

CONGREGATIONAL PEACEBUILDING PARTNERS

Summary

Congregational Peacebuilding Partners provides education and services to strengthen the capacity of congregations to work constructively with controversy and conflict. Through the commitment of a number of church bodies, the Congregational Peacebuilding Partners offers on-going education and training for church leaders. Consultation and intervention in specific conflict situations are facilitated by an informal roster of individuals qualified to consult with congregational leaders or intervene in conflicted situations, and providing appropriate referrals upon request.

Background

In the past decade there has been a growing interest within congregations and church organizations in more deliberating cultivating practices and skills that enable us to function as communities of grace and peace. A number of denominations have begun to develop more explicit training programs, policies, and processes for working constructively with congregational conflict and difficult decisions. However, many of these groups report that their resources in these areas are limited, and they would benefit greatly from drawing upon the expertise and resources of other groups.

Congregational Peacebuilding Partners was initiated in 2006 through the leadership of the Institute for Community Peacebuilding at Canadian Mennonite University, with participation from a variety of denominations:

Anglican Church of Canada, Rupertsland Diocese
United Church of Canada, Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario
Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference
Mennonite Church Manitoba
Mennonite Brethren Church of Manitoba
Evangelical Mennonite Church
Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Winnipeg
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

A Steering Committee provides oversight for Congregational Peacebuilding Partners activities:

CJ Adams – Anglican Church of Canada, Rupertsland Diocese
Greg Barrett – Mediation Services
Hildi Boge – Mennonite Brethren Church of Manitoba
David Pankratz – Institute for Community Peacebuilding
Dean Peachey - Canadian Mennonite University
Dianna Robson – Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Winnipeg
Lynda Trono – United Church of Canada, Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario

Services

The range of services offered is more extensive than individual denominations typically are able to provide on their own. It draws upon the resources and expertise in related organizations such as Canadian Mennonite University, Mediation Services, and private mediators and consultants.

1. *Education and training for clergy, lay leaders, and denominational staff* – A major emphasis is placed on providing a robust selection of courses and workshops for church leaders. This includes a one-week intensive course each spring, and a schedule of shorter workshops throughout the year. The workshops are presented by a variety of local trainers and from throughout North America.

Educational events are offered through open registration, and in addition courses and workshops can be presented for a particular congregation or group. Most events are scheduled in Winnipeg, but can be offered in other locations upon request.

2. *Opportunities for dialogue and networking among denominational leaders on related topics* – One of the needs identified in the consultation leading to Congregational Peacebuilding Partners was greater opportunity for denominational leaders to meet from time to time to learn from one another's experiences and strategies.
3. *Consultation and intervener services* – An informal roster of individuals qualified to consult with congregational leaders or intervene in conflicted congregations can be accessed by any sponsoring group of the Congregational Peacebuilding Partners.
4. *Compilation of resource materials* – Compiling select resource materials for church leaders, and to the extent possible, making them available on-line. A web site will be developed that will include links to related denominational resources and initiatives.

For further information, contact:

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