group met and discussed five major items, three of which were presented here.
 - a. Conversations with the Philippine Independent Church
 - b. The Church of Sweden needs an MOU. Walter Baer is a part of this effort.
 - c. Where is the Episcopal Church in relation to having seats/voices on international bodies and dialogues, especially in the Anglican Communion now that the time for sanctions is officially over? Much of this is on hold until Lambeth 2020.
- 4. United Methodist Church and other bi-lateral discussions (Scott Hayashi):
 - a. Nothing to add to conversations already noted.

RESPONSE/NEXT STEPS

There are three big topics that emerge in these discussions/report:

- 1. Theology
- 2. Ecclesiology/Polity
- 3. Politics – How does this task force guide TEC work/stance/politics? In the world? Within TEC?

Other notes:

Discipline – How does this happen in mutual sharing of clergy?

FAQs, communication, transparency on the Methodist work, including stories

There is a question of multiple belonging

Staff likes the idea of a toolkit for general use

A review of the website is needed – what do we want and where should we be able to find it?

Church of Sweden document needed

Consider receptive ecumenism

Consider three-fold tenets of theology – ecclesiology – politics in this work

How does ecumenical and interreligious work move our justice work forward?

Make clear a commitment to new ways of connecting and building relationships

Looking forward – think about inside baseball regarding General Convention and any resolutions; need to do serious work with communications

FUTURE MEETINGS:

Goal to meet the first half of September – before the House of Bishops meeting

Any chance of a face-to-face meeting in 2020/before ramping up for the 2021 General Convention?

CLOSING PRAYER

"God of victory over death, your Son revealed himself again and again to convince his followers of his glorious resurrection: Grant that we may know his risen presence, in love obediently feed his sheep and care for the lambs of his flock, until we join the hosts of heaven in worshiping you and praising the one who is worthy of blessing and honor, glory and power, for ever and ever."

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Meeting adjourned at 1:57p Central Time

Committee assignments/Requests:

General Convention

David Simmons, Chair

Sharon Alexander

Marisa Tabizon Thompson

Theology

Denise Yarbrough, Chair

Lucinda Mosher

Marisa Tabizon Thompson

UMC/Bilateral Work

Sharon Alexander

David Simmons

Denise Yarbrough

Scott Hayashi, Chair

Kate Bellam

Walter Baer

Anglican Communion and Europe

Lucinda Mosher

Walter Baer

Eugene Sutton, Chair

Jaime Briceño

ADDITIONAL NOTES AND REFERENCES:

Hungarian Reformed Church in America:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hungarian_Reformed_Church_in_America

<http://anglicanhistory.org/usa/misc/nanassy1922.pdf>

Anglican/Presbyterian Dialogue: http://anglicanhistory.org/usa/misc/presbyterian_episcopal1896.pdf

Toward Our Mutual Flourishing by Lucinda Mosher:

<https://www.peterlang.com/abstract/title/22143?rskey=CGbcNL&result=2>

EMM – Episcopal Migration Ministries

EDEIO – Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical and Religious Officers

Methodist-Episcopal dialogue and resources: <http://umc-tec.org>

Anglican-Roman Catholic Theological Consultation in the USA (ARCUSA): <http://archusa.church>

Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee: <http://lutheran-episcopal.org>

Moravian-Episcopal Coordinating Committee: <http://moravian-episcopal.org>

CUIC: Churches Uniting in Christ