

Church & Society Ministry Area Mtg. 8/27/05

Present: Faye Gregory, Claudia Hartz, Will Baez, Deborah O'Connor-Slater, Christine Eastwood.

Opened with prayer.

Those present gave updates in their ministry areas.

Disabilities Concerns: Faye Gregory reported that her group made pamphlets for display @ Annual Conference (2005). They did pass out surveys, but got very few back. The response from the surveys indicated a need for hearing devices, Braille. At this time, the disabilities concerns group is focusing on bringing about better awareness regarding the concerns of persons with disabilities. In the fall, they plan on contacting the churches that have responded and hope to get material and resources for them. A suggestion was made to put the survey in the Connections, if needed. There is a low % of people that have accessibility. "It's easier to go to a store and get a beer than it is to get in a synagogue [or church]". Deborah O'Connor-Slater made a suggestion that a survey to all the churches might be helpful – send by email to through Conference email?

COSROW: Claudia Hartz reported that this ministry group met 3 times so far. They are utilizing email. They are working on creating a mission statement. They've looked to the Discipline for guidance. Need further research and look at statistically what the issues are for Women. COSROW, as a group, felt that they could help COSHA regarding updating sexual harassment policy and info. Deborah O'Connor-Slater informed Claudia that this coming year will be the 50th Anniversary of the ordination of women – 2006. It was recommended that COSROW tap into the Women Interfaith Institute at Seneca Falls as a resource-contact Rev. Marilyn Foster or Alison Stokes.

COCUIC – Committee on Christian Unity and Inter-religious Concerns: Will Baez reported that the committee has set up a seminar for the Conference on "The Bible, Its Authority, and Christian Unity and Interfaith Relations". The guest speaker will be Dr. S. Wesley Ariarajah. The seminar is to be on October 29th.

The committee has plans to create a Christian Unity service incorporating Pan-Methodist Churches. The Prayer for Christian Unity service – they wanted to have in Jan./Feb. of 2006 and would like to work with Bishop Fisher on this. Next year, they are going to focus on Christian-Muslim-Jewish relationships. Will Baez reported that he attended a Christian unity workshop this past spring in New Orleans.

CONAM – Committee on Native American Ministries: Chris Eastwood reported that CONAM has had 2 meetings thus far this year. They planned a Youth

Retreat for Sept. 23, 2005. Brochures were distributed at Annual Conference regarding this event.

Three committee members, Chris Eastwood, Sharon Schmit, and Rosalie Schotanus will be attending a CONAM training in October 2005.

We are planning a trip to Washington, DC for a seminar on Native American issues – gambling and sovereignty in Spring of 2006. We would be visiting the American Indian Museum, seminar, and meet with legislators.

GBCS – Deborah O'Connor-Slater gave update on issues. A recommendation was made that the Church and Society Breakfast for annual Conference of 2006 focus on broader perspectives. Wherein the past, Peace and Justice issues, would like to discuss other issues such as stem-cell issue, conversations re: social principles, a study for the local church, help people dialogue. Deborah recommended Linda Bales as a guest speaker for the breakfast.

Recommendation made to be in conversation with Martie Fisher – Church and Society committee team leader on plans for Church and Society Breakfast in 2006.

Next meeting set for Nov. 12 @ 1pm.

Closed in prayer – presented prayer requests.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine L. Eastwood
C & S Ministry Area Coordinator