

# *Committee on Disabilities*

**Chair:** David Denham

**Staff:** Linda Larson

**Liaison Staff:** Garland F. Pierce

## **Program Mission/Purpose:**

Recognizing that persons with disabilities bring unique gifts to the life and ministry of the church, the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA Committee on Disabilities seeks wholeness in Christ's church by advocating the full inclusion of all persons. To this end the committee seeks to:

1. identify areas of needs and gifts;
2. generate, share and coordinate ideas and resources; and
3. encourage, enable and challenge each other and our denominations and organizations.

## **1. What specific actions has the program ministry committee taken or plans to take to follow through with the work on cultural proficiency begun in the January 2005 ELMC meeting?**

We held a teleconference call with members of the Committee on Black Congregational Ministries and had conversation around the interplay of ablism and racism.

We met with The Rev. Dr. Nathan Harris, United Church of Christ, who gave a presentation on systems of oppression. We will further our work by meeting in 2006 with the Committee on Black Congregational Ministries to specifically see where we can collaborate.

## **2. What actions has the program ministry committee taken to strengthen its relations to:**

**a. Other ELMC program ministry committees:** We have a work group who will be meeting with a work group from the Committee on Outdoor Ministries to further seek inclusion in camping programs and sites.

**b. NCCC member communions not represented at the table:** We are still seeking representation from the American Baptist Churches, who have been active with the committee in the past, and are making personal contacts in order to make this happen.

**c. Other communions and/or agencies?** We have new representation from the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. A representative from Bethesda Lutheran Homes and Services, Inc. will also consider participating with our committee.

## **3. How is the work of this program ministry committee carried forward between meetings of the committee?**

We have work groups in finance, seminary education, leadership, post-summit and the after affects of the hurricanes. We will be teleconferencing and emailing. The contract staff will coordinate with the work groups to facilitate their work.

**4. How does the work of your program ministry strengthen ELMC as a whole? How does your work make ELMC a stronger witness to the unity of the church?**

We held a pre-summit gathering, “Without Voice the People Perish,” that included national and state agencies that work with people with disabilities. We will do follow-up to stay connected with them. We are united in our ministry to ensure inclusion of all people in the life of all congregations.

**5. What resources/products/services does the program ministry offer to denominations/congregations/the public?**

There are numerous resources within all our denominations and organizations. Through the ELMC web-site, we can refer people to the resources that will be most beneficial. Committee members also keep one another informed about new resources.

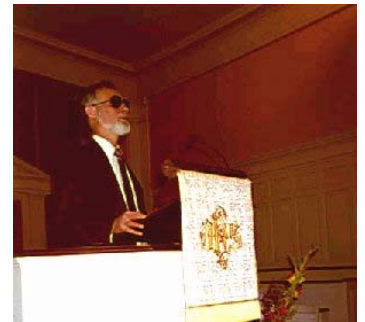
**6. What recommendations do you want to make to the Education and Leadership Ministries Commission? To the NCCC?**

Know that we are available to serve and are a resource.

Expand the youth program to specifically invite youth with disabilities to serve.

**Membership:**

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Earle M. Brooks         | African Methodist Episcopal Church     |
| Aundreia Alexander      | American Baptist Churches in the USA   |
| James Vanderlaan        | Christian Reformed Church in N.A.      |
| Kathy Reid              | Church of the Brethren                 |
| Mary Dulabaum           | Church of the Brethren                 |
| Barbara Ramnaraine      | The Episcopal Church USA               |
| James Swanson           | Evangelical Covenant Church            |
| Harold Spooner          | Evangelical Covenant Church            |
| Lisa Thogmartin-Cleaver | Evangelical Lutheran Church in America |
| Duane Steele            | Evangelical Lutheran Church in America |
| Beth Lockard            | Evangelical Lutheran Church in America |
| John Chryssavgis        | Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America  |
| Paul Leichthy           | Mennonite Church                       |
| Nancy Troy              | Presbyterian Church USA                |
| Judy Broeker            | Reformed Church in America             |
| Charlotte Thoms         | Seventh Day Adventist                  |
| Rosemary Graham         | Seventh Day Adventist                  |
| Peggy Wolfe Dunn        | Society of Friends                     |
| Karen A.M. Blachford    | The United Church of Canada            |
| Devorah Greenstein      | Unitarian Universalist Association     |
| Laurie Thomas           | Unitarian Universalist Association     |
| Margaret (Peg) Slater   | United Church of Christ                |
| David Denham            | United Church of Christ                |



**Organizations**

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| Bill Gaventa | American Association on Mental Retardation, Religion Division |
|--------------|---|

David Morstad  
Barbara J. Lampe  
Jim Hukill  
Nella Uitvlugt  
Ginny Thornburgh  
Janet Benton  
Martha Hindman  
Carolyn Thompson

Bethesda Lutheran Homes and Services, Inc.  
National Apostolate for Inclusion Ministry  
Christian Council on Persons with Disabilities  
Friendship Ministries  
National Organization on Disability  
National Catholic Partnership on Disability  
UMC Task Force on Development  
Ecumenical Disabilities Network WCC

Consultants

Lorraine Thal  
Albert A. Herzog, Jr.  
John Meiers  
Charlotte Hawkins Shepard  
Gerry E. Hendershot  
Brett Webb-Mitchell

National Organization on Disability  
National Institute of Health