

**Minutes of the Worshiping Communities Committee of the  
Presbyterian Mission Agency Board of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
Conference Call  
July 20, 2015**

**CALL TO ORDER AND  
OPENING PRAYER**

The conference call of the Worshiping Communities Committee of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board was called to order by the Chair, David Shinn at 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time. He opened the meeting with prayer.

*Attendance*

Those present for all or a portion of the meeting were:

*Elected Members Present:*

Marsha Zell Anson – Vice-Chair  
Gregory Chan  
Vickie Garber  
David Shinn - Chair  
Patsy Smith

*Excused Elected Members:*

Andrew Barron  
David Ezekiel  
Mihee Kim-Kort  
Gina Meester  
Marianne Rhebergen

*Committee Support*

Ray Jones, Lead Resource Staff  
Sterling Morse, Lead Resource Staff  
Alejandra Sherman, Staff Support, Recorder

**PURPOSE OF THE MEETING**

The decision to add a conference call was made in April to provide an opportunity for members to connect with each other and the work of the denomination between Board meetings.

**SHARING JOYS AND  
CONCERNS**

The committee spent time sharing personal and professional updates with each other.

**RAY JONES - RESOURCE  
COORDINATOR REPORT**

Ray Jones gave an update on work being done since the April meeting in his ministry area. He went on to give an update on institutional changes:

- Theology Worship and Education and Evangelism and Church Growth merged. The name for the new ministry area is Theology Formation and Evangelism (TFE).
- Charles Wiley is the Associate Director for Theology. The name for this area might change to Theology and Formation. Ray will be leading the Formation and Evangelism as its Associate Director. This area contains all the ministries of the former Evangelism and Church Growth, except for Mission Program Grants. This area moved to RE&WM.
- Simone Adams-Andrade has been hired as the Coordinator for Mission

Effectiveness for TFE. One of her responsibilities will be to work on a process for the whole area to ensure the ministry is working within the policies established by Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA).

- A report will be presented in September on how the different pieces of the 1001 program fit together.
- Jason Santos has been called to be the Coordinator for Collegiate, Young Adult and Youth ministries. Camp and Conference Ministry will also be part of this grouping.
- David Loleng in the office of Evangelism is another staff under the Formation and Evangelism umbrella. The goal is to partner with the Racial Ethnic & Women’s Ministries to connect existing churches with Transformation (Ann Philbrick), Evangelism and 1001 so that existing churches are helped in reaching new people, starting new ministries, and new churches. The 1001 movement is great but there has been an unintentional disconnect between new and existing churches.

**DISCUSSION ABOUT  
INTERNSHIPS AND 1001**

A conversation was held around the topic of internships. Ray is aware that work is being done with seminaries for internships. He will be focusing on learning more about internships, assessments and coaching.

Marsha Zell Anson shared information on an initiative in Glacier Presbytery where a partnership started with San Francisco Seminary. It is a new effort called “externship.” Their idea is that instead of doing an internship between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year of seminary they would have all three years together followed by an externship where they would be mentored in a church or presbytery. This would tie in well with the work being done in the office of Formation and Evangelism.

**STERLING MORSE - RESOURCE  
COORDINATOR REPORT**

- A Big Tent Intercultural Pre-conference will be held on July 29-30, 2015. This event is being done in collaboration with the Presbyterian Intercultural Network
- A churchwide conference on race, ethnicity, racism and ethnocentricity will be held at Stoney Point Conference Center on November 5-7, 2015. This work is as a result of a 221<sup>st</sup> G.A. (2014) referral. The committee was appointed by the Moderator and is being co-chaired by Larissa Kwong Abazia and Elona Street-Stewart.

**DISCUSSION ABOUT  
STRUCTURE, LEADERSHIP  
AND TRANSITION**

Committee members requested information on the new structure, new leadership, plans for the future and the filling of the vacancy left by Linda Valentine’s departure. Concern was also expressed for the staff morale in the Center.

**COMMITTEE CHAIR AND VICE  
CHAIR UPDATE ON INTERIM  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
SEARCH**

The chair and vice chair gave an update on the search for an interim executive director. At present time, Barry Creech and Earline Williams are acting executive directors until the interim position is filled.

The Executive Committee has set a fast timeline for the search for an interim executive director and executive director. Communications were sent to mid councils and other groups asking for names, contacts that might want to serve

as interim executive director. The Executive Committee is now getting resumes and will start interviews soon. The hope is to have an interim to present to the Board in September. To search for an Executive Director might be a year-long process.

Also, the Executive Committee is seeking input from staff in the Center to gather data to include in the job description for the executive director position.

Ideas are welcome as the executive committee continues the search for the next Executive Director. One idea offered was to reach out to different areas in the country to find out the qualities and qualifications the new executive director should have. Meetings structured like Town Halls or GoToMeetings would help rebuild trust in various regions of the country. Having formal opportunities to provide feedback would help. This would help healing and repairing the hurt that has occurred during the last 15 months or so. Open showing of concern for staff input and grass-roots input, something as easy as to phrase the question “how are you feeling?” It would help calm anxiety just by communicating.

Staff feedback into this process was to have transparency in this process so that staff can have the right information to share with constituents if questions are asked. Some staff are feeling the pressure of the changes happening lately. The staff left behind after the decisions were made is struggling with the new reality, so prayers were asked. The need for transparency and communication is at the heart of the matter and it will be considered.

**PREPARATION FOR  
SEPTEMBER MEETING  
AGENDA**

The committee started to work towards the September meeting agenda. Here are some initial agenda items:

- Update on process for new steps
- Progress and process update for Presbyterian Youth Triennium
- New Beginnings – hear good things, like to hear more details about the program.
- A churchwide conference on race, ethnicity, racism and ethnocentricity – want to hear more updates on this conference
- How are racial ethnic churches taking advantage of the New Beginnings, how are they getting support from the national denomination
- Update on transitions/changes with staff in PMA
- Update on Collegiate Ministries

**ADJOURNMENT**

Ray Jones closed the meeting with prayer.

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David Shinn, Chair

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Ray Jones, Lead Resource Staff  
Sterling Morse, Lead Resource Staff

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Alex Sherman, Staff Support Recorder