

1 **Church and Society / Social Concerns Ministry Area**
2 **Conference Council Meeting**
3 **April 5, 2008**
4 **Leon VanWie, Temporary Team Leader**

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6 The *Church and Society / Social Concerns Team* is the umbrella group that oversees one
7 task force, three committees, one coordinator, two teams, and is the vehicle for funding for the
8 NYS Council of Churches:
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- 10 A. Committee on Native American Ministries- CONAM
11 B. Committee of the Status and Role of Women - COSROW
12 C. Peace with Justice in Palestine/Israel Task Force
13 D. Committee on Religion and Race
14 E. Peace with Justice Special Offering Sunday Coordinator
15 F. Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns Team
16 G. Disability Concerns Team
17 H. New York State Council of Churches
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21 A. Committee on Native American Ministries- CONAM
22 (Sharon Schmit and Joseph Timlin, Co-leaders)

23 Committee update: 2/28/08

24 CONAM met on 2/9/08 at the Conference Center in Cicero. Sharon Schmit is still
25 serving as co-chair until the Nominations Team finds a replacement. The primary focus of the
26 meeting was on Native American Ministries Sunday (NAMS), General Conference, and Annual
27 Conference.

28 Plans for NAMS include: sending speakers from Hogansburg to neighboring churches,
29 mailing letters to District churches, an open house at Onondaga Nation, articles in Connections,
30 and an article with links and a bulletin insert for Conference News.

31 Joe Timlin will communicate with delegates to General Conference to share items of
32 importance related to Native American issues.

33 In recognition of the full agenda at Annual Conference, the committee decided not to
34 request time on the agenda. CONAM will share its message through display space (requested
35 through Social Ministries), a brochure which is being developed, and a Thursday workshop
36 focusing on celebrating NAMS in the local churches. The worship team for Annual Conference
37 has also offered opportunities for a Native presence during worship.
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39 Next meeting: May 29, 2008, 5:30 for dinner at Annual Conference.
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1 B. Committee of the Status and Role of Women - COSROW
2 (Currently in need of a leader)

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4 No report.
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8 C. Peace with Justice in Palestine/Israel Task Force
9 (Joan Overman and Linda Bergh, Co-leaders)

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11 **Report as of March 1, 2008**

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13 **Trip to Holy Land:** This year three persons participated in the GBGM trip to
14 Palestine/Israel: **Karen Peterson** from Horseheads and **Jan and Hal Garman** from Syracuse
15 traveled with the group totaling 85 persons from across the US, February 3 – 15, 2008. Reports
16 from the three will occur both at the March 14 Task Force meeting and during the Palestinian
17 Dinner on May 30 at Annual Conference.
18

19 **Work of the Task Force** for the next several months will be centered on plans for
20 Annual Conference:

21 **Palestinian Dinner, Friday, May 30, at Clay Trinity UMC**

22 **Sale of Palestinian Crafts during AC**

23 **Literature** to distribute at AC –

24 Map cards secured from Ann Arbor group

25 Social Questions Bulletin from Methodist Federation for Social Action

26 Other literature to be selected
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28 The Task Force is pleased to note that Leah Mae Carlisle will teach the course at Mission
29 School this summer, 2008, concerning Palestine/Israel.
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33 D. Committee on Religion and Race
34 (Inell and Lamar Claypool, Co-leaders)

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36 No report.
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39 E. Peace with Justice Special Offering Sunday Coordinator
40 (Linda Bergh, Coordinator/Leon VanWie Reporting)

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42 No report.
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1 F. Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns Team (CUIC)
2 (Will Baez, Team Leader)
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4 Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns cosponsored w/ the Order of Elders the
5 workshop on being the only way to the Father in March and will be making presentations in
6 April at the Conference-wide trainings, "Steps Towards Unity," reporting on UM dialogue with
7 other Christian denominations including Churches Uniting in Christ, the Roman Catholic
8 Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church USA, the Episcopal Church USA and the Pan
9 Methodist churches.

