

Northern California-Nevada Conference Annual Meeting Workshop

– Received June 6, 2010

What is your response for the Unified Governance Working Group?

1. The national bodies give perspective, that there is also a larger community, but local churches and church goers want to know how this affects them, how can they get things and services they might need, how can they make contact with the national body, how can they participate in the larger body, what is the relationship between the member and the national setting?
2. Right now, it feels like there's paternalism with the national setting, they are creating the programs for "you" (the member), and the member doesn't really have a say. It was suggested that people in the national setting (who work there) come to local churches, visit and talk to the people there to determine what is really needed or what works. The programs would work best if they were created in a direct relationship with the local church. It feels like there's a gap between the local church and national setting right now.
3. Right now it feels like the national setting is staff driven, rather than by the people.
4. In the future, new ways to receive input, not just from "consultation teams" (for example, the various HUGs groups). The people on a certain team don't necessarily reflect all the people they are representing, and that needs to be recognized.
5. Is the traditional formulation as a ministry of the laity? Is it a ministry of the baptized? Deaconate? Not authorization-ordination? Association/conference not oversight of the clergy
What is the role of conferences and conference ministers? of regions?
6. The structure of the church must start from a deep knowledge of our theology and mission/need of the local church, those should be our constitution
7. In order to rebuild the financial base/OCWM it is critical that people know the church, and are invested in the "hierarchy". People have to want to contribute, and to want that, they need to understand where their money is going specifically, what are they funding, who are they helping, etc. They need to feel a very personal attachment to the larger church (national setting), where they can't always immediately see the results of their funding.

What do you want the UCC to be now and in the future?

1. Live out "No matter who you are..."
 - Especially in Cleveland, at the UCC offices. Be welcoming, friendly to all. Anybody can walk in and be helped.
 - Amistad Chapel, make it a place of invitation, of welcome, a place where people can come and really discover what a UCC church feels like.
2. Local congregations called to minister to the people, in their local communities and neighborhoods. Moving beyond just the people within the church, focusing on reaching out and helping those who might not come to the church realize what the church is about.
3. Represent a socially responsible Christian
 - Need to demonstrate this, communicate this more.
4. Inclusivity, it is great that we take a stand on justice issues now, and we should continue to in the future
5. Stimulate knowing (intellectual) faith
 - Progressive Bible Study
6. Community that *wants* participation
7. Save haven for doubters
8. Cultural competency beyond identity to be Christian
 - Not just in faith practice and theology, through art, music, literature
9. No doctrinal tests-full spectrum of theologians
10. Model for open and affirming, accessible to all, diversity
11. Our stance on social justice issues is important and sets us apart
12. Progressive Christian voice
13. Balance serious work with a place to live and love while working

Thank you for all your hard work!

Peace,
Caitlin Kawaguchi
(Discussion facilitator)