

FEEDBACK
UNIFIED GOVERNANCE DIALOGUE AND DISCERNMENT
POTOMAC ASSOCIATION
(MARYLAND, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, VIRGINIA)
May 1, 2010

Approximately 50-60 people were present for the Potomac Association meeting. The dialogue and discernment session took place near the end of the meeting and lasted about forty-five minutes. The session was lively and, at times, intense. The following comments were made on the two assigned questions.

Question 1: What do you believe God is calling the UCC to be now and into the future?

God is calling us to address ONA and to be multiracial and multi-cultural. We are only 10% ONA and we need to move on to get there fully.

The leadership of the church must be trusting of people in the pews.

The focus is on UCC from the cradle to the grave, but the church is questioning whether we are viable.

We are called to be a prophetic voice. The strength of the church is in the local congregation, the pews.

The bonds of the local church and associations must be strong.

We are called to reach out to young people; they are lost after high school.

God so loved the world that he didn't send a committee. We should take what we have had forever - - it starts with the believer. We need to convey the good things to the people in the pews.

The priority should be to educate all congregations. There is a lack of understanding as to how the UCC works; there is not enough familiarity with how the UCC works.

We need leadership development and leaders. There should be training of the clergy and empowerment of the laity. We need to take leadership patterns and invigorate them.

I am disappointed in the UCC ad; there is no clear vision in the ad. Too many people don't know the UCC, let alone its vision. We need the help of the national body.

We need to be a church that is effective with all of our diversity, without doing it in as expensive a way. We are faced with a challenge that is larger than the individual things and concerns. We need to be non-judgmental.

Question 2: What is your response for the Unified Governance Working Group?

Racial and ethnic constituent groups are uneasy with the unified governance document because of concerns about assumptions that are being made. The resolution adopted by General Synod 27 recognizes racial tension in the UCC, but we talk about “diversity,” not race. The number of seats on the proposed unified governance board for racial and ethnic groups is an issue. The undercurrent continues to be there. There is also a question as to whether we should continue with the Collegium.

The unified working group is irrelevant to the local church.

Will the unified structure strengthen the decision-making and allow people to see what the organization is about? If a unified structure makes the UCC less hierarchical, that will be good.

We need to understand the relationship between the unified board, its autonomy, and the local church.

There is hope that national will move closer to the local church.