



June 19, 2022

Recap of 2022 Annual Spring Meeting Past Moderator, Rev. Antonio L. Villareal

Reflecting on the recent Spring Conference meeting, I am filled with wonderful memories. It was good to be together after a two years absence. I missed being with friends, meeting new friends, and sharing with fellow Christians in worship. It was very good to be together.

The meeting incorporated the theme of “Living the Jesus Life: Contemplatives in Action” in all aspects. From the beginning call together with the drumming to the final communion service, we explored many different methods and ways of experiencing contemplative practices in the ordinary of everyday. Even during the business plenaries, I found the influence of the emphasis on contemplative practices to be helpful.

We adopted changes to the Bylaws of the Conference to better reflect our practices. But we also explored ministries that sought to address justice and care of the environment, addiction and relationships in our society. We shared how we as a people seek to care for one another in disaster outreach.

And, we worshipped! The gathering of the body of Christ in worship is one of the joys of returning to in person meeting. We experienced inspiring music, singing with our many voices combining in joyful praise, uplifting my soul as I shared with you. The Word was prophetically proclaimed by robust preaching, and joyful singing. We officially welcomed Rev. McLemore with his installation service. We concluded the meeting with a moving communion experience as we bade a joyful sabbatical leave for our Conference Minister, Rev. Worley.

But, the best part of this Conference gathering was getting together one with another. You made the meeting inspirational, meaningful. Sharing time with one another in conversation and fellowship; during meals, meetings, and one on one connections was the highlight of our renewed gathering. It was good to be with one another, it made the time very special.

As the outgoing moderator, I want to thank the Planning Committee for envisioning such a gathering, and executing the program with care. I also want to thank the Worship Team for very inspiring and challenging worship experiences; and, the Tech Team for enabling all the aspects of the meeting to be shared with the visuals, sound, and out on the web for others to participate.

I would also thank the Staff; our Conference Minister, Associate Conference Ministers, the Support staff, and the many volunteers, who helped to make the meeting run smoothly and inspiringly.

Most importantly, I want to thank you for participating and making this truly a gathering of the body of Christ in worship and service to the world!

In Christian Love,
Rev. Antonio L. Villareal, Past Moderator



From the Addiction & Recovery Taskforce: Step Two

Step Two - We came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

Many addicts have a hard time with the idea of a Higher Power until the full measure of our powerlessness is accepted. We become willing to consider seeking help from a Power greater than our disease. Our understanding of a Higher Power is up to us. We can call it the group, the program, or we can call it God. The only suggestion is that it be loving, caring, and greater than ourselves.

Addicts experience unconditional love by receiving help from other addicts. For most, this may be their first experience. The group's collective experience is itself a Power greater than our own. We begin learning what works and what doesn't through others shared experiences. Attending meetings day after day is an example of the presence of a Higher Power; an attractive, caring force that helps addicts stay clean. By keeping an open mind, we identify other sources of that Power and find a way to incorporate it into our daily lives.

Our understanding and relationship deepens with our Higher Power as we go further into our personal recovery. We continue the journey by moving on to Step Three.