

Brazos Association News

The South Central Conference, hosted by the Brazos Association, met in our Annual Meeting on the first weekend of June at Huston-Tillotson University. Five members of our national Global Ministries/Wider Church Ministries staff preached, gave the keynote address, led workshops, led a pre-Annual Meeting Ministries and Mission Interpreters (MMI) Training at United Christian Church, and preached on Sunday at area churches. Many thanks to our national staff leaders for their outstanding leadership: Cally Rogers-Witte, Executive Minister of UCC Wider Church Ministries; Jan Aerie, Executive for Mission Education and Interpretation; Michael Schuenemeyer, Executive for Health and Wholeness Advocacy; Mary Schaller-Blaufuss, Executive for Volunteer Ministries; and Felix Ortiz-Cotto, Executive for Latin American-Caribbean Ministries. Also, we had outstanding workshop leaders from the Brazos and South Texas Associations who gave us their time and knowledge on issues of migrant worker workplace rights and justice, the Jubilee Partners' refugee ministry, Epiphany Prison Ministries' work with incarcerated youth, and how to talk about race. Many thanks to these workshop leaders: Bill Beardall, Marilyn Vaché, Ray Tirado, Rita Wilbur, and Wilmer Brown.

The Annual Meeting Planning and Worship committees, plus all of the volunteers who helped in so many ways, made the whole event happen. Annual Meeting Planning Committee Worship Committee members included Anne Wehrly and Liz Nash co-chairs, Tamara Franks, Gerry Metzger (outgoing SCC Board President) Melynda Giesenshlag, David Owen (Austin Global Ministries staffperson), Velma Brady, Flo Mason, Tim Tutt, Mary Wilson, Jerry Carpenter, Nodie Murphy, John Sumner, and Carla Cheatham. Worship committee members who planned worship and provided leadership included Tom Vandestadt, Mary Wilson, Tim Tutt, and Carla Cheatham. Special thanks to Nodie Murphy, our spirited choir director; Tim Marquez from the Conference Office who worked for many hours on Annual Meeting; Conference Minister Douglas Anders for his leadership; the Huston-Tillotson staff; Betty McDaniel who ran our AV presentations; the Howdy, Help, and Hospitality Team from St. Peter's UCC in Coupland; Church of the Savior who loaned us their beautiful banners; United Christian for hosting the Friday MMI training; Glenn and Dottie Schoeneberg and Greg Felder who brought and set up sound system for Saturday evening; Carla Cheatham who made the arrangements with the Djembabes and the jazz trio; Charles Stark who put our registration online; Friedens UCC, Washington who provided tasty cookies; Eden Home who hosted the Saturday morning coffee break; University Christian Church who loaned us the big screen; Howard Hartman from Church World Service who served as resource person for our service project; and especially to Tamara Franks who worked so hard all weekend assembling the 920 Church World Service school kits donated by SCC churches as well as doing a great deal of work on much of the planning for the meeting. And thanks to all of you who pitched in to help that I haven't mentioned – many people made our Annual Meeting work so well.

On Sunday afternoon, June 14th, I had the privilege of attending the dedication of the Evangelical UCC, Lyons new sanctuary. I expected a lovely sanctuary, but it exceeded even what I had heard. Light, airy, with the former sanctuary stained glass, a magnificent stained wood ceiling, a great sound and AV system, and a handicapped accessible chancel, this sanctuary is itself a song of praise to God. John Boydston led worship, Douglas Anders preached at the dedication, the many who worked on it were recognized, and the church celebrated its history and future. Go visit when you can!

Blessings in Christ, Liz Nash