

Widening the Circle of Concern – Governance 1 (WtC 4)

Chalice Lighting and Opening Words (5 mins)

“In our work as the Commission on Institutional Change, we have found that an area in need of analysis is that of over-reliance on informal structures to carry out governance work, whether at the local, regional, or denominational level. Informal structures rely on social relationships and thus tend to privilege people from the dominant culture in a community or organization... If the way to get something done is to know the ‘right’ people, then this can perpetuate a narrower circle of leadership.”
Blog post from The Commission on Institutional Change, published April 25, 2019; page 28, WCC Report

Check in (10 minutes): How are you thinking about Widening the Circle since we last met?

Discussion

Avatar (20 mins)

Please reflect on your experiences when you first came into leadership as a UU.

- What would have improved your transition to leadership?
- Do you see any similarities between the avatar congregation and USG?

USG Leadership (25 mins)

- How do we encourage practices towards diversity, equity, and inclusion in the work of our groups and governance?
- One of the recommendations is for more support across congregations for youth and young adult leaders. How are we tapping into the resources available, regionally, and beyond, especially for youth, young adults, those in the LGBTQ community and people of color?
- How is our community participating in regional and denominational work? How are we influencing the direction of our region of the UUA and holding it accountable to these goals?
- How might we partner with other congregations or communities around building our skills to provide greater diversity, equity, and inclusion in our community? If we did, what would be a good first task?

General Assembly (GA) (15 mins)

- The report says, “GA is not really democratic in that delegates are neither representative of their congregations, other than being members, nor are they accountable to them.” How can we support delegates with a structure that enables them to represent the interests of the congregation?
- Should our congregation support all delegates financially to attend GA, if requested?

Theology Goals update (5 mins)

- Do you have any suggested modifications?
- Are you interested in leading any action items?

Check out (10 mins): What we do you want to make sure we cover at the next meeting?

Closing Words:

“Becoming Beloved Community represents not so much a set of programs as a journey, a set of interrelated commitments around which Episcopalians may organize our many efforts to respond to racial injustice and grow a community of reconcilers, justice-makers, and healers. The labyrinth may be an even more useful image for engaging the vision. On the road toward reconciliation and healing, we move around corners and double back into quadrants we have visited before, each time discovering new revelation and challenge.” Disciples of Christ Reconciliation Ministry, page 27, WCC Report.