

## **Minutes from the Reconciliation Meeting (in-person)**

September 8-10, 2016

**Present:** Chung Seong Kim, Doug Wirt, Sharon Watkins, Dwight Bailey, Tim James, Al Lopez, Tera Brown-Daniels (co-moderator) and Jennifer Kottler (co-moderator)

**Absent:** Tommy Morgan, Lori Tapia (excused), Yarla Collado (excused), Nathan Hill (excused)

### ***Thursday, September 8, 2016***

*The Commission convened at 6pm for dinner.*

#### **Opening Reflections**

April began the meeting by reading a selection of Dr. King's from *A Testament of Hope*. She read it and invited us to join in a *lectio divina* style, and listen for what stands out to us. We then invited one another to speak about what we heard in the reading and our reflections about it.

#### **Worship and Communion**

April then invited us to join together in sharing communion. We served one another.

*The Commission recessed at 8:30pm.*

### ***Friday, September 9, 2016***

*The Commission convened at 8:30am, following breakfast.*

#### **Devotion**

Dwight Bailey led us in a reflection on Jeremiah 18 with the image of the potter and clay with reminder that we need to be malleable to be worked on by God.

#### **Review of the Minutes of the last Meeting**

For reasons beyond our control we do not have minutes from our meeting in March, 2015. We reviewed and asked questions about the minutes from the conference call in October 2015. The minutes were approved without correction.

#### **Director's Report (April)**

Learnings from April's sabbatical/medical leave

- Perfect storm of chronic illness, overwhelm/over work, work stress and compassion fatigue
- Took two months to learn to unwind and let go; third month she was finally able to be present and let go.
- Learning to set better boundaries; not take things personally, "should-ing" and doing what is urgent – whether or not it is important
- Compassion fatigue – could not respond to the pains of the world
- Limitations of what one person can do

- Need to serve spiritually, serve God, not serve my own perception and the perceptions of others that I am well/whole/competent in my job.
- Made chaos normal and made the dysfunctional the functional norm.
- God created order out of chaos, that is not my job; God is in the midst of the chaos to create order and life.
- Called to equip the saints not to be a saint.
- Pastoring this mission – my liberation is not totally tied to the church's liberation.

Very grateful to the commission for the ways that the commission stepped up, and to the church that recognized the need for Sabbath.

Tera talked about the need for self-care, Sabbath and making sure we put on our oxygen mask before helping others.

### **Co-moderator's Response**

Jen shared that she didn't know what she didn't know – the benchmarks and deadlines for the Reconciliation Ministry offering, among other things. Necessary to document the processes.

Tera mentioned that in her work, she has spent a great deal of time in the ICU and has learned that she needs to take a lot of mini-breaks so that she can distance herself from her work. She has learned that she has to do for herself so that she can serve others.

Doug talked about how that sabbatical is necessary for both the individual and the institution.

Tim mentioned his thanks as a staff person and member of the Commission to keep the work going. Rev. Minnie Smith stood in for April at National Convocation and he was very thankful for this work. April was given an award at Convocation and it was presented to April by Tim at Light of the World on a Sunday morning in August. He also brought up "single ministry syndrome" – single person serving in the ministry without support staff. You have to be very careful to not overly identify with the ministry.

April said that it is a fine line between taking things personally and being able to have a healthy distance and clarity on what are and are not her responsibility.

Dwight asked what safeguards are being put in place to ensure that this doesn't happen again. April said that she has begun a D.Min. program at CTS – this includes a clergy accountability group, 360 inventory, and learning to be a self-differentiated leader. Also, she is going to the movies, learning to unplug, and spending time with her family in Chicago.

### **Introductions**

Before proceeding with the remainder of the agenda, we spent time getting to know one another sharing our names, locations, roles, passion for the ministry and something that others would not know about us.

## **GMP's Report**

Sharon started by saying that she was happy to help cover April's responsibilities during her leave. Noted that it took four staff people and several volunteers to fill in.

### *Mission First*

- Meetings across the country to gather data on how to keep God's mission first on our priorities to listen and discern.
- Mission Council (45 people) will be meeting in December 4-6, 2016 and they are testing this out as a new governance model. They will discern an area of mission focus and provide an opportunity for the various ministries of the church to begin to collaborate between the various ministries of the church. (Mission Council meetings will be open meetings.)
- Provides a platform that provides for collaboration across ministry lines to work together in a common sense of ministry and mission.
- Come together as a general board in 2017 and make a decision as to whether to continue to pilot the new mission focus.
- Important to have Reconciliation minded Disciples involved in this process.
- Still trying to figure out how all of the related ministries will be represented in the church (and staffed) are very live questions.

