



Report from Assembly of Capital Area Council of Churches- Raw Data

During the recent Assembly meeting members met in small groups and were invited to address the following question: *“As loving and compassionate people of faith, how do we respond to the world around us and what is one thing that we can do together?”* Each group met for approximately twenty minutes. The notes below reflect *all* the information that was captured. The Consolidated Report breaks this information into more workable blocks. Also, it puts it into categories.

Group 1:

Maintain positive attitude, speak the truth, listen to the poor and underserved

Act on the call for unity, practice simple of acts of kindness, practice inclusivity

- *Particular day: Ask Pastors to do a homily on a theme of unity/compassion*
- *Weekly, have someone do a homily on the CACC website*

Other notes from Group 1

- Maintain a positive attitude (challenging in the current situation)
- Speak the truth
- Listen to the poor and underserved, and respond to examples of injustice and inequality, vaccine example
- Act on the call for unity, need to heal
- Practice simple acts of kindness; show empathy
- Discourage crude and rude behavior; have the courage to call it out
- Practice inclusivity as you meet new people
- Practice humor

Group 2:

Food insecurity, gardening, different communities can garden together, volunteering in the community.

Other notes from Group 2

- CACC becomes more intentional about being diverse.
 - Task force that has a listening tour; making sure that whatever we do, include younger people from diverse communities.
 - Listening tours in churches that have strong BIPOC congregations.
 - Reach out to “white churches” to have those need crucial conversations regarding systemic racism, what it means to be antiracist, etc.

- Make sure that young people from diverse backgrounds are not only welcomed at the Council, but are encouraged to provide leadership.
- Volunteers - We need to develop a much larger cadre of volunteers who can serve in the community.

Group 3:

Food insecurity, homelessness, what are churches doing now? Adaptations with the pandemic, streamlining church structure specifically admin so can focus on faith/mission rather than meetings.

Group 4:

Do attentive listening. CACC already has a lot of programs that bring people together; promote existing programs more.

Other notes from Group 4

- Recruit to Ecumenical Witness of Baptism

Group 5:

Disconnect between the people in the pews Sunday morning and the people walking by the church during the week. How to understand the demographics of the neighborhoods. Food insecurity.

Group 6:

Address disparities around health and economically.

Other notes from Group 6

- How do we promote respect?
- If we can respect one another, we can move toward unity and agree on health issues, health and economic disparities.

Group 7:

Listen and discover the perspectives of others around us. Train ourselves. Engage with others, all of whom are God's children.

Other notes from Group 7

- Addressing polarization within society and often within our congregations.
- How do we as members of the supporting congregations of CACC intentionally and concretely act to dislodge ourselves sufficiently from the values of surrounding culture so as to become the most effective servants with Jesus for the well-being of all God's children?

Group 8:

Recognize the contributions we are already making. CACC can be the safe, sacred space that can allow for dialogue and provide annual gathering for churches for a prayerful meeting.

Other notes from Group 8

- Much of our current efforts reflect the teaching of the 25th chapter of Matthew's Gospel.
- Most of our congregations mirror the divisions within our country, e.g., Catholic voters were 50% for one presidential candidate and 49% for the other. This should force us to think outside our comfort zone. We should be grateful for safe spaces in which we can reflect and offer our points of view. CACC could be one of those safe spaces.
- There are differences among the Christian congregations which cause us to defend our respective community's doctrines. We should consider ourselves one person. We could visit each other's congregations; create an opportunity for us, all Christians to worship together once or twice a year.
- In the past there have been common causes for gathering, e.g. in opposition to capital punishment. What are the causes over which we might pray and learn together today, e.g. racism, the environment?

Group 9:

Work together on different topics that restores the human connection.

Other notes from Group 9

- A prayer sent out periodically (weekly) to member churches or maybe everyone.
- Work together on different topics, entrenched racism as an example.
- Find opportunities to enlarge the circle beyond Christian communities.
- Put together a real celebration; service, dinner, picnic.
- A focus to restore the human connection.
- Talking to other groups and having open conversations with others.