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13 G. Disability Concerns Team
14 (Sabine Ingerson, Team Leader)
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16 No report.
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20 H. New York State Council of Churches
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22 No report.

1 **Congregational Development Ministry Area (CDMA)**
2 **Conference Council Meeting**
3 **April 5, 2008**
4 **Leon VanWie, Team Leader**
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6 The *Congregational Development Ministry Area* is the umbrella group that oversees five teams.
7 One staff person and one task force report through us.
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- 10 A. Equitable Salaries
11 B. Revitalizing Congregations/Mission Priorities
12 C. New Church Starts
13 D. Town and Country Ministries
14 E. Urban Strategies
15 F. Lauren Swanson, NCNY Director of Congregational Development
16 G. Boundaries Task Force
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- 19 A. Equitable Salaries (Dora Schneider, leader)
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21 No report.
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- 25 B. Revitalizing Congregations/Mission Priorities
26 (Richelle Duchano and Leon VanWie, co-leaders)
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28 The team met on January 26th.
29

30 There was an update from the “Healthy Church Questionnaire” sub-team. They plan to
31 lead workshops at both of the Conference training events in April. Currently the sub-team is
32 working closely with Montour Falls, Owl’s Head, Van Hornesville and the Onondaga Nation
33 UM Churches.

34 There is a 4-step process of the Questionnaire (after churches submit it)

- 35 1. Letter of acknowledgement
36 2. Response from a “Healthy Church Questionnaire” sub-team contact
37 (phone call to talk about the form)
38 3. Assembly and sending out of resource packets
39 4. Follow-up phone call 2 weeks before target date

40 We are still looking at ways to promote the tool.
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1 The “Healthy Church Institute” sub-team provides this update - the first Institute is
2 tentatively planned for November 20-22, 2008. This first module will focus on leadership. Rev.
3 Adam Hamilton has been contacted about being a keynote presenter who would offer 4 to 5
4 plenary sessions. There has been no reply thus far, but hopefully will have report for 4/5.

5 The “Peer Coaching Support” (BJ Norrix’s doctoral thesis) sub-team provided no report.
6 It was hoped that this process would be able to be replicated in other areas in the conference.

7 DS- O’Connor-Slater discussed ¶213 – as it relates to URBAN STRATEGY and
8 potential for ministry. It’s important for congregations to examine their place in the community
9 and to look for new opportunities for ministry. Some of the difficult questions:

10 What’s the makeup of the neighborhood?

11 What’s the make-up of the congregation?

12 What’s the vision for the community?

13 Are there growth areas within the community?

14
15 Certain churches are making decisions to DIE! The NCNY priority is NOT to provide
16 life support but rather encouragement and support towards LIFE!!

17 A church’s goal should be 50% towards Mission and Ministries (which includes Shared
18 Ministries!).

19 The Revitalizing Congregations/Mission Priorities Team Challenge: “How do we
20 revitalize where we are? How do we change what we are doing?”

24 C. New Church Starts (Jeff Long, Team Leader)

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26 No report.

30 D. Town and Country Ministries 31 (Helen Hadley and Bill Palmer, Co-leaders)

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33 Both Rural Academy Phase 2 sessions scheduled for March 2008 were regrettably
34 cancelled- the first due to lack of registrants, the second due to inclement weather. Registrants
35 were invited to attend other sessions or keep watch for possible rescheduling in the Summer-
36 2008. To date, remaining Phase 2 sessions in April and May are "good to go". Phase 3 sessions
37 are tentative for Spring 2009, and will hopefully utilize the Healthy Church Questionnaire tool
38 and team. We are considering using fewer sessions for Phase 3.

39 Because Bounty's Crossing will be closing, we have not scheduled a Rural Ministry
40 offering Sunday this year, but are open to doing that, if the council would have us do so.

41 With much sadness this team bids adieu to Rev. Bill Palmer as he resigns from this
42 team to pursue other avenues of service in our annual conference. Rev. Connie Seifert has
43 agreed to be co-chair with Rev. Helen Hadley, with our deepest appreciation.