### *GB 16-0977 Task Force Report on Eliminating Racist Language from Our Governing Documents*

- Resolution at 2013 GA started this process. Task Force was named: Eric Brown, Minta Coburn, Sandhya Jha, April Johnson, Jim Powell, Joel Saucedo.
- Brief, clear explanation of what we are dealing with
- However, the recommendations section is very dense and it has been difficult to determine who is responsible for what and what is a reasonable time frame
- The main conclusion is this: very little out-right racist language was found. However, there is a clear white-centric set of assumptions undergirding the documents that needs to be reviewed. (ie. "The purpose of a congregation is..." it should also include pro-reconciling, anti-racist purpose for congregations in the Design.)
- On page three, they have 9 questions that they used to evaluate the documents, which are similar to questions that are asked in AR/PR training.
- The suggestion was made that if we look deeper at the next level *behavioral* documents (handbooks, by-laws, employee HR documents) to ensure that these documents are in line with what we believe.
- This report was shared with the College of Regional Ministers at their last meeting and the recommendation was shared that the above kinds of AR/PR language audit be done at the Regional Level. Their only concern was how we can make sure that this is done well at the Regional level.
- The team and the staff at OGMP went through the report and put together a spreadsheet and timeline for getting the work done. There are assignments that are for this year – language in the Design can happen and be changed as soon as next July at GA.

*GB 13-0848 Task Force on Cultural Competency (Executive Office Search Process Addendum)*

- Require AR/PR training for members of the executive search committees (all Regional Minister search committees and Executive Staff search committees.
- This was helpful but the teams then lacked the cultural competence for these search team to walk with their new leaders.
- This Cultural Competency task force met with Regina Morton as chair to determine what could be done to increase the cultural competency of these teams.
- Determined that this needs to be done in two ways: one is to incorporate some of this in the search process, and the second part of this needs to be done after the hire is made.
- Clearly it has been shown that there is an in-group and out-group and we are not “on-boarding” people well.
- The Reconciliation Ministry needs to be active in this work to keep the church accountable.
- This report was given to the General Board and can be shared with us. April posted it on the website the other meeting documents.

**Pastoral Table Panel Discussion** (Sharon, Chung Seong, Tim and Lori are the members; Chung Seong and Lori are new. They meet 3-4 times per year.)

The following comments were shared by the members of the Pastoral Table:

- Prayer, and discussion among the executive pastors
- New and fresh perspectives with the new members of the table
- Now being asked “That should be a discussion for the PT”
- Letter from OH to GB around 6 specific issues
- Mission gatherings that we explicitly planned for our racial/ethnic ministries
- Pastoral table is a space of prayer
- How can we as a Commission support the Table?
- Are there shared concerns? The status of our church in these times of transition. Our concern is that we can bring our church to the place where God wants us to be – racism, constituencies for which English is not their first language (and non-English-speaking) and classism – and we all share that concern.
- As we move about the church, we see that the AR/PR imperative is getting traction and gaining ‘teeth’ and the fact that this is being done, is crucial. We are willing to take risks and we are doing it, even when it isn’t popular. Someone has to lead the conversation, and keep it going.
- Living out the AR/PR imperative is the only thing that will make it real, and share it with other folks who are doing the work.
- What are the growing edges for the Pastoral Table? When we look at other “-isms” that are legitimate will there be space for them at the table? LGBTQ, for example?
- For some/many there are difference between race and sexual orientation/gender expression – there is a question there. We have to be a pastor for all the church – whether they affirm LGBTQ rights or whether we don’t.

- Is this a constituency table? No, and for example the Director of Disciples Women would not be a member. This is the table for the “Pastors” of our racial and ethnic expressions/ministries with our GMP.
- Anti-oppression is the both/and expression of the work that we do.
- The Table is continuing to live into it’s role.

*The Commission broke for lunch at 12:15pm. and reconvened at 1:30pm.*

### **Budget Report (John Goebel)**

John walked through the budget reports that he posted on the website:

- RM 2017 Budget Draft and 2016 YTD Budget Report
- Reconciliation Offering 1999-2015
- Reconciliation Fund Balances

The commission discussed ways to keep expenses at a minimum, while we are working to increase our offering and our contributions to the annual fund. Questions were raised about budgeting for decline. We also discussed the possibility of sharing support staff with Convocation or Week of Compassion or Faith and Giving, given our capacity and understanding our organizational culture.

A long discussion ensued about how we might recruit either paid or volunteer staff. The difficulty of finding qualified staff that is willing to work part-time was discussed. The ideas of volunteers and students were discussed. Challenges were noted in recruiting and retaining qualified assistants.

April said that she still has two former interns that post things to the Reconciliation Ministry Facebook page. She had them for 10 hours and their focus was on communication.

Convocation raised an offering for Reconciliation at the biennial meeting of \$1587.

