

## **NJA Council President Annual Report**

May 18, 2019

The New Jersey Association Council consists of chairpersons of all Association commissions, working groups, association and conference representatives, members-at-large, and other members. Our ACM, David Popham also attends the meetings. We meet the third Thursday night of most months. We do not meet in December, July, and August.

The purpose of the meeting is to help steer the mission and vision of the Association. We empower churches, pastors, and church members to be the church where they are. We also provide resources, encouragement, program support, and keen direction to achieve such purposes. We meet to stay current of our efforts, reviewing the minutes, correspondences, and financial transactions.

Besides our regular business, over the course of the past year we have accomplished several ministry endeavors. For example, last April, we approved specific grants to help start new ministries in local congregations in the NJ Association. These grants, known as the Exodus Grants (formerly known as the Genesis Grants), must be a new ministry effort that reaches out to the community. Our resources provide seed money that helps provides for a new thing. This year, our grants helped NJ churches to helping local churches provide sandwich meals, to creating an LGBTQ youth social support group, and fixing up a needed shelter. We are still reviewing two grants and will make a determination shortly.

Your Association is living into the new ministerial relationship with several Reformed Churches of America in New Jersey. We are excited about this relationship and have invited their churches to places of leadership within our Association. Each Commission will have a representative as will Church Council.

We are fortunate that the Social Justice Task Force remains a priority in the Central Atlantic Conference and especially within the NJ Association. We are grateful for the work of Michael Howard for his leadership and enthusiasm with the Task Force. Rusty Eidemann-Hicks and James DeBoer are continuing to educate our churches about the needs to remain vigilant regarding social justice issues. To keep the Association updated regarding their efforts, we have reserved a seat on the Council for them. We remain committed to their work as they promote a new way of promoting Social Justice ministries in the association and conference. Recognizing that the old ways of legislative outreach, resolutions, and pronouncements aren't working as efficiently as possible, they have recommended a new approach. They want to help build a social justice movement within our congregations around justice issues. They want to teach community organizing at the local church level.

I am extremely grateful for having served on the Council for two terms. I have been blessed by being allowed to serve with great pastors and lay leaders. Each has brought a Christian heart and dedication to their work on the Council. This year is my last and the reigns are being turned over

to L.L. DeBreuil, pending her vote at the NJ Annual Spring meeting. She brings passion, kindness, and wisdom. Given her institutional memory of how the Association has worked, we are confident that she'll help guide the Council and the NJ Association churches well during the transition period of our Interim and settled ACM position.

Finally, I am grateful for the friendship and leadership of David Popham, our ACM. Working alongside him as been a joy and a pleasure. I wish him well in his new endeavors. He was blessed our Association and left it better for having served.

Respectfully Submitted,  
David C. Bocock