

**Evaluation Compilation
MGB/GAC Meeting
September 28-30, 2008**

Presbytery Staff (PS) - 29
Synod Staff (SS) - 8
GAC Member (GACM)- 27
GAC Staff (GACS) - 8
Other - 1

What was the best part of this gathering for you?

PS-Clark's video; small group discussion on healthy governing body, adaptive work and discussion of IV in writing paper

PS – Networking with colleagues and GAC staff; hearing some of my concerns voiced and finding collaborative energy to address them; the table conversations and the creativity they generated

PS- Meeting other EPS and learning of their experiences/practices; being heard by GAC members and staff; taking stock of how our relationships are evolving

PS- the conversation at mixed table with GAC/MGB most especially Tues am and building on that

PS- Tuesday morning; table groups that stayed together; Guder's presentation

PS- honest conversations; affinity/thematic groups one to one relationship building; worship together

PS-authentic time to tell stories and listen; process of creating "covenant"; hospitality time at night; worship was rich and filling; great location and food

PS- table conversation; Guder was informative

PS-small group discussion/questions; informal conversation; the writing team effort

PS-fellowship with other church leaders; educational value of interactions with GA agencies

PS-conversation with colleagues; will be interested and see the final draft of the document produced by writing team

PS-the table group that looked at context

PS-writing group and group discussions; we can begin to work collaborating

PS-As a new EP it was good to build relationships

PS-meeting GAC members and staff; conversations about our evolving, adapting denomination

PS-sharing at tables; working on ways to communicate and strengthen the whole; enjoyed film clips, worship and prayer

PS-support; finally GAC is partnering in a new way

PS – Getting to know folks at levels – OGA/GAC/AEPS

PS-Enjoying table talk led to some common understanding that serve as a beginning point; Clark's video reflections; Debbie/Joyce's Presentation

PS-Networking with good people

PS-Being with people—seeing new GAC members; getting to know people esp. GAC folks

PS-hearing first - hand what is going on p; faces with name\; appreciating diversity and tensions, and feel the deep love of Christ and the church

PS-connections with others in differing roles of governance; especially GASC staff; hope

PS/GACM – Conversations, discussions around tables, movie clips, Darrel Guder, relationships

PS-worship; film clips – then build the conversation base off of that; Debbie Rundlett's modeling and innovative, informal, conversation and networking

SS-networking; Darrell Guder; help with ministry w/veterans; table talk; worship; setting

SS-Once again the inner actions between friends new and old across the church. Moving ahead with a new draft document

SS-being together

SS-time; formal and informal – to get acquainted with people on a personal level. The paper the writing team shared.

SS-table conversation; community building

SS-relationship

SS-more group interaction and fewer talking heads

GACM-the meeting of new people, the sharing with one another, the worship services, the information received

GACM-building relationships with executives, hearing the challenges of presbyteries that are very much unlike my own; hearing time from presbyteries

GACM-networking and sharing

GACM-willingness to adjust the docket based on what was being heard; small groups about our relationships and what is going on in pbys

GACM- the table conversations – topics and the honest sharing

GACM – the building of relationships – excited for the future; worship times; move lessons – thanks Clark

GACM-the coming together of the MGB's and GAC

GACM-Communication with MGB regarding role of GAC and MGB

GACM- Extending the conversation – the openness of people in sharing (frankness)

GACM-Opportunities to talk with a variety of participants

GACM-information sharing and networking; good speaker selection and variety of viewpoints

GACM-being with people here and getting to know people

GACM-Glass Bottom Boats – hearing ideas and concerns; in reflection, Darrell Guder was very helpful

GACM – Networking between GAC/MGB members – being able to connect with several MGB members regarding GAC business – actually doing what we have been saying we would do.

GACM-the clear sense and desire to remove barriers to cooperation between GAC and MGB

GACM-Good spirit of generosity toward each other

GACM-more info on understanding our organizational structure

GACM-interactive with MGB execs

GACM-working together in partnership

GACM-opportunity to meet representatives from MGBs and to hear their concerns

GACM-Piece of GAC area mission work/complete disaster; could have undermined credibility of GAC

GACM- Relationship Building

GACS-Relationships

GACS-Relationship building; understanding MGB situation/needs etc

GACS-mixing with all

GACS-Relationship building opportunities

GACS-relationship buildings/connective; group0 conversations were wonderful; listening to challenges; concerns and joys; context setting

GACS – the relationship built; table sharing; Clark video presentations

GACS-Relationships, information sharing; time to work together on issues

GACS- to be able to listen to other parts of the church so we can truly work together in serving God and the church

Other – small group discussion and worship

What was the least helpful part of this gathering for you?

