

**Open with prayer:** The Reverend Cheryl Coggins Disciples of Christ, Southwest Ohio

**Minutes for October 9, 2024,** Delegates Council Meeting were submitted and approved with correction to Rae Jane Araujo's name.

**Agenda for December 11, 2024,** Delegates Council Meeting was submitted and approved.

**Roll Call of Judicatories (32 individuals present):**

**American Baptist Church USA, Miami Association:** Mark Basil

**Archdiocese of Cincinnati:** Connie Widmer, Bob Ehram, Andrew Musgrave, Lee Wilson, Karen Martin, Mary Partee, Pat Wittberg

**Cincinnati Islamic Community Center:** Tyrone Jackson

**Diocese of Southern Ohio:** Elizabeth Brown

**Disciples of Christ, Southwest Ohio:** David Tietsort, Cheryl Coggins, Thomas Barnes

**Jewish Community Relations Council of the Jewish Federation:** Jeremy Spiegel

**Great Miami River District, United Methodist Church:** Jan Seymour, Ronda Deel

**Presbytery of Cincinnati:** Maggie Shreve (Knox Presbyterian Church)

**Religious Society of Friends:** Douglas Burks, Nan Hatch, Dale Hayes, J.P. Lund, Jodi Harris

**Unitarian Universalist Council of Greater Cincinnati:** Rae Jane Araujo, Bob Lamb, Dan Schneider, Carole Womeldorf, Wanda Crawford

**United Church of Christ of Southwest Ohio and Northern Kentucky:** Jonathan Bradner, Linda Overholt

**Volunteers of America of Ohio and Indiana:** absent

**Guests (name and denomination or organization, if any):** Alice Skirtz

**MARCC:** Daniel Burrige, Holly Toensing

1. **INTRODUCTION:** Vice President of MARCC, Elizabeth Brown introduced the keynote speaker, Daniel Burrige, the Executive Director of MARCC.
2. **Guest Speaker:** Daniel Burrige, "Finding Our Path: MARCC's Past, Present, and Future," which is a continuation of the Fall Planning Conference program, specifically to provide opportunity to hear input from delegates on the planning process. Daniel expressed the desire to hear all of MARCC's constituents. Daniel gave a brief presentation centered on what he has learned since joining MARCC and where MARCC has been and is currently.
  - a. He stated this is the first in developing a vision for strategic planning. He pointed out that MARCC is in a moment of transition with a new executive director.
  - b. The organization is in a period of dire financial challenges. He stated we need to prioritize funding (online, increase judicatory dues, grants etc.) while doing our work focused on serving the community as a religious coalition focused on addressing the needs of our community, especially those who have the greatest needs.
  - c. The Executive Director said he has been learning about MARCC; has been interviewing people, attending and listing at delegates council and board meetings, by reviewing documents and by reviewing external sources such as MARCC archives and historical newspaper articles.

- d. He stated the goal is to achieve balance (doing work and fundraising), popular participation vs Efficiency outcomes), (visibility and public facing vs behind the scenes), (Short term needs vs long term planning).
- e. Daniel described important strategic questions to be considered as we move forward with strategic planning (please see attached slides):
  - i. What has worked well in the past? (Serving as a space for debate, taking stances, acting as a moral conscience, keeping judicatories involved. Collaborating with others).
  - ii. What needs to be left behind, changed, or transformed? (must be dynamic, need to expand outreach diversity; new partners) re-engage old partners, need to outreach to individuals)
  - iii. What excites us about the future. (research informed, grassroots accountable to judicatories and to those we are working for. Involve younger generations mentor, engage new partners, build an interfaith movement for social justice.)
- f. The floor was open for input from those in attendance. Many delegates responded and a fruitful discussion with many useful suggestions resulted. A sample of comments include:
  - Partners are not there for Presbyterians to be a judicatory and therefore no vote. Only Knox is involved. How do we involve non-judicatories in decision making?
  - MARCC has in the past worked on the local level and must do so in future
  - Non-judicatory status needs to be fixed
  - Local impact is a key to success
  - Connect with community councils is one way to increase our impact; we need to collaborate with leaders from other groups on issues.
  - MARCC ID cards are an example of local success. Consensus building is different for judicatories. How do we build consensus in a diverse religious coalition.
  - Are priorities necessary at all. Do we work past each other. Should we be nexus for all issues.
  - We need to be able to meet the ever-changing needs in our community. Immigration is an example of something we are not doing that will dramatically impact on our community this coming year.
  - Working behind the scenes means we are not well known; we need to get our message out. We need to tell our story.
  - How are other institutions fund raising and how do we use those models in our fund-raising? For example, the Chamber of Commerce and Go Fund Me should be looked at.
  - Immigration is an issue that many religious organizations are working on. Can we be working on housing people? How do we deal with immediate needs of immigrants?
  - What is working behind the scenes. What are examples
  - One example of working behind the scenes is MARCC working with The City of Cincinnati Council in 2002 to engage stakeholders with race relations.
  - Join Immigrant Dignity to deal with it.
- g. Daniel stated that MARCC will start strategic planning in a formal way in 2025. It will start by defining what is the ultimate goal and mission of MARCC. From there plans will be developed to achieve those goals as we move forward. We need to gather input and information, develop “SMART” (SMART goals are objectives that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound), goals and objectives. From the goal and objectives MARCC needs to develop meaningful metrics to measure success and failure. Goals and objectives for fund raising need to be developed.

