

South African Network Conference

Louisville, KY

Monday, April 25, 2005

INTRODUCTIONS

- Eric Markman and Jenny Stoner, Presbytery of Northern New England. Presbytery to Presbytery Partnership with the Amatola Presbytery of the Uniting Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa.
- Kathy Hanna-Stauffer, Western Reserve Presbytery (Ohio). Western Reserve is involved in the Joining Hands Program through the Presbyterian Hunger Program. South Africa is their country of focus.
- Rick Schmidt, Donegal Presbytery (SE Pennsylvania). Presbytery to Presbytery partnership with the Umtata Presbytery of the Uniting Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa.
- Mardelle Amschutz and Bob Myer, Wayne Presbyterian Church in Wooster, OH. Church to Church Relationship with a church in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church.
- Kevin LaPorte and Tom Cook, First Presbyterian Church, Harbor Springs, MI. Church to Church partnership with Elim, Lepopo, Northern Transvaal, Evangelical Presbyterian Church.
- Jo Ann Smith from Oregon. No direct connections to South Africa Traveled with Jon on mission trip to South Africa. Has an interest in South Africa. In particular, Jo Ann is a Native American and is interested in exploring similarities of the stories of black South Africans and Native Americans in the USA. Came to listen and learn.
- Kay-Robert & Desire Volkswijn from Chapel Hill, NC. Native South Africans with an interest in issues concerning reconciliation. Involved with a documentary filmmaker at Duke University who is making a film concerning issues of indigenous people around the world (Khoisan in South Africa, Aborigines in Australia, and Native Americans in the USA). Looking for connections of all these groups, i.e., worshipping ways, eating ways, food ways, etc.
- Bob Schminkey and Sara Holben from Chestertown, MD. No formal connection to South Africa presently, but mission worker in South Africa 94 -96 and have maintained connections since. Bob works for Bread for the World and works raising funds for HIV/AIDS projects in South Africa through Stellenbosch University
- Kathy Reeves, Louisville, KY WMD staff facilitator of International Partnerships and Ecumenical Formation
- Jon Chapman Louisville, KY. WMD Coordinator for Southern and Eastern Africa.

WILL BROWN VIDEO ON PARTNERSHIPS

(What follows are snippets of thoughts from the video)

- Mission is what God does in the world.
 - The question is how do we and people of the church participate.
 - We are a primary voice of what God wants done, but we no longer believe that we have the only role. Rather, we now see our partners having a voice and it's a voice outside of our context.
 - We now want to come in alongside our partners and follow their lead.
 - we are no longer the "tell all and do all" which was the model in the last century.
 - PC(USA) believes in Partnership Missionality
 - Unlike Episcopalians and Methodists, our church stops at our boundaries.
 - WMD has far less control of Mission moneys than in the past. WMD now acts as facilitator/broker
 - The reason why: In years past 75% of mission money was from unified giving. That figure now is 15% with the rest coming in the form of restricted funds
 - It should also be noted that staff salaries are included in that 15%.
 - Several things have made playing this facilitator/broker role easier
 - Emails enable direct connection with the field
 - Plane travel means no more 6 week steamer trips
 - It should be noted that this is not always to the good.
 - Person who meets the plane owns the visitor & their wallet
 - You can tell a Presbyterian but you can't tell them much
 - New way of doing mission
 - Mission personnel no longer give instructions to partners. Partners take lead. However maybe we've over compensated and have gone too far in that direction
 - Now have regional liaisons in six areas with people on the ground in those regions (some are too big, e.g., the position that covers Europe & the Middle East)
 - These on the ground people are not part of decision making leadership, but rather are there to help implement partnership decisions
 - They act as facilitators for congregations involved in mission in the particular country involved
 - They help to keep us from building the wrong thing at the wrong place at the wrong time
 - Via email it is much easier to makes direct connection to the liaison in the country of interest
- § Through this system we are able to articulate more clearly region / country strategies.
- Will be on the web someday but not now

- Also new is the development of WMD Mission Networks. There are 14 to date more in the pipeline (we are an example of this)
 - These networks serve as a brokering & persuasive model that creates a table for Presbyterians involved in and who care about a place can come together to discuss, and share ideas.
 - The network serves as a self correcting mechanism where partners with long standing relationships can share ideas and offer them to their regional liaison
- The bottom line - the new model offers a way to broker funding needs and spiritual needs for an area in a way that we won't be competing and overlapping.