PS-GAC presentations – you all get points for adapting and changing the process but if we are going to talk about programs and goal areas we need to do it in a way that allows for real dialogue

PS- Darrell Guder lecture would have preferred a facilitation who could have led us into intentional table conversations on how we are living into God's mission call

PS – the reports from GAC agencies; there was simply not enough time to do anything meaningful with this

PS- the disorganized agenda and confusion early on; the white male exclusive video clips; completely unnecessary/useless; the centrality of missional with no effort to define

PS-GAC overview when we moved in groups we did not understand the purpose or the experience

PS – Monday morning fiasco – but beautiful “save” by staff – impressive leadership

PS-Inability to address the need for common language; eg – missional, our church, undercutting comments about Deep and Wide

PS-more relationship building; more discernment as a group; a voluntary time of prayer at 8:30 pm one night/someone to lead it

PS- pace and length of meetings; overuse of table talk

PS-GAC telling us what they do – we have better ways to spend our limited time

PS-the dog and pony show; Lord of the Rings; no table fellowship as in Eucharist

PS-GAC staff dog and pony show – which wasn't their fault

PS-the rotating dialogue teams – but really glad staff was able to adjust

PS-the GAC presentations: we can read!; Introductions are helpful, but the dog and pony show was unnecessary.

PS-the thing we changed by that was ok; I should have looked at GAC goals before coming to help me better understand

PS-the parading of GAC Staff

PS-Talking Heads

PS-GACM – instead of presentations by GAC staff – do Q&A sessions with leaders

PS-GACM – The inability to get everyone on the same page – I'm sorry we didn't have time to discuss the movie clips; what a shame; what a waste of good material; what a concept to use film to help us grow!

PS-Equipping the Cruise – “Ugly” as one person commented, many GAC members had no heads up on the activity – The regroup turned out ok but was still a “talking to” the MGB members. Please let GAC members know “the plan” so we can make the communication of the mission work plan a good event

PS – The first breakout on Monday morning; it was awful, but thankfully leadership responded quickly and adjusted

PS-Not having OGA people here

PS-start with listening rather than orientation to GAC; could be clearer about desired outcome

PS-Not enough long prayer and listening to Scripture and Christ

GACS – Rotation exercise that lead south

GACS- Monday after dinner

GACS – Rotational time Mon am

GACS- early process – too much presentation and direction; make models throughout, language, images, etc

GACS-all of the wining and negativism of MGBs

GACM-I did not personally find anything least helpful. However, I did find the lack of racial ethnic person on the writing team.

GACM-No portion – corrections were made quickly

GACM-thought post topic discussion needed a bit more structure

GCM- the show and tell time; need to be conversation not being “told to”
 GACM-Mon. Morning – Yikes!; Move to more exchange or GAC listening (not talking) time; could have distributed mission work plan as a reference or given as some idea of what we were supposed to be doing!
 GACM- the remaining angers; that there were not more MGB attendees
 GACM-nothing negative
 GACM-too much sitting and talking at one time
 GACM-GAC Presentation
 GACM-Maybe because of the overuse of the metaphor, I didn’t much from the luxury liners, etc part, although the presenters were very good
 GACM – defending GAC against negative comments
 GACM-Lack of structured opportunities to get personally acquainted with others
 SS-the time of three GAC areas reporting to the groups and GA description of what they do
 SS-Monday morning, next time please let us choose to meet with the directors, the staff and Council members to discuss programs, strategies, ways to integrate and pray! I’ll love to talk with Marcia, Eric, and Rashell and Sara about specific issues. I’d also love to hear what others would talk about as well. If I heard Marcia about her greatest joy and challenge, I’d be blessed.
 SS-condensed schedule
 SS-length of time

Should this gathering occur –

Yearly	GACS-8, PS-16, (PS-not certain), GACM-20 (still group building), SS-5
Off-Assembly Years	GACM-5, GACS, PS-3, (PS-not certain), SS-3
Assembly Years	PS , PS-1, SS-1

PS – Yearly – think about reversing the order – GAC meeting; GAC/MGB; AEPS; Polity conf.; AEPS recommendation could be shared with Stated Clerks (we could reflect on actions taken at GAC)
PS-Need to address the concept of meeting back to back
PS- Off year have select GAC members and staff meet with synodwide gatherings of EPS and Synod Execs
PS – Combine polity/OGA/GAC/AEPS and engage together as Bible study and prayer, our own separate meeting times, focus on one or two adequate change issues
PS-OGA, APES, MGB

