

PNMC Meeting Minutes

Present: Jack Swaim, Katherine Jameson Pitts, Twila Lehman, Brett Tieszen, Kathleen Aeschliman, Janet Szabo (Skype from Kalispell), Jan Yoder, Jenna Schlegel-Preheim, Jennifer Delanty, Barb Buxman, Tom Brenneman

Absent: Nelly Moran-Ascencio

Jack opened the meeting with prayer.

Main Topic— Vision for the Future

-It's important to support our CIHAN congregations as they deal with immigration issues and the associated uncertainty. MCC in California has specialists that could be brought up to help people understand their rights and have many immigration questions answered. It's important to check with them to see what they think their needs are. CIHAN has formed a Committee on Immigration. Would they like to have someone from the Board on this committee? A statement of support from PNMC would be a positive gesture.

-Congregations sometimes feel they need a common mission for them to feel worthwhile. People may think their congregation is not of value unless they have this common mission. A sharing of information on what persons in the congregation are doing and what help they need would be helpful. Not concentrating on church growth but on working with the marginalized and helping to bring about justice seems like a better mission. Take the focus off of divisive issues and put it on caring for people. Different congregations could find (or may have already found) their own marginalized group(s) to work with. Communication between congregations about areas of common interests (strengthen the web, share the stories) would be helpful. How can we share a list-serve on PNMC's website or another way to communicate what we're doing that would be effective?

-Building community both within congregations and outside the congregations

Conclusions:

-There seems to be a focus on helping the marginalized, and congregations would need to identify the group(s) they would work with.

-If it would add value to congregations, we'd like to provide some kind of "clearinghouse" or network for congregations to engage in if they choose to do so where they can find and/or share resources and ideas.

-There's a need for community building.

-We would need to get feedback from congregations on what we think we've heard before investing too much energy.

Action:

-Jack will use the information we collected today (mainly from our conclusions above) to form some questions that we could use to interview persons from our churches about whether we have heard them (or are hearing them). He will send this out and asks for a reply to all on the questions (or "talk track") within a week.

Next Meeting: April 7 and 8. Barb will check about the place to meet and let us know.