

## Committee on Ministry, Section D

Section D of the Committee on Ministry works with congregations to strengthen covenants and to assist in healing broken covenants.

We offer our services to all NCNC congregations, in times of crisis, and for regular "tune-ups." We work with congregations by invitation, or at the suggestion of their ACM.

We provide a variety of services: we form teams to do personal consultations, to facilitate church "listening sessions" and to conduct regular "covenant check-ins." When invited, we will attend congregational meetings as a "fair witness." Several churches have asked us to assist in difficult transitions or times of conflict. We try to teach church folks skills in conflict transformation, rather than focus on "solving problems." In our five years of existence we have personally provided these services to over 30 of our 120 congregations, and shared resources with many others.

We continue to develop resource packets on common issues like pastor-parish committees, congregational codes of ethics, covenant, power, and evaluating ministries.

Some new issues we considered this year were special needs of churches "on the brink", disruptive behavior in congregations, special concerns when pastors leave (covenant check-out), and suggestions for improving by-laws to strengthen covenant and prevent misuse of power. We are developing resources on these issues.

We had a very helpful training session with Prof. Ron Claussen of Fresno Pacific University's Center for Peace and Conflict Studies on new ways to look at reconciliation following a church conflict.

We are in our second year of facilitating "covenant check-in" sessions with clergy and congregations in the first years of a new ministry, or by request. Among the churches we have visited this year: Plymouth, Oakland; First, Alameda; Community, Kenwood; First, Redwood City; First, Tulare; Union Congregational, Angels Camp. Ask folks from these churches if this process was helpful.

We invite interest: Carol Barriger, Dorothy Brooks, John Crouch, Elena Larrsen, Curt Luck, George Meier, Harold Pierre, Mary Richardson, Faiva Saaga, Ray Stimson, Al Williams, Kevin Omi, Chair, Deborah Streeter, Staff.