



A Message from the President of the Network of Biblical Storytellers, International

Rev. Ron Couglin
Canada



Greetings to you. As the President of the Board of Directors for the Network of Biblical Storytellers, Int'l., I would like to update you on the work of the Board and its many programs. The Board met following the Festival Gathering in August and had a two-hour conference call in early November. We always have a full and lively agenda as we try to keep on top of the many activities of our network and think of ways to promote and expand our work.

During our meeting following the Festival Gathering we spent some time evaluating the festival. We noted that there seemed to be a lot of appreciation for our move to the 4-H Center in the Washington, D.C. area. It seemed that the average age of our participants was younger and the overall participation reflected more cultural and racial diversity. The new facilities met our needs and all the spaces for workshops were handy and easily accessible. The one drawback was that audio-visual equipment in the auditorium was dated, but the 4-H Center has promised to solve that problem by next year.

There were very positive comments about our theme speaker, Rev. Dr. Marvin McMickle, and our featured storyteller, Noa Baum. Worship and music was rated very highly and our workshops seem to be getting better and more varied. The Epic Telling was a great experience as we told the first

thirteen chapters of the Book of Acts in the Chevy Chase Methodist Church across the street from the 4-H Center. One of the advantages of being in the church was that many local people came to experience the Epic Telling. This year for the first time, we invited our partner groups in other countries to submit a report about their activities and invited an international representative to attend our NBS Board meeting. So we received reports from Australia, Cameroon, Canada, Gambia and the Philippines. In addition to myself, Carole Danby from Australia and Larry Gusto from the Philippines participated in the meeting, while George Minang from Cameroon sent a video report. We are hoping to expand our international connections at future board meetings.

On the international front, the board was pleased to hear about a mission trip in 2016 to Haiti. We encourage our members to keep the international missions in their thoughts and prayers. If you have any contacts in other countries which might lead to a mission trip please let our office know about it: 800-355-6627.

Finances continue to be a source of constant conversation at our board meetings, since our income is insufficient to meet our hopes and dreams as an organization. We are doing great work influencing theological education, biblical studies, worship leader-

ship and movements for peace. But we could be doing more if we had the resources!

In 2015, we said good-bye to four active members of the NBS Board: Dennis Dewey, Cindy Maybeck, Juliana Rowe and Gloria Ulterino. We are indebted to their contributions to the Board and their enthusiasm for the work of the Network. We also welcomed two new Board members: Tim Coombs and Bill Wieland.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the loss of a very active and committed former member of the Board, Rev. Dr. Lynn White. Lynn served as President of the NBS Board of Directors. Many who knew and loved him expressed appreciation for his extraordinary skill as leader, his expertise as a mediator, his generous encouragement as a teacher, his sensitivity and caring as a pastoral presence, and his great big, oversized, over-flowingly loving heart as a human being. His family has funded a special scholarship for a first time attendee at a Festival Gathering.

As President of the NBS Board of Directors, I am very grateful for a board that is very active and responsible as it shepherds our mission to encourage everyone to learn and tell biblical stories. We welcome your questions, suggestions and comments. My email is: ronaldkc@aol.com.