

Metropolitan Area Religious Coalition of Cincinnati (MARCC)

Delegates Council Meeting: December 11, 2024

Update on Strategic Visioning/Planning Process:

Still in Dire Financial Straits

- Still facing potential deficit in near future
- Need to prioritize fundraising
 - o Online and social media
 - o Increases from Judicatories
 - o New large donors from Friends of MARCC
 - o Grants?

Process of Consultation and Learning: Moments and Methods

- Danny's ongoing interviews/meetings with folks (will continue!)
- Delegates Council meetings and Board meetings
- Reviewing and analyzing organizational documents from past work
- Reading and analyzing external secondary sources (newspaper pieces, past reports by public/private entities) relevant to MARCC's past and present work

Working to achieve a balance:

- Between doing the work and fundraising for the work
- Between popular participation/process focus and a more efficiency- / efficacy-driven (hierarchical) operational model
- Between working "behind-the-scenes" with politicians and policymakers, and enhancing our visibility and public profile as an organization
- Between outreach with Judicatory Leaders and outreach with ordinary folks/partners
- Across short-term, medium-term, and long-term planning
 - o On the cusp of beginning a strategic planning process in 2025

Strategic Visioning Questions and Answers: Broad trends so far...

Q: What has worked well for MARCC in the past?

- When it has served as a space for debate, deliberation among the religious/faith communities interested in social justice concerns
- When it has taken bold stances in favor of specific causes/issues that have a likelihood of passing/being implemented
- Served as collective moral conscious of the city
- When judicatory leaders as individuals were very involved and invested in MARCC
- When it has served as a convener of other organizations across sectors

Q. What needs to be left behind, changed, transformed?

- Role of ED must be more creative, dynamic, open, visionary
- Reliance on tradition and convention must be combined with innovation and creativity
- Need to expand:
 - o More diversity in members' races, ethnicities, ages, faiths, socio-economic status
 - o Outreach to re-engage Judicatory leaders
 - o Outreach to engage new partner organizations, either as external allies, or member judicatories
 - o Outreach to reengage normal people and congregations in the work of MARCC; that they see it as something that represents their concerns and elevates our collective voices to the halls of power to advocate for a more just society from an interfaith perspective

Q. What excites you about MARCC looking toward the future?

- Doing research-informed and grassroots-accountable advocacy work on key issues
- Reactivating younger generations
- Engaging judicatory leaders
- Bringing in new partners/judicatories
- Building an interfaith movement for social justice

Committee Formation

- Will entail a new, more responsive, more open, and participatory organizational structure
- Dispersion of work responsibilities and multiplication of work output
- Empowerment of normal individuals and congregations involved with MARCC to do work that they feel passionate about within our ongoing concerns
- Specific committees
 - o Strategic planning
 - o Affordable Housing
 - o Community Safety

Work and Messaging for 2025:

- a. Focus on “advocacy, action, co-design of public policies”??
- b. Restart Court Watch
- c. Interviews with key partners, members, leaders to have social media/video content and to identify key opportunities for impact on our social concerns