

PCCNA Christian Unity Commission Report of Activities 2023

Submitted by David Cole, PCCNA Liaison to the Greater Christian Community and Christian Unity Commission Chair

2023 Christian Unity Liaisons, appointed from various PCCNA organizations:

David Cole—Open Bible Churches (steering committee member)

Harold D. Hunter—International Pentecostal Holiness Church (steering committee member)

S. David Moore—Foursquare

Frank Patrick—Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada

Cecil M. Robeck, Jr.—Assemblies of God (steering committee member)

David Han—Church of God (Cleveland, TN)

Dan Coleman—Pentecostal Church of God

Abraham Fernandez—National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference

Dennis Kutzner—CMI Global

Attendance at our Wednesday, February 22, 2023 Christian Unity Commission meeting, in addition to our Liaisons, included prominent ecumenist Wesley Granberg-Michaelson, Monica Schaap-Pierce (executive director of Christian Churches Together in the USA), and Darrell Wentworth (director of Awakening the Domestic Church). In addition to our annual Christian Unity Commission meeting, our members participated in the breakout sessions attached to our plenaries. Our two sessions included robust discussions in partnership with the Race Relations Commission. One session, led by Aaron Campbell and Don Gilbert, focused on how to “Love God, Love People, Love Justice and Love the Least of These.” The other session explored the possibilities related to the launching of PCCNA local chapters which prioritize race relations.

Initiatives discussed at our February 2023 CUC meeting, involving our CUC Liaisons and churches:

PCCNA/USCCB Conversation The 2022 session of this initiative took place September 14–16, 2022, hosted by Oral Roberts University. The three-day meeting carried the theme of “healing,” which had been developed by the co-chairs for the meeting, Rev. Dr. Harold Hunter of the PCCNA (International Pentecostal Holiness Church) and Fr. Walt Kedjierski of the USCCB with the intent to engage in exploratory dialogue on issues related to ritual, liturgy, and sacraments. The dialogue included the offering of two papers, the first by Dr. Andrew Prevot of the Department of Theology at Boston College on “Varieties of Healing: A Catholic Perspective,” and Rev. Dr. David Han (Church of God, Cleveland TN) on “Healing in the Pentecostal Tradition.” Both papers explored aspects of Catholic and Pentecostal healing rituals and the call to healing in the lives of individuals and wider communities.

In addition to having an opportunity to gather and pray in the Oral Roberts University chapel, the theme of the meeting was enhanced with visits to Greenwood Rising, a museum of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre that destroyed what was considered the wealthiest African American community in the country and known as “Black Wall Street,” and to the Hope Franklin Reconciliation Park. Participants of the dialogue also had the opportunity to meet with Rev. Dr. Billy Wilson, president of Oral Roberts University over lunch, and with Dr. Hal Reed, head of the Global Environmental Sustainability Program at ORU, who offered further insights into Pentecostal engagement for climate justice. Other Pentecostal participants attending the meeting included Rev. Dr. Tammy Dunahoo, International Church of the Foursquare Gospel; Dr. Martin Mittelstadt, Assemblies of God; and Rev. Dr. Frederick L. Ware, Church of God in Christ. The next meeting will be hosted by the USCCB at the University of Notre Dame in September 2023.

Global Christian Forum Regional Gatherings The next GCF regional gathering is being planned for the Los Angeles area in February or March of 2024. Conversations have been facilitated with leadership from David Han (Church of God, Cleveland) and Nathan Smith (Glenmary Home Missioners and USCCB field representative). A gathering took place May 12-13, 2022 at Pentecostal Theological Seminary in Cleveland TN, and a second gathering took place in January 2023. These events have included several Pentecostal church families, as well as the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and local Catholic dioceses.

Ecumenical Engagement in Canada PAOC Christian Unity Liaison Frank Patrick's ecumenical engagements in Canada in 2022 included his participation in Canada's Roman Catholic-Evangelical Dialogue, which he has concluded after eleven years of service. He hands the baton to Dr. Allison MacGregor from Master's College and Seminary. Frank also attended the World Day of Prayer service in Toronto in January, attended the installation service for the new RC Archbishop of Toronto in March, and attended the Canadian Council of Churches Governing Board meetings in Quebec City in May, focusing on the secularization of Quebec and Canadian culture.

Christian Churches Together in the USA CCT provides a forum for honest dialogue on issues related to life, poverty and racism, as leaders gather from Evangelical/Pentecostal, Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox, and Racial/Ethnic churches from across the US. The International Pentecostal Holiness Church is among those Evangelical and Pentecostal churches who regularly participate in the ongoing work of CCT. The next annual CCT Forum is scheduled to take place October 3-6, 2023 in Savannah, GA with the theme "Waters that unite & waters that divide: Baptism and the Journey to Unity and Reconciliation." At the February PCCNA CUC meeting we engaged in discussion with Monica Schaap Pierce, who is executive director of CCT. In the aftermath of our connection with Monica, PCCNA president David Wells and PCCNA CUC chair David Cole met with her to discuss the possibility of PCCNA designating an official observer to attend future annual CCT Forums.

Global Christian Forum The Fourth World GCF Gathering is scheduled in Accra, Ghana for April 19-24, 2024 on the theme "May the world know" (Jn 17:23), with the participation of about 250 delegates from all currents of modern Christianity. Church of God PCCNA Liaison David Han is assisting in facilitating the invitation process to Pentecostal leaders from North America and globally.

Pentecostal World Conference In October 2022, several PCCNA Christian Unity Liaisons participated in the PWC in Seoul, South Korea. The theme of the unity-focused workshops that included our members was "Pentecostals Serving the Global Body of Christ." Facilitated by Church of God Liaison David Han, the workshop participants included Liaisons Mel Robeck (Assemblies of God), Harold Hunter (International Pentecostal Holiness Church), David Cole (Open Bible), and David Han (Church of God). Other Pentecostal participants included David Wells (Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada), David Daniels (Church of God in Christ), Clifton Clarke (Church of God), David Ramirez (Church of God), Yeong-Ki Hung (Yoido Full Gospel Church, South Korea), Yongnan Ahn Jeon (Asia LIFE University, South Korea), Johannes Widlund (Sweden), and Sanna Urvas (Finland). Distinguished panelists from the larger Body of Christ included Rev. Casely Essamuah (Global Christian Forum), Mons. Juan Usma Gomez (Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity), and Rev. Ion Sauca (World Council of Churches).

Somos Um David Cole (Open Bible) participated in the Fifth International We Are One (Somos Um) conference in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in September 2022, speaking at a local Catholic seminary and also addressing a plenary session. He is a member of the Somos Um International Fraternal Council.

New PCCNA membership The PCCNA Christian Unity Commission welcomes United in Christ as a new member of PCCNA. United in Christ leaders Matteo Calisi and Ron Allen have engaged with our CUC in the past, and we look forward to further collegiality in the future.

Recognition PCCNA Christian Unity Liaison Dr. Cecil M. Robeck, Jr. has recently been honored by the Assemblies of God Northern California-Nevada District Council upon his retirement from Fuller Theological Seminary, where he is now Senior Professor of Church History and Ecumenics, and for many years served as Special Assistant to the President for Ecumenical Relations. Robeck's five decades of ministry with the Assemblies of God and in Christian higher education, along with his four decades of world-class service to the Body of Christ in the area of Christian unity, offer an unparalleled body of work in fulfillment of his God-given calling.