



## **The Transformation of a Regional Church Christian Church in Indiana**

The traditional, mainline church is living in a wilderness. We know there is a need for real, adaptive change to occur and we feel little equipped to effect such change. The congregations, clergy, believers and seekers that make up the Region exhibit a spirit of restlessness. The Regional system itself is restless; in much the same way as restlessness is present in the General church.

It is time for bold new initiatives that will encourage all expressions of the church to engage in new understandings and new ways of being the presence of Christ in the world. It will take all manifestations of the church working together in mutually supportive ways to become the people of God that God is calling us to be.

The Indiana Region began work with Allelon ([www.allelon.org](http://www.allelon.org)) and Alan Roxburgh in January 2007 to devise a strategy for transformation. The initial phase of this work focused on congregational transformation. We invited seven congregations into a pilot process guided by Roxburgh in June 2007. Five of these congregations continue to work with this process in intentional ways. In January 2009 a second group of five congregations formed to engage the process.

In observing and participating in that process, we have learned that it will take systemic transformation in the Region's own life to fully support the transformative work of individual congregations. From the pilot process, we began to hear appropriate questions from participating congregations: "What is the Region doing about transformation? Why don't we hear any conversation about how the Region needs to transform? We can't do this alone; we need the larger system working with us as they (Region) assess their own life. Are we really in this together?"

To give integrity to the work of congregations, it is imperative that the Region, as system, examine its life and witness and prioritize the work of transformation across the life of the church. The Region best supports the challenging work of congregations by also engaging a process that will bring adaptive change to its ministry. We can not afford to continue a life of business as usual. Congregations will look to the Region to see what it is doing before seriously engaging their own need for transformation.

Given the work we have already engaged with Allelon, it seems apt that we continue to work with them in the process of moving toward Regional transformation. They have been partners on our journey and we see this as an extension of work already begun.



A member of the Regional transformation taskforce suggested, “We know ourselves to be in the wilderness; we also know God excels in wilderness work.” In the midst of the wilderness, we desire to take some bold steps in discovering a new way for Regional life and ministry.

## The Proposed Process

### Basic plan

- The Ministerial Staff will engage in an Executive 360 evaluation to assess and receive coaching on capacity and readiness to lead the church in change;
- The Ministerial Staff will receive coaching on their ability to function as a team to lead the Region in a time of change and transformation;
- The Board of the Region will participate in a 24 hour retreat (late summer 2009) with a consultant to design a process and develop action plans for Regional transformation;
- The Board will evaluate progress toward transformation at its November 2009 meeting and incorporate elements of the action plan in budget and staff planning for 2010 and beyond.

The Pastoral Personnel Relations Committee (PPRC) of the Region requested in the fall of 2008 that the Ministerial Staff of the Region (5 persons) engage in an Executive 360 evaluation process to assist in the growth and development of this team. A variety of vendors were considered and it was determined that Allelon was the most appropriate to use because of their on-going work with the Region. The Regional Board in November 2008 included \$2000 in the 2009 budget toward this process.

Alan Roxburgh, our consultant from Allelon, based in Vancouver, British Columbia, proposes working with the staff on an on-going basis via web cameras. His proposal also includes one day of working with the staff individually and two days working with them as a team. In addition, Alan will help design and give leadership to the Board Retreat and will formulate a “next steps” proposal for the Board to use as an action plan following the Retreat.

The 24 hour mid-week Board Retreat will most likely be held at Camp Camby, [www.campcamby.com](http://www.campcamby.com), near Mooresville, Indiana in the last week of August or first week of September 2009.

Through the Region’s communications tools, *The Indiana Christian*, the Region’s webpage, [www.indianadisciples.org](http://www.indianadisciples.org) and our news blog, <http://ccindiananews.wordpress.com/>, we will keep congregations and their leaders informed of this process.

The consultant will assist in assessing the staff and Board’s faithfulness to addressing goals that are claimed, but it will ultimately be the ministerial leadership team and Board holding one another accountable. The process is designed and intended to build capacity for self-awareness and communication to make that possible.

## Budget

### Income

Board member and individual contributions	\$ 2,000
Christian Church in Indiana	2,000
Disciples Home Mission Grant (applied for)	5,000
Oreon E. Scott Foundation Grant (applied for)	10,000
Total	\$19,000

### Expenses

Consultant Fee	\$13,900
Five 360 Executive surveys (including on-line and phone coaching)	\$ 4000
One day Feedback seminar	1500
Executive Team 360	400
Two Days feedback and teamwork	3000
Team coaching (on-line and web format)	1000
Planning and leading Board retreat	3000
Designing and writing next steps proposal for Board	1000
Consultant travel and lodging expenses (three trips)	2,500
Board Retreat (estimated 40 persons)	2,200
Web cameras and materials	400
Total	\$19,000

Note: The application deadline for the Oreon E. Scott Grant is April 1, 2009. The grant application to Disciples Home Mission will be submitted at the same time. If either or both grants are not awarded the contingency plan would be to use funds, up to \$15,000, in the Churches in Mission and Transition Grant Fund of the Region. This Fund was created by the Generation-to-Generation Capital Campaign of the Region in the late 1990's and has previously been used to award local congregations with grants for new ministry initiatives. It is currently being used to match the contribution of local congregations who are in the Congregational Transformation project. The rationale for drawing from this account, if needed, would be to support the effort of the Region itself to renew its life in ways that foster the transformation of local congregations.

The Churches in Mission and Transition Grant Fund has a current balance of \$40,347.83. In addition, the Churches in Mission and Transition Endowment Fund has a balance of \$63,493.02, from which a 5% annual distribution is available.

## Alan Roxburgh



Alan serves as the Vice President for Allelon Canada. He is the Director of Educational Resources throughout North America and serves as the coordinating team leader for the **Mission in Western Culture** project. He has over twenty-seven years of experience in church leadership as a pastor of congregations in small towns, urban centers and the suburbs and in denominational leadership. As seminary faculty he was responsible for teaching in the areas of leadership development and domestic missiology. Alan is ordained in the Baptist Federation of Canada. He and Jane, a school principal in Vancouver, Canada, have been married for thirty-seven years and have three grown children whose occupations vary from lawyer, plumber and theologian. He also writes for and maintains **The Roxburgh Journal** (<http://archives.allelon.org/roxburgh/>) a web based resource equipping churches in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## Christian Church in Indiana

### Ministerial Staff

Richard L. Spleth, Regional Minister  
Carolyn Casey Reed, Associate Regional Minister  
Dean Phelps, Minister of Church Multiplication  
Becki Nunnally, Minister to the Commission on Ministry  
Cheryl Cloar, Minister of Mission and Women's Ministries

### Regional Officers

Pam Ditson-McCall, Moderator  
Mark Calvert-Rosenberger, Vice-Moderator  
Warren Manns, Secretary  
Mike Sribljan, Treasurer