“Doing for the community, not simply for the church and the church’s survival; rather, witnessing for the community itself.”

Attendees: Carol Hargro, Hank Jud, Melinda Jud, Pastor Lucille Mills, Bill Smith, and Pastor Tim Waltonen.

Opening

Melinda Jud opened with a prayer of thanks for Rejoice’s new space, and for God’s help as the congregation embarks on carrying God’s message to the Chesapeake area.

Pastor Tim Waltonen remembered Benjamin Hooks and Dorothy Height. Our team could do well to live by Dorothy Height’s words (in paraphrase): “We have to remember; we might be the beginning of a movement.”

Old/Continuing Business

Rejoice Report

- **First Worship in the New Space.** Rejoice celebrated First Worship in its new space at 838 Old George Washington Highway, Chesapeake, Virginia, on Easter Sunday, April 4, 2010. Both a sunrise service and a 10:30 A.M. worship service took place -- the latter, with the Reverend Jean Bozeman, Assistant to the Bishop, attending. Rejoice received its occupancy permit at 9:30 P.M. on Good Friday.

- **Project Connect.** Begun with the goal of helping young people – especially, of color – discern a calling to become pastors, the project received an original $3 million grant from the Lilly Foundation, and has recently received over $1 million more. Pastor Mills serves as chair.

- **Evangelism Strategist.** A 24 year-old student from a Baptist university in Atlanta visited Chesapeake to evaluate the community, and has agreed to work with the Rejoice congregation in return for a donation. Currently working for a Lutheran church in Columbus, GA, the strategist helps churches see potential ways to reach out to communities (e.g., Rejoice has rich possibilities by virtue of its shopping center location: “Everyone in the center wants to relate to the community.” The medical, dental, and chiropractic offices are all venues of opportunity. Pastor Mills will “become a familiar face” in these and other community locations; then the strategist will come back and go out to work together with her. The basic approach is “asset building” via businesses in the community, a fresh idea for Rejoice.

- **Atlanta Conference.** Details of the conference, “Welcoming God’s Many Faces,” conference hosted by Dr. Everett Flanigan in February 2010, are as follows:
- **Dr. Gemechis Buba** gave the keynote address, on “**Passionate Witnessing**,” saying that Lutherans tend to miss the boat on this.

- During one session, attendees used Bible texts to brainstorm over a name for Dr. Flanigan’s **Region IX Work Plan.** Dr. Flanigan and Jocelyn Bennett, Director, Poverty Ministries C.S., and Church-Wide African American/Black Outreach Team, will use the results of the brainstorming to finalize the plan’s name.

- A speaker in an additional session clarified that “**cross-cultural**” is not the same thing as the American “Melting Pot;” salad, with a mix of ingredients that complement one another, is a better example.

Other data from the conference: Of the **1, 278,000 African Americans in Virginia,** only **248 are Lutherans.** Reasons for this: **Names of the churches (people don’t “see themselves” in the names).** Also, too often “**the welcome isn’t there.”**

- **Rejoice’s Finances.** As of April 1, 2010, Rejoice will pay $1700 rent per month (based on a backlog of payments already made), plus $1500 per month for Pastor Mills’ salary. Pastor Mills believes that the congregation has sufficient funding for the current fiscal year. However, the fiscal year beginning on February 1, 2010 will present a challenge, as external support will wane. In the meantime, Rejoice is still paying for things such as a new altar, a cross that will hang from the ceiling, a lectern, and signage. A donor has contributed funds for a new computer.

**New Business**

**LETTER TO BISHOP**
A letter authored by Melinda Jud was distributed for feedback. All present gave positive feedback and no changes were suggested.

**SYNOD ASSEMBLY WORKSHOP**
It was suggested by the Rev. Chip Gunsten that to plan for the anticipated heavy attendance with Dr. Buba as our featured guest, the team should do a workshop in lieu of being available over lunch in the rear of the cafeteria. Box lunches will be provided to the team.

In preparation the Rev. Tim Waltonen studied the PowerPoint created by Dr. Buba on “**Missional Hospitality**” and created a written list of questions in response. The questions were distributed to all present. Tim stated he tried to allow several opportunities to have Dr. Buba expand. After much discussion it was clear that the team was unclear as to what Dr. Buba would present at the assembly. As well it was suggested that the prepared questions be used if the conversation would be helped by them at the actual workshop but not limited to what the team prepared since the workshop was to engage the participants. There was also a suggestion to send the questions in advance to Dr. Buba. It was clear the team needed to know what Dr. Buba was presenting in order to prepare.
BLOG
Melinda posted an entry on the team’s blog about Rejoice’s first worship. She will also post about the Rev. Dr. Gemechis D. Buba and specifically the team’s workshop during synod assembly. She stated the website needs a “dialogue” where readers could write interactively with the posters and others. There was discussion on how to draw the readers into responding. CeCee suggested Tim ask the question he posed several times in the wake of the loss of a major leader in the Civil Rights movement–Dorothy Height– “Are we part of a movement?” Carol suggested questions on “Missional Hospitality” and to ask for suggestions for the blog on cross cultural outreach. It was also suggested a link to the blog be put on the synod’s website and in synod publications.

REVIVAL PLANNING TEAM MEETING
Melinda submitted a written report. CeCee added she would like at least one Peninsula church. She also added that to determine who we wanted to preach we had to determine what audience we wanted the preacher to reach. Tim suggested there be five people from each church.

2020 VISION
Melinda tabled this due to time.

Future Meeting Dates:

- May 16, 2010 in Fredericksburg
- July 18, 2010 in Fredericksburg
- October 17, 2010 in Fredericksburg

(Rejoice’s Ministry Review will be October 9-10, 2010.)

Closing - Pastor Tim Waltonen closed with a prayer for the new life that is in Christ.