We thanked John for his input and assistance.

### **Development Committee Report/Reflections Discussion (2 parts)**

#### **1. Financial/Fund Development**

April stated that in our face-to-face meetings, we’ve discussed having 1000 donors to give \$100 to Reconciliation annually as “Friends of the Ministry.” That would add \$100,000 per year to the annual fund.

The Commission members could be tasked to raise \$3000, and April would raise \$7000. This would be \$10,000 on the way to \$100,000.

As a follow up to our goal to hire a retired fund raiser, April has been in conversation with Dick Hamm, to learn how to make development calls for the permanent fund. He mentioned that sharing stories so that we can make the compelling case of Reconciliation in order to solicit and receive the resources necessary to move the funding forward.

Phone-a-thon? Service days? Covenants – how do we introduce new ways of raising money without taking away funds from others.

We can a request letter and commitment card that we can use. There is a CCF giving conference in January, and this year it's on donor relations.

April is going to talk to Cathy Myers-Wirt, President of the College of Regional Ministers to see if there can be a conference call with Regional Pastors.

## **2. Board Development/Re-populating the Commission**

*Suggestions:*

- Send out an application through the TLC listserv, core trainers, AR/PR teams, larger church donors, congregations that are top donors to the Reconciliation Commission.
- Tim asked how many people we need for a full cadre of Commission Members.
- Application form on the website
- Commitment card that are given out at the one day training. We could use this information for a database. Sign the standing rules statement every year.
- Guests at the Reconciliation Breakfast at Assembly – commitment cards at the Breakfast, application forms, challenge to the participants, get 10 people to raise \$100/\$1000, etc.
- Need to have 7 at-large members so that we do not have more ex-officio members than at-large members.
- Challenge Tennessee to give us names of people within the region. Gloria Carr has been recommended to serve. Minnie Smith from Hannibal, Missouri.
- Another challenge is to recruiting millennials – but we might be able to work with HELM, DSF, etc to find seminarians, younger folks to serve. Former DPF interns and NBA Xplor interns to serve.

## **Old Business**

Updates from 2014-2016 -- Stated Goals and Updates from our April 14 meeting:

- Commission Roles and Goals vis-à-vis Standing Rules
  - Establishment of measurements for RM
1. Increasing partnerships with general ministries
  2. Increase partnerships with regions
  3. Decrease the dependence on the offering
    - a. Intentional focus on tactile fundraising
    - b. Increasing the offering by \$15K
    - c. Establish the permanent fund
  4. Build capacity – increase partnership with other faith bodies
    - a. Interfaith Organizing Initiative
      - i. Interfaith dialogue around BLM
      - ii. Virtual meetings (Zoom)

- b. Disciples Center for Public Witness/DHM
  - i. Racial Justice Advocate – Deidre George Harris
  - ii. How do we get involved?
  - iii. Equip her with commitment cards/promo packet
- c. NBA Incubate (non-documented partnership)
  - i. Deitre Wise-Baker (incubated to do racial justice work through NBA)
- d. Others?

## **New Business**

### Challenge of Two-fold Priorities

1. Mission Imperative of AR/PR in DOC
2. Getting the Work Done:
  - a) Reconciliation Offering
  - b) Training
  - c) Fundraising/Relationship Building
  - d) Communications (Speaking Engagements)

Honorariums? Yes! Accept honoraria to support this important ministry.

Travel?

How do we leverage our travel in the most effective way?

Asking why we do what we do, and making choices about how the time gets spent.

Empowering the capacity of current staff and April to determine the priorities and processes for the Minister of Reconciliation.

## **General Assembly Planning**

Dates: July 8-12, 2017

Monday night is the Reconciliation Offering (Serene Jones, preaching)

April will find out when the Reconciliation Breakfast is held (mon/tues)

Speaker brainstorming:

- Rev. Joshua DuBois – Values Partnership
- Charlene Sinclair – Chair of IOI / Union Seminary / We Say Enough
  - Susan Leslie
  - Sekinah Hamlin
- Dr. Iva Carruthers – Proctor Conference (4)
- Rev. Osagyefo Uhuru Sekou, Black Lives Matter
- Rev. Noel Castellanos, CCDA
- Rev. Tracy Blackmon (3)
- Rev. John Dorhauer, UCC President – White Privilege (1)
- Jon Berquist, DSF
- J Kwest – Julian DeShazier – Rapper/University Church (2)

April will invite the speakers in the following order:

John Dorhauer, Julian DeShazier, and Tracy Blackmon

Ticket prices: \$25 per person; \$15 for students  
Students/Young Adults – how might they be involved, service project  
Reconciliation Bike Ride  
Ride around Indy and end up Kennedy/King Park

National Convocation has prepared a resolution asking the church to further support Reconciliation Ministry. The AR/PR imperative rests with this ministry and it has been underfunded since Day 1.

