

Committee on Ethnic Local Church Concerns

The Committee met on March 9, 2017, at 10 a.m. in the Library of the BWC Center. The Committee commenced with devotions conducted by Pastor Jacques Banks of the Indiana United Methodist Church. We were able to cover some subjects that needed attention and concern.

On the whole, the Churches are functioning well and although some of these Churches have a small membership they are quite strong in performing all the functions and following all the programs that large churches have. The members are faithful and very strong in worshiping regularly. We found that if these small Churches, some that are at a stone's throw, are merged there will be more enthusiasm in worshiping. Praise and Worship with a larger congregation can attract and draw non-members to join. This was expressed by some of the members.

We had a Pastor whose congregation was primarily from Burma. These people came as refugees under the Asylum program. They do not have great jobs but they are regular members of the Church and give whatever they can to support the Pastor. The Congregation has no Church of their own and they borrow places in other churches to worship by giving some contribution. The Committee has felt the need of a Church that Conference can provide to them. Some Churches are losing membership and if they are unable to continue, can such Church be provided to those who do not have place to worship? There is also a need for those who come from foreign countries to learn English to settle themselves. Does the Conference have any provision where such classes to teach English can be arranged?

In concluding this brief report, may I state that based on the conversation with some of the members comprising of both clergy and laity of the Ethnic Churches, they all have programs like helping the needy and providing material and services to the Pantry Kitchens. Children in Sunday Schools are learning well and the Youth and Young Adults are attending worship service and perform Praise and Worship when asked. The only disadvantage and concern that the larger churches are facing is the loss of membership. Most of the older members have gone home before us and some are home-bound in nursing homes. The Youth after completing their education are leaving as they are finding jobs in other states, especially the professionals.

Meeting concluded with prayer by Rev. Biak Chunga.

We will meet again and will be more than glad to bring to your notice if there are other concerns.

Respectfully,

Sukumar Christopher, CLM
Chair