**Engagement Team Notes**

April 2, 2024

**Present**: Karen Olson Johnson, Joan Mitchell, Mary Louise Menikheim, Irene O’Neill, Kate O’Connell

**Unable to join:** Lois Mineau, Catherine McComas-Bussa

**Opening Prayer**: Mary Louise led us in the Table prayer

**Meeting agenda:**

* Jill Underdahl invited to share some suggestions
* Forum postings
* Share a model
* Prepare for April 13 Community Assembly

**Jill’s suggestions:**

* Thanks to Mary Louise for reaching out and inviting me to this meeting. I want to see this endeavor come to fruition, as it will be part of my future life
* I felt a disconnect between the 2/10/24 and 3/21/24 meeting because I thought the March meeting would share the notes from the table discussions at the February meeting.
* I can see where the proposal for the Common Table used some of the words and phrases from the February meeting, such as the reference to interest groups, but it was hard to make the leap and see whether the Common Table was totally inclusive of the themes at the February meeting.
* Q: What if we called it the Community Assembly rather than the Common Table?
* A: Changing the name doesn’t seem necessary, as “Common Table” does suggest something new. Where does the term “Common Table” come from?
* It comes from the December 2023 meeting, with the Conceptual Framework indicating that Community-based Leadership is “**not part of Governance; rather a collaborative table for all of us, focused on Mission, Ministry**”
* We’re using the term “Common Table” rather than “Collaborative Table” with the important idea that all are called together.
* Jill suggested charting the path and the threads as to how the proposal came together, to help people see that it came from them and to understand their connection to the process
* The themes of the February meeting of community, relationships, belonging, etc. seemed to have a strong resonance, so it would be helpful for people to understand the pieces that led to the proposal
* Have a story board to show the threads
* Some tables were enthusiastically in support while others pushed back, needing to know where the proposal came from, etc.
* Might want to start with themes in February

**Karen’s diagram and discussion:**

* Includes the following elements, in a continuous circle: Vision, Purpose, Scope of Work, CLBG, Investment
* The Engagement Team (ET) liked the visual, which uses elements from the webpage. We’ll want to do more work on it, but it really helps highlight that we are in a continual process of connecting, living and supporting the Charism and Mission with each other
* Want to focus on the Vision at this time, help people understand that it has come from them, and confirm that vision
* Build trust, help people see that this isn’t about anyone losing a job or about throwing away things that are working; instead, this is about evolution
* Mary Louise shared reflections about the reading of Jesus being asleep in the boat while a storm raged. Talked about how Sisters often lived in community and were more aware of what each other was doing and could support each other
* Consociates tend to be less connected with each other, have worked less with each other, and have not built the same kind of relationships.
* It particularly takes courage to tell each other about painful parts of our lives, including how we are living the Charism and Mission in our lives. “I will tell you when I trust you”
* Suggested reading [Grandmothers Counsel the World by Carol Schaefer: 9781590302934 | PenguinRandomHouse.com: Books](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/161546/grandmothers-counsel-the-world-by-carol-schaefer/):

We are thirteen indigenous grandmothers. . . . We are deeply concerned with the unprecedented destruction of our Mother Earth, the atrocities of war, the global scourge of poverty, the prevailing culture of materialism, the epidemics that threaten the health of the Earth’s peoples, and with the destruction of indigenous ways of life.

We, the International Council of Thirteen Indigenous Grandmothers, believe that our ancestral ways of prayer, peacemaking, and healing are vitally needed today. . . . We believe that the teachings of our ancestors will light our way through an uncertain future.

* Noted Pathfinders, with the image of “them” and “us” together [Sisters INSPIRE project explores the future of faith-based service | Global Sisters Report](https://www.globalsistersreport.org/ministry/sisters-inspire-project-explores-future-faith-based-service) In this article , Jocelyn Sideco noted:

“This takes us back to our Gospel roots. It can be scary," she said. "But if we want our organizations to have life in the here and now and the future, it's going to have to be different.”

* Further, Bridgette Kelly stated:

"It's not easy to sit with these challenging questions, but we've really been called to ask them," Kelly said. "What we know is what is at our core: spirituality, community, justice and leadership. Those values will remain the same, and we are committed to being just in our own operation."

* Consociates are leaving the community and we don’t know why in part because relationships haven’t been strong enough.
* We would like to see the circuit being completed – for people in the community to share sharing with the CSJ Community how we are being sent in the world, and being encouraged in that work – supported, challenged, invited in with each other
* In the proposal, the central person is the Convenor – meaning someone who calls people together, understands the “glue” that brings people together, listens, encourages people to bring their best forward, inspires people to act – this is not a person who controls or tries to do it all
* People may choose to do a variety of things together – discuss books, plant trees, clean graves, follow legislation, work with groups outside of the CSJs, cook together, write poetry – however they are called to work together with and for the Charism and Mission

**Further thoughts about April 13 Community Assembly**

* We want to tell the CSJ Community “we hear you, we understand, we are responding”
* Name the vision, with Karen’s diagram, for the CSJ Community to see where it has come from
* Tell the story of how we’ve gotten here, with a storyboard
* Answers are unfolding

**Next meeting:**

* Tuesday, April 9, 5:00, CV Family Dining Room
* Before then: identify the Vision in words (e.g. want to see the Charism and Mission survive and thrive into the future beyond our lives in a community of St. Joseph)
* Come with ideas for April 13 Community Assembly
* Mary Louise will contact Lori True

Submitted by Kate O’Connell