44 There is still the need for more members to join our team. We attempt to accommodate
45 all schedules for our meetings. Please consider who might join our team and let either Helen
46 (hhadley@twcny.rr.com) or Connie (cseifert@twcny.rr.com) know.

1 E. Urban Strategies (Craig French, Team Leader)
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3 The Area urban strategy team has held two significant events in the past month. The first
4 was an Urban Academy “traveling seminar” (a follow-up to the original two year Urban
5 Academy leadership development and training program). The other recent event was our second
6 “urban pray-in”—this one held at University UMC in Syracuse.

7 A total of 10 persons participated in the traveling seminar (6 from NCNY and 4 from
8 WNY). The group traveled from upstate NY to northern New Jersey on Friday, Feb. 22. Due to
9 a major snow storm that day, four site visits in the Newark area had to be cancelled. However,
10 after safely arriving at Xavier Retreat Center, the group spent an hour with two seminary
11 professors who specialize in urban ministry: Dr. Fred Smith from Wesley Theological Seminary
12 in Washington, DC, and Dr. Ronald Peters from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. Dr. Smith
13 and Dr. Peters provided a theological framework for understanding and assessing urban ministry,
14 including a helpful presentation on core values of urban congregations.

15 On Saturday morning the group traveled to Camden, NJ, for a series of site visits. The
16 first stop was at Bethel UMC, a small congregation (worship attendance of 60) with a primary
17 weekday ministry focused on the educational needs of Camden’s youth. The church is home to a
18 “Community Education Resourcing Network,” that serves 80 teenagers each day as an
19 alternative to a failing public education system. Operating on a shoestring budget and with
20 minimal staffing, this program prepares students for the next step in their education—early
21 entrance to Camden County College.

22 The second stop was at Asbury UMC, a dual-language congregation with one worship
23 service in English and another in Spanish each Sunday. The English-speaking congregation
24 includes Africans, African-Americans, and Euro-Americans. The Spanish-speaking
25 congregation includes both documented and undocumented persons. A primary ministry of the
26 congregation is its Immigration Center, which provides a variety of legal, educational and social
27 services. A new ministry of the congregation is a weekly feeding program for the homeless and
28 near-homeless in that community.

29 Our final stop in Camden brought information about three additional ministries—
30 Parkside UMC, Respond, and Camden Community House. Speakers from each group made
31 presentations over lunch. Parkside UMC (largely African American and led by a part-time local
32 pastor who has served the congregation for 40 years) has pioneered in several areas: lay ministry
33 and lay leadership development; an early Sunday morning worship service for homeless and
34 indigent persons; and a second worship service that makes use of both dance and media. Other
35 highlights include their ministry with men and their strong connection to the community around
36 them. Respond, Inc., is a large, multi-purpose not-for-profit agency, originally started with
37 church input. Today it offers child care, a senior adult center, programs for homeless adults,
38 youth services, and economic development—a holistic, lifelong approach to ministry. The final
39 presentation was made by 4 young adults, who live in a form of intentional Christian community,
40 as a way of living out their Christian faith and service.

41 Leaving Camden, the group traveled to Baltimore, Maryland, for one final site visit
42 Saturday afternoon—New Life UMC, a 12 year old re-start. Once a white congregation in a
43 white neighborhood, New Life is now an African American congregation, serving a largely
44 African American neighborhood. A distinguishing feature of this church’s ministry is its
45 partnering with two groups: (1) city social service providers (through a Family Life Center,
46 housed in the church) and (2) local community groups and leaders.

1 Sunday morning brought two final site visits—one in Baltimore and one in Alexandria,
2 Virginia. Half of our group attended worship and were introduced to the ministries of Centennial
3 – Caroline UMC in Baltimore. The other half attended worship and learned about the ministries
4 of Rising Hope UMC in Alexandria, Va. Centennial – Caroline UMC proved to be an exciting,
5 dynamic place of worship in the African American tradition. A major piece of its ministry lies in
6 a youth shelter housed in the church’s former parsonage and supported, in part, by government
7 funding. The Rising Hope UM Mission Church (its complete name) was organized 12 years ago
8 as a church of and with the poor. Through its worship, educational program, outreach and
9 advocacy, the church seeks to provide a place of welcome and hope for those who are often left
10 out in other ways. The congregation is as diverse as one can imagine, in terms of language,
11 nationality, ethnicity, education, employment, economic level, etc.