Discussion

Regional liaison for South Africa is Douglas Tilton. Jon describes him as a miracle worker. Doug was based in Cape Town, but will be moving to Joburg in the middle of June. When he moves he will also become the liaison for the South African Council of Church's (SACC) new nine provincial councils. Jon suggests we get in touch with Doug when organizing a trip to South Africa.

Janet Guyer will soon be on the ground in the Joburg/Pretoria area soon. Janet is the regional consultant for HIV/Aids.

The following are ideas/challenges suggested by various people regarding their experience working with partnerships in South Africa

- Challenge: How to keep the local folks in the USA happy, particularly in explaining the slow use of money sent for projects
- Communication challenges
 - Kevin: Stay engaged, find multiple channels of communication and follow through
 - Rick: face to face annual meetings take place at Donegal. This works much better than emailing which doesn't work all that well
- Question: What to preach?
 - Bob Myers: Lent & Advent meditations, common passages,
 - Connecting through banners is a great way to communicate
 - Kay-Robert: the PHP's Joining Hands program has developed a devotional resource
 - Exchange prayers.
 - Sara: speaking from her experience she suggests preaching as a partner not as pastor of a congregation, Teach the body of Christ, and/or of coming together. She further suggests staying away from direct issues, especially their issues.

TOPIC #1 MISSION

Cultural Misunderstandings

- Jon: when going to another culture be humble. We are often perceived as arrogant (editorial comment: I can't image why). As a result, we need to demonstrate the reverse, i.e., we are not there to tell them what to think but rather to listen
- Jo Ann: we should not reduce South African kids to being beggars recipients, i.e., we should not bring second hand goods. She also suggested that taking pictures can sometimes yield kids to becoming like minstrel performers. We must be culturally concerned about that. We need to come to know them personally. In so doing we will be more likely to know what will insult them and avoid it.
- Kay-Robert: it is probably not a good idea to organize a mission trip around a work project where we come in and build something. This is not a good idea in an area that has 50% unemployment. If such a project is to be, it should be designed so we work alongside the people not do all the work and then leave.
 - Kevin asked if it would be appropriate to pay them to work. Kay-Robert responded yes that would be very appropriate
- Jo Ann: we need to be good listeners not always talking. We need to emphasize, that although we are different, we are also the same with the same wants: i.e., health, worship, family, food, etc. She also suggests that all on missions trips should be encouraged to journal as it will leave a lasting memory
- Eric: ask for native food, not necessary for fancy western food (meat).
- Eric: a project creating sewing, weaving etc can build excitement in your home presbytery and is invaluable even when seemingly the cost of mailing / duty suggests a better way
- Bob Myer said he "went" native while in South Africa. This should be considered.
- Eric: orientation of groups going is very important
- Jon: Americans want to "do" and have a difficult time just "being." We need to take time to be and to listen
 - Eric said his Peace Corp experience is a good example of this

- Jon: it is possible to both “be” & “do.” As important as it is to be sensitive culturally, it is also important to be yourself. That is we need to get this done but we also want to hear how you pray about your family etc, etc, etc
- Kay Robert: The Joining Hands program stresses this idea of being. On the other hand we must not forget that in the “so called” Third World, especially South Africa, money is important and they are in need of it.