Additional Comments/Suggestions

PS – This was the best MGB/GAC gathering of the three we’ve had
PS- more than a mocktail; time at assembly counts; post GA gathering; off year accountability
PS- Have interactive conference with OGA also i.e. MGB/GAC/OGA
PS-GAC/OGA/MGB meet concurrently not in succession
PS-bring OGA/GAC/MGB/AEPS all together at the same time; have it layered, so we come together for common times, but meet individually as need by; have an outside facilitator for this event; focus on GA processes
PS-affirm the team – from where we were to where we have come; affirm when we found out something not working and then changed it; affirm sharing about presbytery context and challenge could have had staff and GAC members share their context and challenges; much thanks to the planning team; how about communion

PS-Do the orientation piece with new GAC and EP outside the mtg
SS-would rather it be a staff gathering and not with elected council
GACM- be separate from other meetings
GACM – let's get some younger faces and voices who will help us address the issues in a more effective manner – like Clark Cowden, Deborah Rundlett
GACM- great facilities and food
GACM-The difference between a legislative body and executive work
GACS-more time just for prayer together and a time to share in the Eucharist
GACS-might stop at Mon evening as many MGBs left before final session

Speaker Suggestions

PS- Pat Kieffert
PS – Walter Bruggerman
PS- Joan Gray new book on “Spiritual Leadership”; Diana Butler Bass – new book on their way of being church
PS- Steve Hagner – Prof of Evangelism at Columbia Sem
PS-Bible study together ; I don't need a keynoter
PS-Francis Taylor Gench
PS-GACM-Mark Lou Branson from Fuller Seminary; Scott Sandquist from Pittsburgh Seminary
PS – Someone to help us learn to listen to the voice of God's Spirit in pursuit of answers to adaptive challenges
PS-not Darrell Guder; Gil Rendle; Bishop Claude Payne?
PS-someone who can help us with process, but who is not a stakeholder
PS-Ronald Heifetz; Paul Nixon; Facilitator from outside
PS-Loren Mead; Rick Ufford Chase; James Wond
PS- BobQuinn; Deep Change; Russ Moxley – Center for Creative Leadership; Bible study leaders
PS-Debbie Rundlett; Clark Cowden; Steve Yamaguchi these with gifts for spiritual formation, discipleship, prayer, facing adaptive challenges with innovation and hope
SS-Please give us a great Bible study leader
SS-Guder was magnificent we need to tie him back in
SS-Gil Rendel, Pete Steinke
SS-Pete Steinke, or Alban folks and more interaction from that input – need more time to respond
GACM-Scott Sundquist – mission and post-Christendom, church life
GACM- Listening – forms for execs with staff to share problems and priorities
GACS-Diana Butler Bass

Topic Suggestions

PS-Empowering better collaborative processes as per PUP recommendations
PS – workshops for practical skills e.g. property management; church closing etc
PS – Growing Missional leadership; Building Community in Turbulent Times
PS-doing things better
PS- How to recreate GA meetings/process; governance leadership – what is generative thing
PS- the role of Repentance in Regional/Denomination Renewal; historically and how denomination reinvent; evangelism
PS-Let's learn in detail about the uniting church of Australia way of doing their GA; if we do this again, include OGA it will be much more productive

PS-Defining missional so we are working with a common understanding
 PS-Overall good meeting
 PS-changing the assembly; what do we do about Biblical literalism; bring OGA and have 3 way conversation about changing GA; define and recast language of missional church
 PS-Bible study together; Frances Taylor Gench was great; Involve OGA next time
 PS-3 key issues that GAC is having to decide (as brainstorming)
 PS- Show a program doing mission together – synod/pby/GA
 PS-Trust and reconciliation commission – to break out of camps/solos into intimate relationship within our Center – Jesus Christ
 PS-Francis Taylor Gench
 PS – How to change GA meetings (needs OGA involvement)
 PS-Living as Exiles
 PS-faith-filled sharing of ways of adaptive experiments and innovations
 GACM-More missional church; more adaptive change; writing team document; do Bible study – how to deal with Biblical illiteracy across the denomination; share missional experiments and holy innovations going on across the denomination
 GACM-Have an opportunity for a resource fair for the EPS by GA staff
 GACM-Non-topic – GAC “Show and Tell”
 GACM- Bible Study -2
 GACM- effective communication; conflict resolution
 GACM-how elder leadership can be better trained – spirituality – try Joan Gray after 2009 book
 GACM- regional challenges – presentations by synods/presbyteries to GA and GASC staff (and others not in region); to share their challenges and growth/response/adaptive to meet these
 GACS – Expert in leadership or change
 SS- I’m still looking for a place to talk about regional strategies for higher education; racial ethnic ministries; NACC strategies; NCD; transformation; stewardship
 SS-living with our own anxiety and within governing bodies
 GACM – New immigrant ministry not sure who can best speak on this
 GACM-Let’s clarify our understanding of missional
 GACM-effective communication conflict
 GACM-defining missional

What has been the significance of this gathering for this group?

