

**CHRISTIAN CHURCH CAPITAL AREA
GENERAL BOARD REPORT**

Lari R. Grubbs, Regional Minister

3/6/09

Regional Staff: At present we have two people on staff full time. Lari R. Grubbs – Regional Minister – white, male. Nicole McPayten – Administrative Assistant (non-clergy) – ethnic minority, female. We also have several person on staff part time. Joyce Holloway (non-clergy) – Regional Accountant – white, female. Noemi Mena (clergy) – Hispanic Ministry Specialist – ethnic minority – female. Pat Rizor (clergy) – Congregational Transformation Specialist – white, female.

States Included: Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Delaware and the District of Columbia

1) During the last biennium, the Capital Area has continued to support and resource the congregations within its area, oversee and care for the clergy who serve in this region, work to begin new congregations, encourage newer congregations and transform existing congregations. We have developed a program of congregational transformation, offer scholarships to those in seminary, sent five new ministers into the field and are working at present with 9 seminarians. We have also engaged in social ministry through the Bradley Christian Mission Center which is operated by the Region and is a feeding station. Our congregations have done more. Through our Martin Luther King service we have supported or partnered with congregations in local mission work.

The nurture of clergy has included a number of counseling hours by the Regional Minister of ministers, crisis financial support and the resourcing of a number of congregations through interim and search and call processes. We are currently working with eight congregations in various stages of search for clergy leadership.

The region has also endeavored to keep congregations informed about the work of the General Church working with our General Ministry partner, the Council on Christian Unity and Robert Welsh and our Global Ministry partners, Michael Joseph in Columbia, SA and Marla Schrader currently living in the Capital Area.

We continue to work on continuing education experiences for our clergy. Our annual event known as Slat and Light is an educational opportunity for lay and clergy alike to upgrade their current understanding of congregational needs and resources. We also continue to work on developing hands on mission projects as well as anti-racism/pro-reconciliation efforts.

2). We have a new church start in Laurel, MD [United by Faith] which is currently struggling, are starting a new Haitian congregation in Seaford, DE [Haitian Pentecostal Church] and another in Mt. Rainier, MD [Christian Family Church (Disciples of Christ)]. We continue to try to examine a number of places where we might begin other new churches. We have also invested funds in partnering with National City Christian Church to bring Hispanic expertise and resources into the Region. Rev. Noemi Mena is serving as an Hispanic advisor, working with a number of communities and pastors to see if we can begin some new Hispanic congregations.

The last biennium has seen the development of our GIFT program [Gathered in Faithful Transformation]. Under the leadership of the Rev. Pat Rizor, we have gathered five of our congregation in a support system for transformation. GIFT has also offered several workshops on transformation to which all of our ministers and congregations were welcome to promote transformation.

Finally, for leadership development as mentioned above our Salt and Light events are major opportunities for helping equip leaders for regional congregations. During the last biennium we reached almost five hundred people through this event. We also provided resources that reached a number of others in the Region. Our Regional Camp and Conference program continues to be an integral part of reaching the next generation of leaders for the Church. We are rebuilding our leadership council for junior and senior high youth. Our clergy educational program is also being further developed with a goal of continuing education and licensed ministry leadership.

We continue the reevaluation of the work of our Anti-Racism/Pro-Reconciling team, have created an Anti-Racism Council to help evaluate our documents, work and decisions to insure that they are not racist and that we have a pool of people to move onto our team when needed. We have extended our Capital Campaign for 2009-2012 to include two special endowments. The first is an endowment for a scholarship at Lynchburg

College for a Capital Area student from a diverse cultural background. In addition we are seeking funds to underwrite Anti-Racism training for all camp staffs and an anti-racism education experience at each camp.

3a). This is detailed in the paragraphs above. We believe that our education program, GIFT and licensed and seminary student support systems are aimed at meeting this goal, but there is more to do. Significant funding to accomplish this is needed as many of our struggling congregations are caught with large building expenses (both operational and maintenance), the need for full time leadership which they cannot currently afford, and several have a lack of parking which greatly impacts congregations that are regional rather than neighborhood churches. The effort to add mission opportunities is also a part of this issue. We are further trying to negotiate sharing pastoral leadership with healthier congregations where that might be possible.

3b) We are just beginning to explore New Beginnings and the literature is growing on transformation, but I have not seen any magic keys to open these doors to easy or rapid transformation. Indeed, the depression or fatalism that seems rampant among the members of these congregations is one of the greatest problems. For others, fatigue from having tried a number of things that have not worked so far is also common.

3c) The greatest needs right now in the Capital Area are more professional staff time, greater financial support, a rebound to the stock market, funds for more transformation work because financial need is the greatest difficulty for many of these congregations to afford full time leadership, make repairs and do things that attract new members. We also need more prayer both for us and by us and a deeper conviction that the church makes a difference and that a better time is coming.

2007 is in the final stage of audit and 2008 goes to the auditor as soon as 2007 is completed. 2007 and 2008 are thus subject to final auditor corrections! Copies of audits are sent to the General Minister upon completion. We know that we had actual losses in 2008 of \$65,000 plus which were not just a paper loss. This stretched thin resources. We have already adjusted our budget and will decrease it again in June if finances do not make a marked change.

	2008	2007	2006
Total Income	\$ 351,638.12	\$ 436,579.09	\$ 462,083.53
Total Expenses	\$ 464,701.85	\$ 502,116.98	\$ 470,216.26
Surplus (Deficit)	\$ (113,228.00)	\$ (65,537.89)	\$ (8,132.73)

Recommended Action:

The General Board receives the report from the Capital Area Region.