Final General Thoughts

- History of the Presbyterian Church and its way of relating in South Africa (specifically) and the Third World (generally) is through money. We have not figured out completely the new way of partnership
- It is more important to stay in one place over traveling around to many places
- Sharing music is important
- It is important to emphasize the importance of every single person that you meet, as well as their hidden gifts
- Helping our friends in South Africa is about honoring and sharing the gift that we have received.
- We should effort to replicate projects that work and avoid projects that don't work. This network can aid in this and we should find ways to get the info out to the body of the church at large
- Church globalization concerns:
 - There are haves vs. have nots: how, as the church can we create the ability of the have nots to become self supporting
 - Jon: globalization is not just about money & wealth, haves and have nots, but also about the globalization of faith that we push on the south. We need to listen to the ideas of the south and the globalization issue offers the chance for this dialogue to begin
- A good book on the topic Lexus and the Olive Tree by Thomas Freidman

TRAVEL

Led by Kathy Reeves

Travel question

- Travel agents:
 - Menno Travel (more for individuals) per Kathy
 - Bob Schminkey: Travel Beyond, 214 south Minnetonka Ave Wayzata, MN 55391-1717 will work with individuals who want to do their own thing from the rest of the group. If you use them tell them Bob Schminkey recommended them.
 - § A good idea to build a relationship with a travel agent
 - § share names of good travel agents,
 - § group tickets will always need a large deposit,
 - § New law in South Africa requires all groups must have a certified tour guide, but there are ways around it that travel agent should be able to help with.
 - § Jon things always change so we need to network with each other about good current deals
- Jon: employ someone to drive. If you do drive, be aware of security concerns and that at night walkers and animals in the road are common.
- Renting a cell phone at airport for emergencies is a good idea, or a t-mobile with sim card enables you to call the USA. Leave the sim card with someone before leaving the country
- Leave emergency phone numbers to call while in SA
- Know of any traveler's medical conditions in case of emergencies before departing
- Basic life and limb insurance is possible for groups of 5 or more through GA. Write Kathy Reeves for a form
- Copies of passport are a good idea
- Places of interest
 - St. Georges Cathedral in Cape Town www.stgeorgescathedral.com
 - Hari Krishna Temple in Durban is a great place for a vegetarian lunch
 - Voortrekker Monument in Pretoria www.voortrekkermon.org.za
 - Anglican Cathedral south of Grahamstown www.places.co.za/html/grahamstown.html
 - Mofatt Mission in Kuruman, (Northern Cape) where Livingston went and all early missionaries passed through. www.places.co.za/html/moffat_m.html
 - Village of Mqwali is the church established by Rev. Tiyo Soga. This was the first church in South Africa established by an ordained black South African pastor and is still an active church

Money

- Rand Usable in other parts of Africa, Dollar, Euro & British Pound are also acceptable
- ATM cards can be used, but use caution as there are scam artist. You do get good exchange rates, but for security reasons use it in a bank with security guard
- New rule, you need to buy ticket 45 days before traveling & need 4 clear pages on your passport
- When buying tickets for travelers from South Africa buy the tickets through travel agent in South Africa, but use & buy the ticket with a USA credit card

PRESBYTERY OF NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND (PNNE) YOUTH EXCHANGE **Led by Eric Markman and Jenny Stoner**

18 campers + adults came to the USA from the Amatola Presbytery

The next year 17 youth and adults from PNNE traveled to South Africa

The idea for the camp grew out of earlier trips where those involved found it a transformational experience and felt there was a need to focus on the youth of both Presbyteries. It was felt that the first camp should be in the USA to be used as model and to build confidence

Year One in the USA

On the American side

- large planning committee (15 + people)
- included the big power brokers of the Presbytery so all decisions held fast
- also resulted in successful fund raising

On the South African side

- Planning Committee did not include power brokers of the presbytery so decisions had to work their way up
- Amatola Presbytery is about 50% white & 50% black
- The Presbytery's treasurer is white while the planning committee was black
- Communications were slow and difficult
- Logistics and details were cumbersome

One hurdle to be overcome was to define what is a youth. Much older on the South African side. After compromising it was decided to define it as young people from 15 to 21.

