

## **Common Table for Church Vitality Minutes**

The scheduled meeting of the Common Table for Church Vitality was held on Thursday, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 10:00 A.M via Zoom.

For the record those present were as follows: Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson (Resident Bishop of the Richmond Episcopal Area), Rev. Steve Summers (Assistant to the Bishop), Mr. Dwayne Stinson (Director of Connectional Ministries for Discipleship and Congregational Vitality), Rev. Jonathan Page (Director of Connectional Ministries for Creativity and Innovation), Ms. Martha Stokes (Conference Lay Leader), Mr. David Dommissie, (Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer), Ms. Katie Mueller (Executive Administrator in the Office of Connectional Ministries), Rev. Ryan LaRock (Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries), Mr. Lester Kurtz (Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy), Rev. Don Jamison (2024), Ms. Terry Bain (2024), Rev. Aaron Fitch (2025), Dr. Carlos Liceaga (2026)

Rev. Joshua King (Annual Conference Secretary, without vote.)

Those who were unable to attend: LAY MEMBER VACANT (2025), Rev. Doug Forrester (Cabinet Representative)

Rev. Jonathan Page welcomed us to Common Table, who is the new Director of Connectional Ministries for Creativity and Innovation.

### **Devotion, Rev. Jonathan Page,**

Rev. Page read the parable from Matthew 13:19-23. He spoke about how much of our culture says that if our soil is poor, that it is up to us to make the soil better. But truly all the soils are redeemable but is only done so through an outside force. And the force that does so for us is the grace of God. He shared then a personal story about how he was redeemed through an experience of God using a friend of his.

### **Greeting, Mr. Dwayne Stinson**

Mr. Stinson invited us to introduce ourselves as this is the beginning of a new year for Common Table. Members introduced themselves and called upon one another to introduce each other.

### **Bishop's Report, Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson**

Bishop reported that she had a wonderful Annual Conference and is already working toward next year's Annual Conference. She is looking forward to concluding our last Special

Called Annual Conference in October and then moving onto to a time of joy and identity building. She further stated that she believes her role is to make our hierarchy into a connection. She feels that we should all be pulling in the same direction for the support of the local church.

#### **Lay Leader's Report, Ms. Martha Stokes**

Ms. Stokes shared how she was reminded at Annual Conference to never underestimate how the laity in the Virginia Conference will show up.

#### **Director of Connectional Ministries for Creativity and Innovation Report, Rev. Jonathan Page**

Rev. Page thanked the hospitality and welcome to the two new DCMs of the Virginia Conference. He echoed the Bishop's comments on the learning the leadership structures and creating a leadership of connectionalism. He asked for feedback from Common Table as to how we would view how they ought to lead Common Table as Co-DCMs.

Bishop Hauptert-Johnson shared that she believed they would need to define their roles to Common Table and help us know their responsibilities. Mr. Liceaga shared about using their gifts and graces to lead in the areas that they are gifted in.

Rev. Page shared that there are new staff that are being added to the Connectional Staff at the Conference Center, but they were unable to present with us today. He introduced Dr. Lakeeyna Cooper is our new Director of Missional Engagement. In addition, he introduced Rev. Jo Ann Batteiger (Assistant Director of Missional Engagement) and Rev. Hannah Bryn (Assistant Director for Discipleship and Congregational Vitality) who are coming on the team.

#### **Director of Connectional Ministries for Discipleship and Congregational Vitality, Mr. Dwayne Stinson**

He shared that our role is to support the ministry in the local church and with the current staff and incoming staff, he believes that they can truly make "Kingdom impact." He thanked Common Table for their support as they figure out this Co-DCM together.

#### **Approval of the Minutes of May 11, 2023,**

The minutes were approved by consensus.

Rev. Jamison had some technical difficulties and so Rev. Page asked if there were any questions for the personnel committee that were present. Rev. LaRock shared concerns about how these

new roles will interact with one another and to whom the conference is to go to for answers as they too learn the new conference staff. He further shared how he believes we have a great opportunity now to re-define those roles. Bishop Sue shared about her view of the role of Common Table.

### **Grants Committee, Rev. Don Jamison**

Rev. Jamison shared there is not a lot going on at the moment as they are receiving requests for grants.

### **Personnel Committee, Rev. Don Jamison**

Rev. Jamison shared that he is getting up to speed on the personnel committee. Though he has been on this committee for a few years, he is still catching up as the Chair. He reported that all positions have been filled before he came in except for the one in the area of Director of Advocacy (Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity). There was discussion on the expectations and some good practices to find the right person to fill this position. Rev. Summers offered some insight into placement of this position within the structures of the Conference. Rev. Summers shared that he views this position not as a Connectional Ministries position, but as a Conference position that would support the conference as a whole and would directly report only to the bishop. This frees this person up to do their work as needed.

Rev. Jamison concluded his reports asking that as he transitions to be Chair of the Personnel Committee that someone else would fill his current leadership as Chair of the Grants Committee.

Questions were asked about the communication of available grants. In addition, as we have now created a new office Director of Connectional Ministries for Creativity and Innovation, are their going to be funding available from the Grants Committee to support those ideas that will be coming out of this new office.

### **Wesley Community Development**

Rev. Page shared about opportunity to meet with Wesley Community Development, who is an organization that helps churches image property and how to use it well. Rev. Page recommended that we move our next Common Table to Monday, September, 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023 to meet with Wesley Community Development. This shift for next meeting was amenable to Common Table.

### **Other Items Discussion**

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Dr. Carlos Liceaga asked about Common Table's support of an organization called, "Just Neighbors." Mr. Dommissie shared that they are not currently supported through Common Table, but they are available to request grants. Further that this was not an approved budgetary item. Mr. Dommissie though did share that if they would like to make a request for budgetary funding, they would need to present to Common Table. There was further conversation about other areas of funding that could support this cause such as the Grants Committee or The Advance.

### **Closing Prayer and Adjournment**

A closing prayer was offered by Mr. Dwayne Stinson at 10:56 AM.

### **Upcoming Meeting dates/times:**

September 25, 2023 – 10:00 a.m. (Monday)

November 16, 2023 – 10:00 a.m. (Thursday)

Rev. Joshua King, Secretary