

REPORT TO THE SACRAMENTO VALLEY ASSOCIATION - Mike Hill, Moderator
By Rev. Matt Broadbent, Vice President of the NCNC Council

Listed on these two pages are the comments made at the meeting of the Sacramento Valley Association about their expectations for the work of the NCNC. All comments are listed verbatim in bullet points. I have organized them into five areas of significance. My narrative comments interpreting the sense of what I heard is in *italics*.

Connectedness to the wider church – *There was strong feeling that the purpose of the NCNC was to connect local churches and members with the wider church. We want the sense that we are not alone, and to do that we need opportunities to meet with other churches and members throughout the conference, to tell each other the stories that “inspire and encourage us.”*

- Sense that we are alone – Christian Conservatives do not have a monopoly on “the Christian Perspective.”
- Community/ affirmation that being UCC is unifying. We want to know each other.
- Keeping in touch and connected with other people of other congregations.
- Stay closely connected with local churches.
- More opportunities for connection
- Continue dialogue with members in the NCNC
- Stories like today inspire and encourage us.
- More exposure to youth

Witness to a wider world – *Local churches want information and opportunity to have a voice in the larger justice issues of our day. In addition, we want to hear of what other settings of the Conference are doing to create and sustain viable ministries that meet real needs. Not everyone can do the same thing, but there are ways we can network to support each other.*

- We can't do it alone (justice issues)
- A place and voice in the wider church
- A public Voice – take a stand once in a while.
- Public witness in the areas of justice – a larger voice
- The churches to be aware of the bigger picture: the struggles and victories of their fellow congregations are experiencing.
- Keep us informed of new ways to be in ministry
- Resources for new ways of doing church outside the four walls on Sunday
- Larger ministries to join without needing to invent them
- Support for “group” giving or organized funding of a worthy project.

Resources for Ministry – *This is a recurring theme in other Associations. The chief task of the Conference is to provide accessibility to resources to do effective ministry.*

- e.g. StillSpeaking, and Sunday School
- Innovation and help with our future – too many churches failing.
- Continuing Education
- Provide new opportunities to serve
- Support for church camps for youth.

Support and Accountability – *This is the “nuts and bolts” of Conference work – the support system for ministry, in and through our church (including specialized ministries), and the trust that we will be held accountable.*

- Conference would be in a better position if everyone knew what you did, who does what.
- Be viable – Be present
- Being held accountable
- Pastoral/Ministerial Accountability
- Annual Gathering that is accessible to everyone
- Stewardship / Money
- Meaningful salary guidelines
- Fellowship and Pastoral Support
- Search and Call
- Support when there is pastoral change and loss.
- Our church will need support and guidance to determine future ministry when pastor retires.

Spiritual deepening opportunities – *While this may be the shortest list it was presented as one of the greatest needs, since spiritual growth and development is what we are about.*

- Retreats worship, guidance
- Resources for spiritual formation for laity
- Professional development – small pastoral groups
- Spiritual care of pastors