- The make up of the first group from Amatola Presbytery: 2 white, 2 colored, 11 Xhosa (black)
 - There were 3 times the number of applicants as available spaces which was set at 15
- The make up on the American (PNNE) side was all white

Camp logistics

- T Shirts were made
- Each camper from South Africa was paired up with an American Host family
- PNNE paid 80% of the ticket costs plus all the costs in the USA which totaled \$43,000. \$8,000 came from grants while the other \$35,000 came from fundraising within the Presbytery (all churches in the Presbytery were involved in the fundraising)

The working of the camp

- The host families came from all over the Presbytery, although most were from Maine
- Camper met their host families and stayed with them through the fourth of July weekend
- The six day camp then began
- Following the camp, the campers stayed with a second host family
- Finally, there was big gathering of 100 plus people for debriefing

The six day camp agenda. The setting: rustic. This was not welcomed by all of the South African guests (this was brought up during the time set aside for discussion of issues)

- Worship
- Arts and crafts
- Work project
- Classes at branch of Maine University
- Music in evening around camp fire with stories sing & dancing

Year Two: Camp in South Africa

- Theme: Breaking Barriers Building Bridges
- Often slow in getting things needed to be done when needed on South Africa side
 - Multiple emails & if necessary phone calls yielded an outline & dates by November
- Required American youth involvement in fundraising if their ticket was being paid for by Presbytery.
- Total cost \$70,000 achieved only with cutting back on travel in South Africa
- Recruitment in South Africa was disappointing as not all church notified (white churches). Black churches feel their American partners belong to them and as a result, whites often feel unwelcome
- 17 from USA sent. This included some college kids & 3 adults
- First day spent as a group
- A homestay with a family followed
- The 6 day camp then commenced

- homestay with a host family at the end
- American kids had different experiences. Some kids stayed in luxury some in poverty

Next possible partnership projects:

- Trip of pastors involving study of a common theme involving seminarians
- Eric is also interested in a 3 week nest project pastor exchange where he exchanges the pulpit with a pastor from the Amatola Presbytery.

Rick asked the folks from PNNE: How did your Presbytery became so energized in your partnership? The reply:

- Began with an energized, dynamic speaker at Presbytery by a traveler from their partner presbytery.
- It followed with a trip to South Africa with many people paying their own way. They return transformed and energized and spread the word.
- At every Presbytery meeting they speak on the partnership and have something for churches to pick up and take home to their congregations.
- Their partnership committee includes 15 people (many of whom drive 2 hours to attend committee meetings).

HIV-AIDs

Presented by Joy Raatz

Some statistics and background information on AIDs in Africa

- Africa represents 10% of the world's population yet 60 % of those afflicted with aids are found in Sub-Saharan Africa
- The age expectation is under 40 years in nine African nations
- Aids in Africa is predominantly a women's issue
- The problem is not universal across Africa
 - Dropping in or holding steady in East Africa
 - Growing in Southern Africa

Rev Janet Guyer consultant in South Africa will return there soon and be an available source

Message of church is the A,B,C's. This is not always useful to women in a culture where men dominate. A's & B's work, but less so C's in this context.

Questions of Gender

- women are two times as likely to get aids as men with young women three times as likely
- In Africa women are property. This increases their risk as they may be used as a sexual object to raise income for family
- Another factor is lack of education
- Also a factor is violence against women as some 40% are raped

Questions of Poverty:

- Vicious cycle: Those with AIDs in Africa often have less access to food & water which compromises their immune cycle which lessens their ability to work which lessens their productivity yielding an increase in the prevalence of death by aids which only furthers the cycle of poverty
 - One result is that the older generation which used to be taken care of by the younger generation is now forced to be care givers for orphaned grandchildren
 - Orphan centers in communities (during day) now established where community helps care for the orphans, with folks coming in to help them with food, education, and teaching songs

Office happenings, new website www.pcusa.org/aids-international starting in May. Look for it

- Info of world aids day
- Info on an aids quilt
- Policy on aids

September gathering of folks working on aids here in Louisville. They will be looking at criteria for grants, policy questions, and country look at aids.