12 In summary, while the lessons of the “traveling seminar” are still being compiled,
13 participants are unanimous that it was informative, inspiring and well worth doing again. Formal
14 evaluations from participants have been received and are being compiled. Expect a follow-up
15 story in the Conference Connections in the near future.

16 Then, just last week, the Urban Strategy team, in cooperation with University UMC,
17 sponsored our second “urban pray-in.” Between 25 and 30 persons took part in the event, which
18 began with a simple meal together and ended with a focused time of prayer for the church, its
19 leaders, its ministry and the community around it. Structured along the lines of a “Stations of the
20 Cross,” the prayer service wound its way around the sanctuary and then out into the
21 neighborhood, with designated prayer topics at each stop (e.g., pulpit, baptismal fount,
22 communion table, Armory, Ronald McDonald House, Genesee Grande Hotel). Participants took
23 turns leading the prayer at each stop. The next pray-in will be held on May 14 at First UMC in
24 Buffalo, with a follow-up pray-in anticipated in the fall in the Utica-Rome area.

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28 **F. Report from the Director of Congregational Development**
29 **(Lauren Swanson)**

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No report.

35 **G. Boundaries Task Force**

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No report.

1 Conference Council on Youth Ministries
2 Report to Conference Council- April 5, 2008 meeting
3 Maddie Horrell, chair

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5 In the past few months, CCYM has been very involved in planning for various events.
6 First of all, we had our annual Winter Retreat at Casowasco in early February, which was a great
7 success. We had slightly decreased attendance at this retreat, but nevertheless raised more
8 money for the Youth Service Fund than in recent years. In early March, a few NCNY reps,
9 including myself, attended the NEJ Council on Youth Ministries meeting, where we planned the
10 “Nor’Easter” NEJ youth convocation in July. One of our focuses for this event is to incorporate
11 it into the Jurisdictional Conference, which will begin at the same location the day the
12 Nor’Easter ends. Special gatherings for the youth delegates and observers to Jurisdictional
13 Conference during the Nor’Easter will help the youth be familiarized with the issues and feel
14 more comfortable during the legislation times. Immediately following the NEJCYM meeting
15 was a meeting with the 4Word Steering Committee to plan 4Word ’08, which will take place in
16 the end of April in Liverpool. We finished up worship schedules, workshops, YSF events, and
17 other aspects of the event. The day before the event starts, we will have one final meeting to
18 finalize everything and make sure it runs smoothly. The four conferences have also been in
19 discussion about doing more events together in the future (maybe even all events) before the
20 proposed new conference is officially in place. We plan to continue conversation about our
21 future this summer; also, the conferences plan to include each other more in our events in the
22 coming year.

The North Central New York Annual Conference Finance Team brings the following resolution regarding interest generated from “Sweep Accounts.” *Accounts that are greater than \$10,000 receive the interest they generate directly, this resolution concerns money generated from smaller accounts and “pass through” money.*

Resolution concerning interest income from Sweep Accounts.

Therefore be it resolved:

1. Accrued “sweep interest” will be reported to the Finance Team monthly.
2. The Finance Team will report the income to the conference on a quarterly basis.
3. Any funds that are swept into a savings account, and held there over 90 days, and the principal is \$10,000 or more, will receive the interest accrued for them for the said days.
4. A Contingency Fund will be created with the “Interest Money.” It will be used to support the mission and ministries of the North Central New York Annual Conference – both administrative and program. This money may be used when agreement is reached by: The Chairs of the Finance Team and Conference Council along with the DCM and Treasurer. The money will be used for expenses that are unexpected or unusual in cost and will be used for program and administration.
5. Ministry Teams and Areas desiring funding from the Contingency Fund shall forward their requests through the Treasurer who will then convene the committee. The money given will be in the form of grants.