

You can't fish for people without

BAIT

www.uccny.org/CastingYourNets/ Spring 2010

Welcome to your newly reformatted Casting Your Nets support guide. Four times each year, your CYN Steering Committee offers direction to help you grow CYN in your church. Written and edited by Rev. Lex Liberatore stpaulunited@verizon.net.

Going Deep!

Winter meetings lead into a vital Spring

Jesus got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon Peter, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. When Jesus finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into the *deep water* and let down your nets for a catch.” Simon Peter answered, “Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets.”...they caught so many fish their nets began to break.’ (Luke 5:3-6)

Is Jesus in our boat? Are we ready to cast our nets into the strange and unknown places where our church has never gone before? Are we prepared to stand before God, even though we fear for our very lives? Are we ready to trust and take risks – to cast ourselves fully into the depths of community, find our true selves and be empowered to serve? Are we ready to go into the deep water for a catch? Over 30 NY Conference churches declared themselves ready at four winter regional CYN workshops.

Creative and energized folks from Suffolk and Metro, Upstate and Black River St. Lawrence, Western Area, and GVA churches, and even one Susquehanna church, joined in 4 winter CYN meetings to focus, share, learn, grow and get fishing. Everyone was eager for CYN tools to focus their congregations on bringing the Good News to their neighbors and growing the church. Under the spirited direction of CYN Steering Committee members Bonnie Miller, Marcia Tolman, Jen Mazur and Lex Liberatore these first ever winter events were mini CYN fishing schools (Lex and Jen called them “fish nuggets”). This was also the public unveiling of CYN’s new “consultant” program. Bonnie, Marcia and Lex are ready to help your team with problems, provide resources to aid your church’s CYN discernment process and answer questions. CYN helps create excited, vital Christ-centered churches by concentrating on five focus areas: Our life together in Christ (Fellowship); Identifying, getting to know and inviting new people (Invitation); Reaching out to others with Christ’s love (Mission); Supporting it (Generosity) and Celebrating it (Worship). The underlying message: *CYN’s not just one thing, it’s five things*. Churches must stop thinking their lives revolve around one thing at a time. To be vital in the 21st century, churches must focus on all these areas at once.

Bonnie Miller, CYN Southeast Region Consultant found churches hungry for the tools CYN offers, ‘I was able to touch base with the minister from Garden City, who is now going home to get his folks together so they don't miss out on the discount price this year! Also, a church in

the interim stage of life wants to have me come out to do an orientation. The third contact was with a minister from Riverside Church who is going to look for an interim position. She wants to be “fully trained” in how to implement CYN so that she can use it, along with her interim training, when she is called to such a position.’ Through a special CYN web-site (www.uccmetrosuffolk.org/revit_church/revit_church-casting_your_nets.htm) the Southeast Region has posted ideas to help integrate all five CYN areas in your church. New churches were also added from the Western Area event. Bonnie Bates (Pastor, Faith UCC Boston, NY) was an event leader and has pastored two CYN churches. Bates reminds all of us that numbers (a one dimensional focus on recruiting new members) is not the focus of CYN. The Gospel and prayer are the things that give life to the body of Christ, these are our focus, “It was wonderful to share experiences from two different (CYN) congregations and focus on the renewed life in congregations, even when additional numbers are not the result. A joyous, focused congregation is enough!” Successful CYN pastors, like Bonnie Bates, know our relationship with Christ must be our sole and unwavering focus. If we can hear God speaking to our deepest needs and heartfelt prayers, true renewal isn’t far behind. As Bates said of her own experience at this CYN gathering, “Thirsty people enjoyed the information on the fishing schools as well as an overview of the concepts and hopes that CYN fosters in church revitalization.”

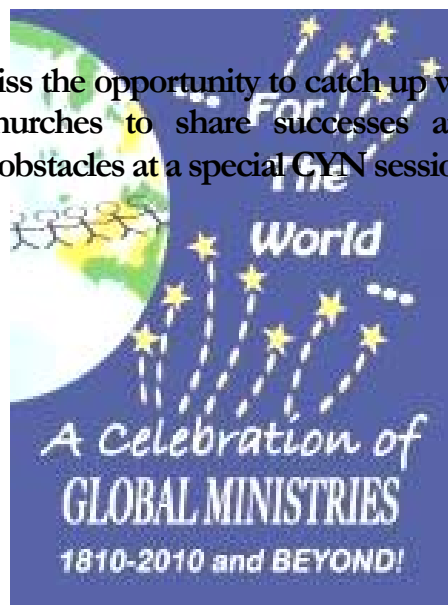
CYN is not a new idea. It’s a reminder of something very old, something we modern believers often take for granted: “The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.” We are the continued witnesses of that Word alive in the world. We just have to remember how to do it.



CYN Consultant, Bonnie Miller: addresses the group at the Southeast Regional CYN Meeting

Catch CYN at the NY Conference Annual Meeting, June 4-6 at Silver Bay of the Adirondacks

Don't miss the opportunity to catch up with other CYN churches to share successes and work through obstacles at a special CYN session



Go to: <http://www.uccny.org/> to register

CYN Annual Retreat Set For October 2010

Attention all CYN member churches, and any church who wishes to join the NY Conference CYN program. The Casting Your Nets Annual Retreat is set for Friday evening October 22 through Sunday afternoon October 24.

This is the major yearly event for member churches in the NY Conference CYN program. While the shape of this year's event is still under construction, we can promise a full weekend of powerful witness and tools to take home and put into practice in order to help your church hear and obey the voice of the Still-speaking God. A national speaker is planned to integrate the five CYN focus areas (Mission, Fellowship, Invitation, Generosity and Worship).

Look for more details in future emails.

SAVE THE DATE

CYN Annual Retreat

October 22-24, 2010

**Emmanuel-Friedens UCC
Schenectady**

More Details Soon!

NOW'S A GREAT TIME TO JOIN AS A CYN MEMBER CHURCH

It's time to renew or join for the first time as a CYN church. The New York Conference underwrites part of the cost of the CYN program, but all participating churches must do their part as well. Now is an especially good time

**Special
Promotional
Rate**

- \$300 for churches under 100 members
- \$500 for churches of 100 – 250 members
- \$750 for churches of more than 250

**Rates Go
Up In 2011**

- \$600 for churches under 100 members
- \$1000 for churches 100 – 250 members
- \$1500 for churches of more than 250

to join. Any church joining in 2010 will get a 50% discount over the regular rates. Plus, if you join now, you won't have to renew before October 2011. This is a great value in these times of tight church budgets.

Even at the 2011 rates you get a lot for your money: **The Annual CYN Retreat** (join with Conference churches and learn from national and statewide experts on church revitalization) - all hotel, meals and conference fees are included for up to five people from any member church. **The CYN Consultant Program** (Your very own regional consult to help guide your Team through the rough patches, and act as a resources person to advise your church on it's journey to revitalization)

The CYN Regional Winter Meeting, a day long event held in 4 different regions—for your convenience. Plus, receive **BAW** (the quarterly CYN support newsletter) and materials to help your church Team make CYN work in your setting.

Join CYN now! It's the right time to renew your church!



YOUR CYN PLANS HIT A SNAG?
Your consultant is just a phone call or email away!

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