- Let them know what's happening in your area

Question: Why aren't Aids Kits for South Africa (like those used in Malawi).

- The answer lies in high custom requirements in South Africa on some items like aspirin and other medicines that don't exist in Malawi.
- One thought is to put together kits in the USA of items without high tariffs and to then send money to purchase in South Africa the high tariff items.

Cultural Obstacles in South Africa

- Lots of denial
- In the white dominated areas of the UPCSA aids isn't even on the list of things to do

- Government denial, though less, still exists
- partially a result of apartheid, manhood issue of manliness and having multiple sex partners makes victims of women who have no say
- At a conference sponsored by PC(USA) in Kenya, pastors faced the problem and reality that it is problem of women as victims

Questions: What should we do in our partnerships?

- Bring it up at presbytery level.
- Ask: (1) How are you doing, (2) What are you doing, (3) Is there anything we can do, (4) Do you have an HIV/AIDS policy statement (if their answer is no, get this information to Joy Raatz & also get them in touch with Janet Guyer)

Final Thought: Send good stories to Jon Chapman who will pass them on to Joy Raatz.

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PLANNING THE PARTNERSHIP'S FUTURE

Ideas:

- Develop a network webpage
- Encourage other churches and presbyteries with partnerships to get involved (Jon will get us a list)

Objectives:

- 1 Sharing information
- 2 Growing the number of partnerships
- 3 Develop network membership
- 4 Strengthening existing partnerships
- 5 Access to information
 - a. Resources
 - b. What's happening
- 6 Long range goal: Common mission project or program, e.g., aids project

Things to do:

- 1 Bob Schminkey will write a news release and Eric will proof
- 2 Getting the word out
 - a. National press releases
 - b. Get it the word out to our local presbyteries and to other partnership presbyteries not at conference
 - c. Locally we need to be advocates
 - d. Info Paks to denominations pastors
- 3 Communication within the Network
 - a. Bob Schminkey will set up a Yahoo Group for the network team
- 4 Webpage: Webmaster Rick (for now he will develop a basic page which requires no cost)
 - a. Links for website: New aids website, Joining Hands Across Hunger and to Ken Jones and Suzanne Carter, sites of other denominations with South African connections (Jon will look into)
 - b. Rick will put something together and email the link to everyone to review and make comments and suggestions. He will make those changes then bring it online.

Contacting Presbyteries with South African partnerships but not present at conference

- Jon points out that the network is listed as the Southern Africa Network, not the South Africa Network. The group agreed that we should contact all partnerships in Southern Africa not at the conference. At this time all partnerships are in South Africa (four not represented at this conference) save two in Zimbabwe. We agreed to contact those not present as follows:
- South Africa Partnerships
 - Rick will contact Western New York Presbytery
 - Eric will contact New York City Presbytery
 - Sara will contact Florida Presbytery
 - Kay Robert will contact North Alabama Presbytery
- Zimbabwe Partnerships
 - Bob Schminkey will contact Philadelphia Presbytery
 - Tom Cook will contact Denver Presbytery

Next Meeting set for Louisville on January 22nd – 24th

Set next date agenda via conference call

Possible ideas things to think about for next get-together

- Mission Project
- Bible Study
- Access to aids resources & funding
- Devotional / worship resources
- Advocacy
- Church to Church Partnership case study (or other one)

Kathy and WMD will be our contact

JOINING HANDS AGAINST HUNGER (JHAH)

Presented by Lionel Derencourt

Not a pairing of partner churches or presbyteries in different countries, but rather a network of peoples working to relieve hunger's root causes in certain selected countries (e.g. India, Palestine, Peru and South Africa). The network includes people of faith working on these causes and includes people of different denominations and faiths eg India network includes Muslims, Hindus & Christians.

