

Summary of the Clergy Session – Wednesday, June 17, 2009

The Clergy Session was opened at 1:30 p.m. with singing led by Dorothy Straks. Prayer was led by Siosifa Hingano. Kathi McShane, Chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry, welcomed everyone and reviewed the agenda. It was mentioned that this year's clergy session is strictly a business meeting. We will be done at 5:30. Prayers for colleagues may be brought to the prayer wall at the back of the room. Paper is provided to write the prayers and then post them. Linger at any time. There are also sprigs of rosemary to remind us of the healing power among us.

It was reported that those eligible for full connection will be introduced in a different way. This year we will see the variety of ways that candidates are able to invite a deepening relationship with Jesus. Video of the 10 candidates in their work setting, seeing them minister in their contexts, was then shown.

Residency in Ministry (RIM) – Stan Barkey, member of the subcommittee, reported that concern was expressed by candidates about their experience, and as a result the mentors were invited to speak to the committee, as well. Don Cunningham was the ombudsperson. The Executive Committee developed a task force to revise the RIM process in time for those coming in and those continuing in September. The focus will be on development, growth, coaching, and encouragement – we want folks who finish the process to be grateful.

Clergy Development: Transformational Spiritual Leaders – All clergy under appointment in the California-Nevada Annual Conference were asked to participate in the LPLI, an inventory measuring spiritual depth, character and integrity; leadership; and fruit. Two hundred and thirty-four (234) pastors did so. Research identifies three areas: Character, competence, and contribution. The pastor does a self-assessment, and then is assessed by others of the pastor's choosing. Seventy-five areas are measured. Results are a comparison between ones' own and others' perceptions.

Generally speaking there was a halo effect – others saw clergy as being better than the clergy viewed themselves. This was true for high competence pastors, but not for low competence pastors. Highest ratings were in character, lowest were in contribution – increasing worship attendance and making disciples. Irrelevant factors include gender, age, years of service, and size of congregation. Cal-Nev rated much higher on encouraging inclusivity.

Now what? How do we merge what we have learned into a CE program? Kathy La Point-Collup: One unit of Continuing Education is 10 hours of content. Requirement is a minimum of one unit per year for a total of eight per quadrennium. Website will be going up soon. There will be three forms – one to submit if you are taking a course; a form to use when you go to something that doesn't offer CE; and a form to report how you are doing. Conference will offer sexual ethics CE for clergy.

Standards of Effectiveness – The BOOM is designing a tool to be used by SPRC to give quality feedback, which it hopes to have available this fall. Training is involved. It uses the same kinds of standards with DCOOM, and they are helping refine it. Having clear standards based on what we can observe will be helpful to all of us as we move forward in ministry. The tool will provide more specific feedback, guidance in CE plans, and better conversations. It will give the SPRC some tools for giving quality

feedback. Eight churches are currently testing. Use of the tool is voluntary by pastor. The intent of all this measuring is to provide support to all clergy as they accomplish the mission of the church.

Vital Signs Report by Blake Busick – Survival of any congregation is not the issue, and focusing on it is misplaced. **The focus is the reign of God embodied by disciples of Jesus.** Church vitality is about spiritual leaders nurturing disciples who then act as change agents in the world. Two hundred and twenty-three (223) churches (59%) have taken the survey. *Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations* is a helpful next step after completing the vital church survey. Forty percent (40%) of our congregations rate as declining and decaying. This should spark some conversation – what does it mean to be stable and growing? How do you get there? Blake is done with the consumer church; he is ready to devote his days to living together in a vital church community. He invited us all to embody the reign of God, to live as missionaries of the gospel and to make all of life sacred.

The conference secretary reviewed the rules of eligibility for presence and voting.

Presentation and Election of Candidates for Commissioning and Provisional Membership – The process before a candidate is presented for election involves two years with DCOOM, with much writing and assessment; by the time the recommendation comes from district to board to clergy session, the candidates are ready. This is a beginning of a mutual discernment process in which both the candidate's call and the calling and need of the church are examined. We are not working with quotas. We recommend everyone who the district committee recommends and who we have affirmed.

The following were presented and each one individually elected for Commissioning and Provisional Membership:

Towards Deacons' Orders – Thomas Joseph Buratovich, Catherine R. Noellert

Towards Elders' Orders – Kristen A. Marshall, Helen E. Mansfield, Kelley E. O'Connor

Probationary Membership with commissioning next year – Tim Gravatt

Candidates for Full Connection and Membership – (Historic questions will be asked before entire annual conference.) The following were presented and each one individually elected for Full Connection and Membership:

Ordained Deacon in Full Connection – Susan Griffin

Ordained Elder in Full Connection – Katie Marie Goetz, Hayes Hyesung Kang, Young-Gwon Kim, Hyok-In Kwon, Marylee Sheffer, Carolyn Jean Talmadge, Tevita Fotofili Vaikona, Motoe Yamada

Recognition of Orders – John Arthur Yoda was approved for recognition of orders.

Jennifer Goto, coordinator of mentors – Reported that there are changes in the process. Candidacy and mentoring processes are the first two steps. There is a new edition of the *Christian as Minister*. All candidates need to understand that the journey of a Christian as minister begins with baptism. Only

clergy in full connection, associate members, and long term vocational local pastors may be mentors, and all need training. Jennifer does the training.

Conference Relations, Greg Bergquist, chair – Myrna Bernadel-Huey raised a concern regarding the presentation of candidates who were just elected. We moved directly through our business with barely a minute to look at the written statements before voting. She wants an opportunity to make an informed vote, and recommends that we take the time to read in silence. Response – Kathi McShane: We don't expect that anyone's vote is going to be shaped by the one page, the recommendation, the video, etc. The work is entrusted to BOOM; everything on the paper is exhaustively covered by the board. We want you to affirm the long process the candidates have been through. Bishop Brown responded that he would endeavor to work in some time for reading, next time.

The relevant questions from the Business of the Annual Conference report were addressed. The results may be seen in that report.

Retirements – Those retiring at this Annual Conference Session were announced and remarks were given by some. The retirees are: John Auer, L. Rachel Berry, John Broad, Estan Cueto, Ray Dowdy, Lois Edde, Denis Eucalyptus, Art Gafke, Lin Goodyear, Paul Henshaw, Dale Kuruhara, David Moss, Kathleen O'Leary, Cheryl Olson, Anthony Oropeza, Lynn Rhodes, Paul Sweet, Carole Vincent, and Stephen Yale.

Acceptance of the entire report was moved and seconded, and approved.

Reminder – There will be A Gathering of Clergy, November 17-19, at Zephyr Point. Information about registration will be coming soon.

The session was adjourned.