

Evangelical Friends Church Southwest Representative Report to PYM Annual Session 2018

SUMMARY

As the representative from Pacific YM to the Evangelical Friends Church Southwest, I attended their Annual Meeting in Loma Linda in January, 2018. The theme for this year is "Fueling a Spirit-Led Movement Where Jesus Changes People Who Change the World". The goals of EFCSW include five areas:

1. Pastoral Development - identify, develop and deploy new potential lead pastors
2. New Churches/Campuses - 'Planting' new churches and building campuses where EFCSW churches already exist
3. Pastoral Care - define and create a profile of a healthy pastor, provide training and conferences in English and Spanish, and create pastoral clusters, personal followup and assessment (including the a counseling therapist on staff to prevent and address burn out).
4. Local and Global Initiatives - work to create events that change our world
5. Governance - analyze and assess their system- what keeps them healthy and on mission and what is cumbersome and ineffective for this time?

Several pastors from northern CA reached out to my husband (my guest) and me during our time with them. We enjoyed the worship and singing with them.

Reflections:

This experience was refreshing in that it was energizing to experience another model of Christ's work in the world. These Friends are on fire and are also being financially supported in their work, so that it is not just middle class, predominantly white Friends doing the work, but includes people with more ethnic and class diversity. While we are often unclear about what we believe, these Evangelical Friends are very clear that Jesus saves and therefore there are huge populations in the world needing the outreach of these Friends. On the other hand, the leadership roles outside of the Latino Friends were held by predominantly white males.

My visit raised several questions: Do we invite Evangelical Friends to join us for our Annual Session? Do we send a representative to EFCSW as a way of creating a relationship with these Friends or in hopes of developing such a relationship? Do we provide sufficient support to leadership in our monthly meetings? What more can we do to develop leaders?

Sandy Kewman
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