

RELIGIOUS/FAITH-BASED COMMUNITY

Barriers to getting religious community involved

- Congregations are segregated economically, racially, geographically. No cross-barrier ministerial associations.
 - MAMA > Metro Athens Ministerial Association
 - Downtown Fellowship (crossed racial boundaries)
 - Sheppard's Fellowship (crossed social boundaries)
 - IHN is a reason to get together > PPA could be a reason to get together

- ** Must get clergy involved to get congregation involved
- ** Try to continue lunches bi-monthly
 - Not another subcommittee, but almost a parallel/ancillary groups. Not much else other than schools foster common ground.
 - > 5 Co-conveners > (1) ministers, (2) downtown church with most clout, (3) African-American church with most clout, (4) Conservative, and (5) Sparrow's Nest
 - Some are tired of meetings: takes time away from ministry
 - Tried, but hidden agendas
 - Has to be broad coalition to get this organized

- A lot of frustration from those who are dealing with this on the frontlines > they've been doing this for a long time and are tired of hearing this.
 - Can't do things like community barbeques until pastors know each other.
 - Have to build a coalition of congregations >> Is this the job of PPA?? It can be since nothing else has brought them together.

- Co-conveners can stipulate about what the agenda is NOT (no proselytizing; no common values)
 - Then they can start defining what they are about
 - Need to identify one outside facilitator to work with them

- Something that has never been tried in this community
 - > eradication of poverty is something all groups agree on.
 - > Importance of being part of a community

- Good thing to have congregants put some pressure on pastors/leaders

- Where from here?
 - Some church members live in poverty
 - Some members have family/friends living in poverty

- What do we want to achieve?
 - Talk to people where they are comfortable
 - Then have the churches work together to start solving problems
 - Then, pastors all have relationships that allow them to work together
 - Churches could have the loudest voice on this issue
- This adjunct group needs to have a broader force than just education
- Congregations can be partners in addressing issues related to eliminating poverty
 - > Core of church is mission to lift up those who have less
- “Education” is much broader than just traditional education > need to be careful on how far we push on “social education.”
 - To know each others’ strengths and concerns, we have to know each other better
- There were 5 co-conveners of PPA > the 6th partner at the table needs to be the religious community. OR an auxillary committee

“To do something that has never been done in Athens.”

- All groups have hidden other agendas, but our collective agenda can be eliminating poverty.
 - NOT every group would be attracted to this effort
- e-mail list
- cards
- mailing list of everyone at the meal
- Deborah Lucas

[1] 5 meetings for info at churches

[2] Formation of auxiliary group – identifying 5-7 co-convening pastors

- here’s what the larger body has asked churches/clergy to do > ask for honesty & doing something about it.

- Have to wrestle with the truth that not everyone is aware of poverty and how extensive it is.

- Generational poverty and the “we’ve been there and it didn’t work” are two huge issues
- Not always going to reach everyone, but get as many as we can get.
 - > If 5 break the generational cycle, that’s hugh.

JULY 10

- If larger steering committee believes this auxillary group of clergy is a good idea, then we can reconvene the group.
 - bigger than the education subcommittee

- 1a First United Methodist – Bill Britt
- 1b First Presbyterian – Glen Doak/Andy Cooke
- 2 Beach Haven Baptist Church – Dr. Stewart Simms
- 3 Faith Temple Outreach – Debra Lucas
- 4 Ebenezer West – Dr. Hope
- 5 Cornerstone/First Assembly