- h. A short presentation on forming committees for the upcoming year was presented by the Executive Director (see attached slides). The formation of three working committees were proposed and brought forward for a vote by Vice President, Elizabeth Brown: 1) Strategic Planning, 2) Affordable Housing and 3) Community Safety/Violence Prevention. The motions passed and the committees will be formed for 2025.

A call for volunteers to serve on the committees was made. A notice will be sent announcing the committees and asking for active participants.


## **REMINDERS**

**Delegates Council Next Meeting**, Wednesday January 15, 2024, 12 Noon-1:15 PM on Zoom, Speaker to be Announced

**MARCC Annual Meeting**, Wednesday, February 12, 2024, noon-1:15PM; **IN-PERSON** @ Fifth Third Convening Center, United Way of Greater Cincinnati—2400 Reading Rd; Cincinnati, OH 45202

The meeting was adjourned at 1:19 PM

Respectfully submitted,  
Douglas J Burks  
Secretary



# Finding our Path: MARCC's Past, Present, and Future

MARCC Delegates Council Meeting

December 11, 2024

Daniel Burrige, PhD

Executive Director, MARCC

## *Outline of the Presentation*

- Where we're at
- Inputs from Strategic Visioning thus far
- Discussion by attendees of Strategic Visioning questions
- Toward Strategic Planning in 2025
- The Idea of Committee Formation

## *Where we're at as MARCC*

- Moment of Transition (new ED!)
- Moment of Learning, Reflection, Balancing, and Visioning
- Still in dire financial situation
- Need to prioritize fundraising
  - *Online and social media*
  - *Increases from Judicatories*
  - *New Donors to become Friends of MARCC*
  - *Grants??*

# *Learning about MARCC: Methods and Moments*

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

## Achieving Balance

- Doing the Work
- Popular Participation
- Visibility and Public-Facing
- Outreach with Leadership
- Short- and Medium-term needs
- Fundraising for the Work
- Efficiency and Outcomes
- “Behind the Scenes”
- Outreach with normal people
- Long-term planning and strategies

## Strategic Visioning Questions

- What has worked well for MARCC in the past?
- What needs to be left behind, changed, or transformed?
- What excites you about MARCC looking toward the future?

## What worked well for MARCC in the past?

- Serving as space for debate, deliberation, consensus-building across faiths and judicatories
- Taking public stances on issues with a strong chance of being passed/implemented
- Serving as collective moral conscience for the city/metro area
- Keeping Judicatory leaders involved and invested
- Convening other organizations across sectors (faith, business, community-based, policy makers)

## What needs to be changed or transformed?

- Role of ED must be dynamic, open, visionary
- Tradition and convention must balance with innovation, creativity
- Need to Expand our Outreach
  - More diversity
  - Outreach to re-engage Judicatory leaders
  - Outreach to engage new partners, allies, judicatories
  - Outreach to re-engage normal people, congregations

## What excites you for the future?

- Doing research-informed, grassroots-accountable advocacy work on our ongoing concerns
- Reactivating younger generations (“get a mentee!”)
- Engaging judicatory leaders
- Engaging new partners
- Building an interfaith movement for social justice

# Strategic Visioning Questions

- What is MARCC's mission?
- What has worked well for MARCC in the past?
- What needs to be left behind, changed, or transformed?
- What excites you about MARCC looking toward the future?

# Elements of Strategic Planning for Non-profits

- (Re-)Establish the ultimate goal or mission
- Gather input from stakeholders
  - Analyze internal context/forces
  - Analyze external context/forces
- Set SMART objectives (*see next slide*)
- Flesh out specific metrics for objectives and sub-goals
- Create the necessary fundraising plan



# SMART Objectives

- **Specific**: clearly defined and unambiguous
  - **Measurable**: trackable in either quantitative or qualitative terms
  - **Achievable**: realistic and attainable
  - **Relevant**: aligned with broader mission/goals
  - **Time-bound**: specific timeframe for completion
- 
- *How does this look for a small advocacy-focused organization??*

## Committee Formation: what do we get?

- More responsive, participatory organizational structure
- Dispersion and multiplication of MARCC's work
- Empowerment of individuals and congregations within MARCC

## Committees to be Voted on and Formed

- “Strategic Planning” (including Finance and Fundraising)
- “Affordable Housing”
- “Community Violence Prevention/Safety”

**VOTE YES AND THEN JOIN A COMMITTEE!**