

THE CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION TEAM is a group of five individuals who work alongside the Center for Congregational Health, Evangelism and Discipleship (CHED). This team is helping churches to find God's energy in conflict and to release that energy in their lives. The team functions in four ways presently:

- Preparing congregations through education for inevitable Conflict,
- Educating ministerial leadership in both the necessity and the dynamics of Conflict,
- Strengthening members of the Conflict Transformation Team, and
- Consultations with congregations in Conflict, assisting them through the processes of Conflict and of Forgiveness.

The Conflict Transformation Team emphasized this past year the **Ministry of Forgiveness** and plans to have an additional seminar on Forgiveness this year on February 11, 2010 at Johenning Baptist Community Center and workshops on Conflict November 24, 2009, March 16, 2010 and November 2, 2010. There also be a workshop on Neighborhood Violence in Ward 8 on June 5, 2010.

The Conflict Transformation Team has a set **suggested schedule of fees**, whenever team members act as consultants, since some of these individuals are not paid by the Convention for their services. The basic fee is from \$75 to \$100 per hour, dependent upon the level of involvement by the church in the DC Baptist Convention. Additionally, churches will pay for travel and expenses of the consultant. These fees are significantly

lower than local fees for similar services by nondenominational groups.

THE MEMBERS OF THE CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION TEAM ARE:



Dr. Blanche Hudson
Metropolitan Baptist Church



Maria Cannito Hjort
DCBC Baptist Chaplain, American University



Dr. Robert D. Cochran
Associate Executive Director, DCBC



Rev. Paul Clark
Intentional Interim, Clergy Coach, Church Consultant



Rev. Avery Blakeney
Pastor, Lighthouse Ministries

Too many Baptists fear Conflict and remain unaware of the possibilities churches have to use Conflict positively. Through the Annual Meetings of 2004-05, CHED introduced DC Baptists to the realities and possibilities of Conflict, as well as to this ministry.

During the late Fall of 2009 the Team intends to sponsor a **conference for ministers and for church lay leadership on Conflict**, exploring its spiritual and social dynamics. This workshop welcomes both clergy and laity to discover elements of Conflict, both healthy and destructive.

Over the past three years, few churches have accessed the Team consultation skills, while in the chaos of conflict. Churches may still call upon team members for help when in the throes of conflict, but the team will now focus more of its energies on understanding conflict and teaching DC Baptists about it.

One of the members of the team, Maria Cannito Hjort continues her ministry addressing conflict in international settings, in Italy, Mexico and Sicily. We hope to use the experience of Mrs. Cannito Hjort to help apply the ministries of Conflict Transformation through the church and into the community

Rev. Avery Blakeney has worked on issues of conflict between Israelis and Palestinians. .

February 11–The Forgiveness Seminar, exploring the Christian discipline of Forgiveness and applying it for use in the lives of both individuals and local churches.

**CONFLICT?!!!
WHO WANTS IT?
CONFLICT?!!!
WHO NEEDS IT?**

IT TURNS OUT WE ALL DO!

Conflict can be a sign of a healthy church as well as a sign of an unhealthy one. The tensions of both creation and resolution, of both development and demise, of both growth and possibility, all of these and many other tensions are sources of conflict. To continue to have health, conflict will arise, and to regain health, conflict may erupt. Conflict may also be a sign of ill health or dysfunction. Even when we sense that we do not need conflict, conflict eventually finds us, for we are humans in relationship with others. Conflict exists. The challenge is to harness its energy for transformation.

Healthy churches are in conflict, although that conflict is often under control. Unhealthy churches may be in active, destructive conflict or be constricted by past conflicts unresolved, issues left simmering all the time. Conflict is not a pleasant subject to consider, but it is necessary to deal with Conflict to find Congregational Health.

The Conflict Transformation Team sees hope in every conflict and searches to discover what God is doing in transformation among the churches. Support the team with your prayers and, if so led, through your involvement. Please feel invited to join the Conflict Transformation Team.

The new pastor was coming to a church which recently had significant conflict with the last pastor. Clearly, the church wanted a new pastor, but the membership was carrying significant issues that were unresolved. The young pastor realized that there could well be challenges ahead.

Rather than waiting for the challenges of conflict to raise its head again, the pastor resolved to become proactive. Contacting the Conflict Transformation Team, the new pastor sought out a consultant with whom to work, learning the dynamics of congregational conflict. Later, when the team offered a conference for church leaders on "Your Conflict Resolution Style," the new pastor attended learning from other pastors in the area and from their experiences, as well.

Once prepared personally to understand congregational conflict and to detect its beginnings, the pastor also shared some reflections on Conflict with the congregation, helping them to think about conflict in both its positive and negative consequences.

So prepared, the congregation moves into the future, hopeful for the ministry of the new pastor and aware of the challenges every congregation shares.

**The Center for Congregational Health,
Evangelism and Discipleship**

Robert D. Cochran, Associate Executive Director
robert.cochran@dcbaptist.org
District of Columbia Baptist Convention
1628 Sixteenth Street NW • Washington DC 20009
202-265-1526 • www.dcbaptist.org
10/6/2009

**LAYING
FOUNDATIONS
FOR CONFLICT
TRANSFORMATION**