Resolution 0731 was for the church to own the Office of Reconciliation – that the basic functions would be funded in DMF, and the offering goes to resourcing congregations. April considers this resolution as crucial to her job description. We are not able to live into this resolution that it has already passed because we have no mechanism to add partners to DMF.

*We adjourned after dinner to allow for rest and reflection.*

### **Saturday, September 10, 2016**

*Al Lopez opened us with a brief devotion and prayer.*

#### **Re-cap/Loose ends**

Doug mentioned his need for us to be looking at financial projections for Reconciliation a few years out. With the Mission First discussions, the church has not gotten to the point of talking about funding and Reconciliation needs to be in the mix of all the mission that is funded.

Al mentioned that the PSWR is having a Mission First conversation today and his colleague will be there. Is there anything specific we wanted them to bring forward?

Doug asked about reconciliation grants and we will touch on that today.

April mentioned that we will need to follow up on our tasks and assignments that were mentioned yesterday.

Tim also mentioned that we needed to think about how we can fund this ministry over the long term. Al asked if we had ever gotten outside grants for our work, and we have – from Oreon Scott and Disciples Women – for the Women of Color Leadership Institute. There may be possibilities for more of this, but we need to be clear on what we are asking for. Do we want to think about asking for a grant for continuing education for our trainers?

(TLC is Team Leadership Conference – Regional ministers, Execs of Ministries and Higher Education.)

Al and Jen will work on the application for the website and Dwight will update the commitment card.



Is there a possibility of short-term volunteers? Are there tasks that we would have them to do?

Are their partnerships that we can form?

- What about with DPF with their summer interns? Could this be a part of their summer work? Are there ways to help train camp counselors?
- Week of Compassion trained Advocates to go out and multiply their efforts around their offering.
- Can Reconciliation have a program, other than training? Reconciliation is not a “program” ministry, but it appears that what this means has changed over time.
- Oreon Scott grants are due in April.

### **Special Offering Report**

- Tera shared the offering flyers and envelopes that we prepared this Spring.
- April shared that we need to have print ready information by the end of April, and then she works with the graphic designer.
- At our Spring meeting, we need to

### **Grants**

- Due January 31<sup>st</sup> for 2017
- Following the new grant guidelines and application
- The entire commission will be involved in the review and decision making process
- Spring meeting will need to be in late February/early March

### **Core Trainers (Who/Where/Trainings)**

Dwight Bailey, clergy, IL  
Marcus Leathers, clergy, DC  
Martha Herron, lay, IL  
Margie Pride, clergy, MO  
Yvonne Gilmore, clergy, IL  
Nathan Hill, clergy, MD  
Regina Morton, lay, TN  
Joe Jimerson, clergy, MO  
Sandhya Jha, clergy, CA  
Dave Bell, clergy, WA

### **Trainings:**

OK	November 19	(Dwight and Martha)
FL	October 20	(April)
PSWR/DSF	October 28/29, 2016	(Regina, Nathan and Marcus)
VA	November 5 <sup>th</sup> , 2016	(Nathan and Marcus, maybe via Skype)

Hope/Church

Extension	November 12/13, 2016	(Yvonne and David)
OR/ID	November 1/2 (trainers)	(Sandhya and Nathan)
	November 4	(Sandhya and Nathan)

A question was raised about how soon after people are trained that they will get the opportunity to do training. When we worked with Crossroads, they required a year of apprenticeship. Now the newer trainers are able to work with our core organizing trainers to receive training and then coaching as they move forward to train. Should we use assessments to determine whether or someone has the gifts and graces to do this work? April will review and revise the application for trainers.

### **Nominating Committee**

Jen and Al will work to create an application/nomination form that we can post on the website. April will provide a general nominating form.

### **Standing Rules Committee**

Tera and Jen make up the standing rules committee. They do not have a report at this time.

### **Next Meetings**

Conference Calls (1.5 hours)

October 27<sup>th</sup> at 4pm/3pm/2pm/1pm

January 24<sup>th</sup> at 4pm/3pm/2pm/1pm

In-person meeting (Thurs evening to Saturday morning)

March 2-4, 2017

### **Meeting Evaluation**

Everyone was invited to share a word that they felt expressed their experience of the meeting. All that was shared was positive. There was a general feeling that the time spent together was generative and time well spent.

### **Closing Worship and Communion**

April shared a brief closing meditation and the words of Institution. Jennifer prayed. We shared communion together to close our meeting.

*Box lunches were available to those who needed to take food to the airport, and shared by those who were able to stay longer at the hotel. Our meeting was adjourned at 11:30 am.*

Respectfully submitted,  
Jennifer Kottler  
Co-moderator

