

Conference Vision Team Report

Conference Vision Team Annual Report

The Conference Vision Team rounded out the first phase of our work by finishing a number of important responsibilities. At the 2014 Conference Annual Gathering, the team led two consecutive all-assembly presentations on the *Statistical Analysis of the Conference*.

Conference consultant Dr. Richard Hamm shared the team's report on the demographics, trends and milestones of the Missouri Mid-South UCC. Important discussion and feedback ensued. Vision Team chair Rev. Dr. Paul Koch introduced the sessions with scriptural reflections on Luke 19:23 *"If anyone asks you, 'why are you untying it?' you shall say this, 'the Lord needs it.'"* An additional listening session was held at CAG along with the sharing of listening results by out-going Conference Minister of Strategic Innovation, Jan Aerie.

Thanks to all the wonderful feedback received across the Conference, the Team articulated five mission imperatives that deserve considerable attention as we *untie* organizational structures that served us in the past but will not meet the challenges of "being church" in the 21st century. As we move away from the "hub and spoke" model, a new matrix or *web* will unite exciting strands of mutual ministry into a stronger network, congregations, and ministries. The clarified five prophetic points to act upon are: Cultivating and nurturing authentic covenantal relationships; Strengthening congregations; Supporting authorized ministers in all settings; Enhancing communication; and Advancing a mission of advocacy for peace and justice.

To present and help the Conference lived out this vision, a Future Story document was written and shared. Each point was elaborated on from a vantage point of seeing accomplishment a few years hence. A filmed One-Act play was also produced presenting examples of each point realized in a humorous and fun way. Thanks to master filmmakers, Revs. David Poe and Phiwa Langeni. "Right brainers" perhaps will find clarity in these creative approaches; linear, technical "left-brainers" will appreciate seeing and hearing the Strategic Points document and presentation by Dr. Hamm at the 2015 Conference Annual Gathering.

Some members of the Vision Team will continue to help the Conference live out this vision under new leadership. We salute the hard work of dedicated treasures who devoted themselves to our future: Rev. Cindy Bumb, Rev. Phiwa Langeni, Sue Simmons, Ula Sao, Joyce Bathke, Stephanie Beckmann, Rev. Rick Oberle, Amy Engelbrecht, Peter Oleski, Rev. Felicia Scott, and Rev. Traci Blackmon.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Dr. Paul B. Koch, Jr., Chair