JHAH is a celebration of spirituality as a new way of doing mission. The dynamics of the model stresses that this celebration of spirituality is multi denominational (Catholic & Protestants), multi faith (Hindu, Muslims, Christians, etc.), and includes academics, and others to offer a new way of doing mission.

The New Dynamic of Hunger Issues

- To address hunger concerns it has become apparent that hunger's root causes revolve around questions of globalization
- Multi-Nationals are taking over land and companies in the USA and overseas
- Because of this process many countries that used to be self sufficient in food now must import food
Globalization dictates new ways and yields poverty as folks have to purchase food they used to grow
- Solving hunger issues is no longer about teaching folks how to create a better garden as the reality is they no longer have land to grow the food in the first place, e.g., the country of Haiti
- There is a lot of aid but poverty continues with no improvement because of globalization

What Works Given These New Dynamics

- What we now are finding helps is to organize people to give them a voice to speak to their government
- Need to have a partner on our side (USA) who compliments their voice in talking to our government as well as their government

That in a nutshell is what Joining Hands Against Hunger is all about

The South African Case

Create a Provincial network to address issues (the focus in South Africa since 2001):

- There is no social security in South Africa. Pressure needs to be put on the government to address this problem
- Needed is a basic minimum amount for everyone that is not means tested (to avoid possible corruption)

The Presbytery of Western Reserve has had a special relationship with JHAH and Kathy Hanna-Stauffer is here representing the Western Reserve Presbytery. Some of the things happening:

- Workshops on globalization and history of apartheid & how it played into globalization
- Had a delegation attend the Tacoma gathering last year
- Had a delegation go to South Africa

The three partners

- In South Africa: Ken Jones & Suzanne Carter located in East London
- In the USA: Kathy and the Western Reserve Presbytery
- In Louisville: The Presbyterian Hunger Program: Lionel Derencourt (Coordinator) and Lynn Cornett

What JHAH is about

- JHAH attempts to not be the old model of a person coming with suitcase of money to hand out, but partners in a network working to solve the root causes of hunger, i.e., it is not about funding projects
- JHAH is about developing alternative economic models, i.e., not just against something but for something
- Some examples of these alternative models:
 - Fair Trade in Peru
 - Grass Roots Micro Banking in Cameroon

At present the JHAH in South Africa is in flux and reconfiguring stay tuned

INTERNATIONAL PRESBYTERIAN EDUCATION NETWORK (IPEN)

Presented by Bruce Whearty

IPEN does not work through PC(USA) and Louisville

- Volunteers comes from outside
- They will do mission talks

IPEN is partnership of churches with common interests sharing their experiences together

- Want someone from our South African network who is interested in education to communicate largely via email with IPEN
- This person will be the liaison with IPEN and will be the voice of what is happening in education in South Africa and will share this information with others in IPEN

Question what kind of education is of interest

- Primary, Secondary & Theological Education
- Long-term goal is to be a clearing house for all levels of education
- How do we deal with the colonial school model of teaching skills that don't mesh with the new global world

IPEN can help with short term volunteers overseas (11 months or less). In its infancy and finding its way

- Details of short-term volunteer posts
 - someone knows a need on ground
 - § through an area coordinator (e.g., Jon Chapman)
 - § through a partner church/presbytery
 - define what is the situation, what's available
 - PC(USA) covers insurance but nothing else
 - What is covered by the hosting country (housing, food etc.) is case specific
- Types of short term mission opportunities
 - medical, education, evangelism
- who decides the person is appropriate
 - use pcusa guidelines of application
 - in person interview

We will table picking a liaison and refer it to the leadership team for