

COCAM B Annual Report

May 2023-April 2024

COCAM B committed itself to serving our community of churches and their lay leaders in the Southwest Conference. To that end, we approved and sent to the executive committee for their approval four grant requests this calendar year. The distribution included three Social Justice Grants and one Sow The Seed Grant to four of our churches.

Following a conversation with Rev. Drew Terry from Oro Valley UCC, we discovered that there is a need for a new grant. A request was sent to the finance committee to set aside grant funds for some of our churches who have seen membership decline and less available funding to redevelop the churches with necessary and active ministries. This grant would be for Church Vitality/Church Renewal. This became obvious to our committee after we realized how many churches had drifted into non-existence and needed to be removed from the Southwest Conference's list of churches. There were a variety of reasons that these churches required their standing in the SWC to be terminated and removed from the national database. We sent a recommendation to the Executive committee to remove:

Flagstaff UCC - had already closed

Efkas UCC - had stopped functioning as an active congregation

Tempe Marshallese - no longer existed

Ktizo UCC - sold their building due to a decline of members

This committee accepted New Hope UCC into consideration as a new church start a year ago after careful discernment with their pastor. First

Church UCC in Phoenix agreed to be partnered with them during this period of growth and discernment. New Hope celebrated a year of existence on Palm Sunday of this year. There has been slow but steady growth under the leadership of Rev. Myra Taylor (who also worked on her doctorate during this time and was approved). With a glowing report from First Church and an interview with Rev. Taylor in March, COCAM B requested that the Executive Committee put this church on the agenda for our annual meeting so that the entire SWC may vote to approve their standing as a church in our conference.

We have been in conversation with Iglesias Congregacional La Trinidad regarding the disposition of funds from the sale of their building in El Paso, TX approximately 6 years ago. These funds had been set aside for continued ministry of our only Spanish speaking church in the SWC. Unable to definitively identify how these monies were being used, the finance committee voted in March to discontinue funding. There was a need to discontinue the standing of “La Trinidad” at this time as well.

We are happy to announce that the UCC church in Rio Rancho, NM is still in existence and is a model for how our very small churches can continue to be functioning as well as offering the UCC’s Christian perspective to others who may be unchurched.

We continue to stay in contact with Silver City UCC in New Mexico as their membership has declined and they are not meeting for worship. Reluctant as they are to actually close, we will continue in discernment with their lay leadership. They are not acting in full fellowship with the SWC. COCAM B

offered the following options to them: to stay open and remain in covenant with the SWC, to become a community in our conference or to close.

Our Policies and Procedures have been completed and are posted in Basecamp.

COCAM B operated with only 5 members for much of the year. This is my last year on COCAM B because of term limitations. I believe we have left the Southwest conference in good shape as we move into the near future.

Respectfully submitted to the Southwest Conference on April 11, 2024,

Rev. Julie Parmenter
outgoing chair of COCAM B