Presbytery Staff --This gathering has been significant because there were incidents of improvement of the relationship between GAC and MGB. There was a more positive tone and willingness to relate; 3 years ago there was a lot of mistrust between groups there is lot more trust this year than the first year. We are making relationships/personal relationships with each other. The tone has changed from what “I” want for the church to what “we” want. We learned that for some “new” execs the history of distrust is not their history. They are open to cooperation because they do not feel they have been part of the mistrust.

Presbytery Staff – this meeting began to move from vision to a reality as MGB/GAC sought to hear and work with one another; sharing of constructive suggestions on how we can continue to build bridges of cooperative/collaborative working relations; realization that newer MGB/GQAC members do not carry history; how to deal with constant turn over of folks at all levels of MGB/GAC; awareness that some MGB folks weren’t present at gathering; freedom to vent frustrations and look toward a different

future; beginning image change of GAC/MGB and who is responsible to insure communication passes between both groups; new awareness of how both groups can do work together and how that can be enhanced as we move together into the future; new GAC/MGB folks brought new sense of energy to efforts of both group (also new staff); ability to sit with others who shared our wonderings and concerns

Presbytery Staff – valuable meeting – not the meeting we thought it would be – concern: lost focus on modeling for the future how we model ourselves as MGB. Relationships are important, but about the realities of the challenge presented by Jim Collie/Shannon Webster; we still need to build relationship, step out of context – be led through a change experience (e.g. Bob Quinn, Philippians, Ephesians); lost opportunity for larger conversations; significance has been the relationship; the good moment in building relationship between GAC/MGB, the good moment in bringing GAC and MGB significant staff improvement; appreciated creative chaos; time for stories for GAC to hear was very (note: Big Tent, Day Event – OGA/GAC/MGB/AEPS components in conversation and worship)

Presbytery Staff – opportunity to meet and interact with MGB's hear their concerns; able to listen and be part of the solution; level of hostility less than number of years ago; GA releasing GAC to do more; GAC working with local congregations and presbyteries who support mission workers on own; examples of how to do things in MGB – ideas to take home; third year of meeting has meant progress

Presbytery Staff – need to change GA gathering; process, procedure, [GAC, OGA, AEPS- all together explore different models]; good working covenant; good outcome; helpful to know GAC members; lots of new people, and let past baggage go and start up without those impediments; energy between AEPS and GAC much, much, more positive relationships – on way to mutual respect and partnership; we lost something with discontinuation of churchwide administration staff meeting now reclaiming that ongoing conversation; talked enough – now let's get into the work of it; keep working the document next year and year after; maybe expand conversation to include OGA/MGBs/GAC and Clerks; Bible study together – separate gatherings with together meetings; commend flexibility of this event to accommodate desires and hopes of participants on the fly!; work new range of metaphors to understand God's working with us as transforming governing bodies.

Synod Execs – liked not being in Louisville; what we have to say to one another is but said face to face; this was the best of the 3; more validation of synods; more process less talking heads – good; don't have infinity groups in everything, more trust getting better together, more comfortable in being leaders together; want a summary of GAC meeting

GAC Elected – learned a lot where the MGB executives are; our church is so diverse. We as the GAC need to consider how GAC can make MGBs more effective. Good way for new members to get introduced to issues before us, including the mistrust that is present. New members learned a tremendous amount. Relationship between MGBs and OGA is part of the problem that needs to be addressed. Helped understand the history behind the current state of the church

GAC Staff – build relationships; listen; seen new ways to build relationships; learn about ministry contexts; broader understanding; glorious to have way to do business and make contact; education – both ways; new staff get acquainted and we meet new EPs; non-director comment at value of getting to

know; listening to them hear from each other including differences in expectations they each have; one of our generative ideas was moved forward – ease of contact; relaxed non-politicized; we heard lots of positive among the negatives ; what takes most of your time” was asked – answer – the crazies and the lazys, staff turn over, dealing with conflicts; hearing sense of call by many execs and some very discouraged; some EPs say they aren’t interpreting denomination support

What are going to do as a result of having been here?

