

## Becoming servants of today's spirit movements

Catalyzing and sustaining a decade-long community project

David Dunn - 2010

The December 2009 “Transforming the Legacy” Symposium at Wesley Theological Seminary was an affirming recognition of the lasting prophetic address of the *Ecumenical Institute* on the historical church in mid-20th Century. The May 2010 “Archive Sojourn” month in Chicago was an energetic month-long workday, a relaxed celebration of our lives and labors and a collegial affirmation of showing up in history as the *Order Ecumenical*. The July 2010 “Peace, Poverty, Planet Earth” conference in Oklahoma City was an expansive exploration of the *Institute of Cultural Affairs*' collaboration with faculty and students at one of the most successful institutions planted by the historic (Methodist) church—the OIKOS Scholars Program at Oklahoma City University.

All three events had meaningful agendas and each one was an energizing experience. They were all reminders that our movement's external mission is not complete and that we need to serve the present and coming generations with as much care and attention as we served our own. This third talking paper considers what it might mean to live the resurrected life as an elder in an emerging movemental order.

In the first talking paper I mentioned three ways to create the kind of information gathering, global interchange and practical training activity that we described as a “repository dynamic” 30-some years ago.

- *Community building*: people are needed to organize, recruit, facilitate and document events, in Chicago and elsewhere for further the development of the EI-OE-ICA archives and network relationships.
- *Asset development*: stipends and expense reimbursement—for colleagues involved in oral, video or written documentation of historical and current experience of our colleagues; collecting or receiving, processing, organizing and data entry related to extending the global archive collections;
- *Creative and technical services*: stipend, expense reimbursement and fees for contracted services—for designing, editing, desktop publishing of print and electronic media and online resources; developing and maintaining web sites, collaborative platforms, web logs and content management systems; developing systems and procedures for processing new holdings, maintaining a catalog database, creating finding aids and adding to the digital collections; developing training and support materials and curricula for volunteers and staff members who are working on the archive and for the general public who are interested in accessing and using the archive.

It's not difficult to brainstorm important early steps. We need, for example:

- an inclusive, in-depth listing of all the people with an interest in the EI-OE-ICA common memory and something to say about their own involvement with this heritage; documentation of these colleagues' arenas of interest, their personal and professional engagements and contacts, and the stories and case studies they could share with colleagues and the public
- a comprehensive listing of all of the publications by or referencing our colleagues, with thumbnail images of the publications and where they can be obtained
- a way to cross-reference our interests and fields of engagement in a way that reveals the breadth of information and experience that surrounds us
- to thoughtfully identify colleagues with high value memory and health vulnerabilities whom we need to spend time with immediately for oral history taking and topical debriefing
- to identify subject area memory holders and interest groups that can help us prioritize the most important materials we need to uncover and prepare for cataloging and archiving
- to describe the most urgent archiving tasks needing the investment of volunteer effort and to encourage and support self-organizing teams willing to spend time with the archive in Chicago
- to develop a calendar that helps people plan for engagement in Chicago

- to thoroughly document lessons learned and best practices from our work in May and continue developing resources for use by future volunteer groups
- to continue using the web sites available to us to foster distance eventfulness that keeps the archive and related projects in mind and that furthers development and community building with the ICA USA web site

These three categories of work provide a starting point for envisioning cash flow scenarios and a budget that could evolve over time as this work expands and begins to attract funding and fees for service. We should include creation of a travel pool for sojourn (like May) and conference events (like OCU in July) that could support participants and include contributions on behalf of participants. It will help us project numbers if we visualize budgeting stipends for the different levels of experience people bring to our archive-related work:

- \$10/hour: interns without common memory or system familiarity = \$400 per week
- \$15/hour: colleagues or part-time staff with common memory and/or system familiarity = \$600 per week
- \$20/hour: colleagues or part-time staff with subject familiarity and/or process leadership = \$800 per week
- \$25/hour: colleagues or part-time staff with subject, process and/or technical expertise = \$1,000 per week

We should create a budget for work that needs to begin immediately and prioritize that work so that we can grow the level of contributed or earned income that it attracts. These are servant leadership roles for empowering and engaging colleagues, partners and clients in activities related to our methods, the contents of our archive and the long-term project of reinventing ourselves and our services in partnership with others. In principle, the more time we invest in activities that engage others, generate income and/or support the income-generating activities of others, the more we will be able to attract funding, contributions and fees for service.