

Committee on Outdoor Ministries

Chair: Suzanne Getz Bates

Staff: Garland F. Pierce

Program Mission/Purpose:

The Committee on Outdoor Ministries, composed of persons designated by their denominational faith groups, is committed to do God's will and be prophetic in its effort to provide support for outdoor ministry in local churches, camping associations, middle judicatories, and denominations. The committee's purposes include:

- Equip persons to provide leadership
- Engage in disciplined experimentation and creation of models
- Develop resources for outdoor ministries
- Facilitate communication across and among judicatories and denominations
- Build partnerships with other ministries of the church
- Resource and assist leaders in their task of spiritual formation and growth
- Build a network among committee participants

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?

- Introduced the models presented at the ELMC meeting on cultural proficiency and the work of NCCC's Faith and Order Commission on racism. Assessed various aspects of the culture of the committee
- Made a commitment to seek multiple ways to be culturally proficient in all curriculum development and resources such as recruiting writers from diverse backgrounds and working with writers to understand cultural proficiency
- Visioned developing a retreat model based on cultural proficiency and began to make plans to include it as curriculum focus

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

a. Other ELMC program ministry committees

- Began working with the Committee on Disabilities to provide a campership for a child, distributed guidelines for inclusive writing and instruction guidelines.
- Considering initiating a partnership with the Eco-Justice Working Group.

b. NCCC member communions not represented at the table

- Sent personal invitations by email and phone, visited individuals inviting them to future meetings

c. Other communions and/or agencies?

- At the January 2005 meeting, had for the first time a representative from Passport, Inc, which is affiliated with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship
- Hosted Marge Scanlin from the American Camp Association and received a presentation on ACA's current research "Youth Development Outcomes of the Camp Experience: 2001-2004"
- Reviewed reports from the Cooperative Publishing Association

- Invited representatives of other agencies involved in outdoor ministries to give presentations at the meeting

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

- Telephone, email, notes and personal meetings between committee members

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?

- Initiates and reviews current research on faith formation and leadership development
- Provides “holy ground” – spaces for faith development and renewal, reflection and environmental stewardship
- Makes connections and linkages among faith communions possible—a fertile ground for idea and resource sharing

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

- *New Earth: Christian Resources for the Outdoors - Peace Talks 2006*
Staff devotionals to complement the curriculum
Related worship resources for Camp Sunday
- Previous years themes are also available
- *Theology of Outdoor Ministries* available from the NCCC website
- *Outdoor Ministry Facility Administration and Leadership Manuals*

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

Thank you for enabling and encouraging the rich and varied ministry to children, youth and adults that occurs in camp and conference centers across the nation. Continue to be a strong advocate for this unique resource for faith formation, environmental awareness and leadership development for the church.

Membership:

Charles Armstrong	American Baptist Churches in the USA
Alan Wright	American Baptist Churches in the USA
Rex Miller	Church of the Brethren
Frank Ward	Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America
John Anderson	The Episcopal Church USA
Rosey Peterson	Evangelical Covenant Church
Mark Burkhardt	Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Barb Fast	Evangelical Lutheran Church of Canada
David Bragg	Evangelical Lutheran Church of Canada
Oswald Goering	Mennonite Church
Fr. Michael Anderson	Orthodox Church in America
Suzanne Getz Bates	Presbyterian Church USA
Rick Garland	United Church of Canada
Amy Crawford	United Church of Canada

June Boutwell
Bud Schroeder
Jeff Puhlmann-Becker
Kevin Witt

United Church of Christ
United Church of Christ
United Church of Christ
United Methodist Church

Members at Large

Nancy Ferguson
Bonnie Castellaw
Marge Scanlin
Dick Chamberlain
David Burroughs

Project Manager, New Earth Resources
Catholics Involved in Camping
American Camping Association
Independent Consultant
Passport, Inc. (Cooperative Baptist Fellowship)

