

## IPMN Annual Meeting – Oct 11-13, 2012

### Report from Curtis Marwood

Jan McIntyre and I attended the annual meeting of IPMN at the Cenacle Retreat Centre in Chicago. The Centre is a conference and retreat house in Lincoln Park neighbourhood in NE Chicago, a beautiful area near the lake. Jan and I spent 3 hours Thursday morning walking through the area, including a stroll through the free zoo that is open 365 days of the year.

It was the largest gathering they have had in the 6-7 years with over 100 in attendance.

The meeting began at 4:00 pm on Thursday and ended at noon on Saturday.

The new Moderator is Katherine Cunningham.

Over the 3 days, some of the business they dealt with was elections for new officers, By-law changes, treasurer's report and budget. They set a budget of \$80,000, with \$60,000 of that as the goal for 2012-13. At the end of the meeting they had new pledges from members of \$23,000 toward the goal, and with other pledges and funds on hand, they have \$43,000.

Worship was a meaningful part of the weekend for me. The worship times included opening worship on Thursday, morning devotions on Friday, Evening vespers on Friday, Communion Saturday morning and closing devotions at noon.

#### Highlights of the program were:

Thursday evening: Miko Peleg, author of *The General's Son*, co-hosted with Episcopal Peace Fellowship's Palestine Mission Network, at the Episcopal church across the street from the Centre. Father Fadi Diab from Palestine was scheduled to be part of the event but was unable to get a visa to leave. Rev. Rani Abdulmasih, pastor of the Mother of the Saviour church in Dearborn was able to come at short notice and participated in the conversation.

Friday morning: Conversation with Miko and Rani continued in the morning, with Rani presenting the message in the morning devotions.

Friday Morning: Conversation on Boycotts with Dr. Dalit Baum (WhoProfits.com) and Rae Abileah (Code Pink)

**Task Groups:** members self selected to attend break-out sessions on Friday morning:

1. Boycott strategies/divestment, socially responsible investment
2. Boycott outreach & education
3. Monitoring Positive Investment
4. Communications strategies (Curtis)
5. Partnerships and Coalitions (Jan)

I have extensive notes from the Communication session in the morning.

**Committees:** members self-selected to attend break out sessions on Friday afternoon focusing on Committees with the task of developing strategies, Actions and Values for committee work:

1. Advocacy/Education
2. Positive Investment
3. Communications
4. Partnerships
5. Building Community – membership

Among the actions taken, the Advocacy Committee (Jeff DeYoe) presented a motion to begin a national campaign on SodaStream.

In summary, both Jan and I found a warm welcome and were well integrated into the work of the gathering. There were several other ecumenical partners present who took part in the work. Since there were several “guests”, we were not given individual time for presentations, but we were made welcome and invited to participate in the conversations. I was part of a small group or the Building Community committee session in the afternoon (along with 1 UCC (Christ) member, an Episcopalian and 2 from IPMN) The leader of the group did not show up so I made a few notes and presented them to the plenary.

Perhaps the most valuable part of the event was the opportunity to make personal connections with members of IPMN.