Presbytery Staff -- Pray for “us” – MGB/GAC; Sharing stories of MGB with others presbyteries; Send along staff communication and PR (like DUDS) to congregations; More frequent communication with execs; Hold staff accountable to go “out” to presbyteries; Take every opportunity to include/collaborate with presbytery/synod staff – example ACSWP will be meeting in Detroit in Oct 2008. The GAC members have connected with stated clerk who attended this meeting about the presbytery’s involvement in this meeting.

Presbytery Staff -- continue to make intentional efforts to touch base with MGB groups within our GAC catchment areas to knock at door to share; asking staff when they visit pby/to let GAC member know they’re there; when GAC members goes to a congregation/pby/synod will contact exec. In that judicatory

Presbytery Staff – eliminate OGA – combine with GAC?

Presbytery Staff - start a list of persons to be invited to a presbytery event (have GAC/MGB staff present); connections with national staff; concerns of presbyteries are being engaged at GAC/MB; movement toward a discernment process; continue to work on dismantling language of US and Them (language from the meeting has been helpful); productive of video for synod video use in our presbyteries; GAC Senior level staff have presented a “how can we be one” order GAC folders; tell story that we ware one – working on issues; importance of Bible study in our conversations

Presbytery Staff – Nominate folks for GA committees from our presbytery; interpret GAC work with presbytery and congregations; communicate to OGA ideas to improve and reshape GA process; talk with Gradye and COGA

Synod Exec – more intentional in issuing invitation; share with those unable to attend what happened at the meeting; learned about people coming to our area that we didn’t know were going to be there, more intentional communication; take working document back and share with the synod

GAC Elected – make good suggestions; we are here for a reason; consider concerns that we heard on actions before GAC; might solicit input as GAC on significant pending actions for MGBs; recognize importance of communications between various groups

GAC Staff - continue conversations; follow up on conversations; awareness, intention to be about informing; cut each other slack having heard challenges; followup on invitations; look at work plan in missional sense; study missional – develop common working definition and dig more deeply; develop

more interpretive material how sessions discern and determine where their benevolence \$ go how they evaluate

What things you've heard throughout this meeting were surprising to you?

Presbytery Staff - Diversity and unique challenges of presbyteries GAC member of east coast was surprised at the low density and large distances in some presbyteries (he learned this from history to some MGB members); Surprises that we could just with anyone – people willing to sit with many others they do not know and people would talk with each other; MGB members very willing to share both good and bad – hearing about more lawsuits as example of their big problems; Surprised by the comment by MGB that communication between GAC/MGB has improved ; Surprised that Monday morning event was so poorly organized – GAC members were embarrassed. MGB members commented that they being talked at

Presbytery Staff – no one seems to know why the energy to derail synods became derailed; how do we come alongside one another out at the desire to be faithful; didn't talk about tension that we cannot have all these presbyteries/synods – where can we talk about this?; how do we engage COGA in this conversation; we don't talk about the structural changes that must be done!; no opportunity to talk about repentance (except in the paper)

Presbytery Staff – GA/GAC treated as the same agency; lack of understanding of function of GAC

Presbytery Staff -- that folks are “angry” about this and that; unless council understands need for partnership with MGB then will not be able to happen as easily on part of GAC staff; GAC works in context of advocacy groups not as inclined view from presbytery perspective; how little able to learn about the new innovation and risks we are seeing around the church – energizing points will lead somewhere new.

Synod Exec – some GAC members didn't know their pby execs – also seemed very uninformed how did they get on the GAC?; bright younger MGB leadership; fewer EPs here – many did not come; confusion about relationship to staff, document spoke ? to GAC and MGBs need to hold staff colleagues mutually accountable; casual dress assists in better, more comfortable engagement; learned that GAC sets national mission strategy

GAC Elected – to see GAC is serious about making changes to be more functional; degree of animosity with MGB that existed previously; that some people felt that they were being talked at; maintain proper distance between MGB/GAC, not too close, not too far

GAC Staff – different ministry contexts of MGBs amount of EP turn over; number of pbys deciding not to have EPs wide ranging opinions about MGBs; raw power dynamics; refreshing to hear a comment about who has capacity

Other comments:

1. Continue meetings – this event connected people through dialogue. This event put issues in connect – table had EP, GAC members, former seminary President – we are suspicious of that we don't know (19 member of 47 GAC are new!)

2. Have group explore increased communication
3. Find a way to change legislative activity at GA
4. Have EPs and GPs give up date every meeting and have frequently in hand a short video from GAC or MGB staff, demonstrate connectedness
5. GAC needs a face – the key is to have a GAC personnel appearing at the right time
6. Have execs speak on one another's turf
7. Criticism accompanied by suggestions