

NORTH CENTRAL REGION  
REM NETWORK  
Regional Report - May 2004

The North Central Region's REM Network has spent the last months planning and implementing the national REM Invitational 2004 conference.

*Making Connections in an Age of Multiculturality* served as the theme for the REM Invitational Conference xvii, 2004. Held in Chicago ITom February 5-7, REM was hosted by the North Central Region (ACPE). Over 200 people attended the conference. The conference explored the connections that need to be made within Clinical Pastoral Education to serve a multicultural community of students ITom a feminist, KoreanAmerican, African-American, and Latino perspectives. The conference also explored connections across faiths.

The plenary sessions were well-attended and provocative. They were led by Dr. Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite, president and professor of theology at Chicago Theological Seminary, Dr. Ai Ra Kim, professor of Church and Society at United Theological Seminary (Ohio), and Dr. Homer Ashby, professor of pastoral care and counseling at McCormick Theological Seminary.

Dr. Thistlethwaite, a theologian and social ethicist who is known for her ground-breaking scholarship in feminist theology, delivered a lecture entitled "The Spider's Web: Women, Connection and Culture in an Age of Careless Violence." She probed with the audience the resources that women globally offer as we seek to weave a community strong enough to withstand the senseless violence and almost permanent war.

Dr. Kim, who researches Asian immigrant women and religion, addressed "Clinical Pastoral Education and the Challenge of Our Contemporary Pluralistic Reality." In her lecture, she delved into the role and function of CPE in inter-racial, multicultural, and cross-religious practical contexts. She prodded the audience to risk learning ITom races and people different than one's own.

Dr. Ashby, a highly respected pastoral theologian whose research explores communal forms of African American pastoral care, explored "The Challenges of Interdisciplinary Care." He addressed the ways other disciplines are addressing issues of spirituality and religious faith and how professional chaplains can work with and understand these challenges to our previous exclusive work in these arenas.

Rev. Dr. Wright, one of the most influential preachers in the United States today and the pastor of the 12,000-plus member Trinity United Church of Christ., preached the sermon at the opening worship and Rev. Dr. Gale Kennebrew, ACPE supervisor and UCC minister, preached the sermon at the closing service. During the banquet, Rev. Dr. Ozzie E. Smith, Jr., UCC pastor and saxophonist, led the band that provided live music. Following the dinner, was a fun-filled time of dancing and fellowship.

The conference also included networking sessions and workshops on supervision and the certification process in CPE. Additionally, the workshops examined the theme from the angle of constructive theology, pastoral theology, and history with speakers who were Jewish, Muslim, Protestant and Catholic. Among the workshop presenters were Dr. Dwight Hopkins of the University of Chicago, Dr. Debra Majeed of Beloit College, Dr. Wilhemenia Kalu of the University of Nigeria at Nsukka, Dr. David Daniels of McCormick Theological Seminary, and Dr. Jesus Rodriguez, professor at the Inter-American University in Puerto Rico.

Chaired by Rev. Delois Brown-Daniels, the planning committee included Reverends Gale Kennebrew, Brenda Jackson, Richard James, Willia Brown, and Larry Jackson who arranged an informative, enjoyable, and provocative conference. The conference was supported with a generous grant of \$5,000 from the North Central Region and of \$7,500 from Advocate Health Care. REM 2005 will be held from February 3-5 in Miami, Florida.

Respectfully Submitted,

Delois Brown-Daniels, Chair  
NCR REM Network