

# APPENDIX I

## CCIDD MISSION/VISION STATEMENTS

### CCIDD VISION STATEMENT

**CCIDD is committed to living out the Biblical faith which affirms God's active love, presence and preferential option for those who are poor and suffering now and throughout all of human history. It values and is rooted in the struggle for liberation that has characterized those who work to build the "Kin-dom" of God on earth through denouncing injustice and building up truth, justice and dignity for each person, for all peoples and all of creation.**

**CCIDD offers an opportunity for people living in the abundance of the "developed" countries to enter into the lives of the poor, to be challenged by the reality they confront there and to engage in discussion and analysis with others to understand and interpret that reality. CCIDD offers people from the US and Canada the opportunity to witness the often heroic efforts of the poor to survive in a globalized economy and it enables people who have been living in privilege to experience and understand local and global realities from the perspective of the poor.**

**CCIDD challenges the perceptions and cultural mores of its participants and opens them to embracing a new and exciting world view which overcomes ethnocentric interpretations and invites commitment to building up God's reign of justice and peace in solidarity with those who are poor, marginalized and suffering.**

**CCIDD provides a retreat setting in which prayer, reflection and community sharing are also essential elements in moving toward the creation of a more just and human society.**

In 2001, the CCIDD Board of Directors approved another statement regarding the CCIDD vision that essentially affirms the previous versions but within a

different format and context. Undoubtedly, the emerging situation in Central America influenced the new wording.

## **CCIDD VISION STATEMENT      JUNE 2001**

**CCIDD's vision is rooted in the biblical faith that God hears the cries of His people and empowers them through His presence to struggle. This struggle is against all obstacles in order to free themselves and achieve the fullness of the Kingdom of God here on earth that they are meant to be. This was true about 3,000 years ago when Yahweh heard the cries of the Hebrew people and chose Moses from within the house of the pharaoh to help liberate them from Egypt.. It remained true decades ago when peoples within Chile, Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala, among others, were empowered by God's presence to free themselves from their own local tyrants but these efforts were thwarted by the new imperial power supporting the status quo, the United States of America.**

**Thus CCIDD's founders saw the need to raise up new people like Moses from within the land of the new pharaoh to question and weaken him so that God's people in Latin America and everywhere might be free. CCIDD saw the need to bring people of faith from the North to experience the suffering, faith vision and struggle of God's people here, perceive the presence of God within this struggle, and understand and respond appropriately to God's call to them to act, as Moses, as His agent for change so that the people be free. CCIDD's vision has always been that the churches and related institutions were those who should be most able to understand this call but that, because of their comfortable social conditioning with the wealth of the North, they have many times not properly responded to this prophetic call. Thus the importance of attempting to engage them in CCIDD's retreat experience while also being open to receive all groups of good will to allow the Spirit to blow as She will. The fact that the negative U.S. policy towards Central America was strongly questioned and significantly weakened by the organized effort of a Christian religious opposition is due, in part, to CCIDD's acting on this vision.**

**Today, CCIDD continues to see God's presence supporting people struggling to be free. We see this more clearly in the Indigenous struggle of southern Mexico which has a global extension. We see it in the growing resistance of organized groups concerned with the impoverishment of most people and our planet because of a globalization process responding more to the needs of capital. CCIDD sees the need of bridge building among God's people to be even more necessary and demanding than in the past.                      And thus.....**

**CCIDD is an intercultural, ecumenical Christian retreat center rooted in an inclusive and liberating theology.**

**CCIDD's mission is to provide opportunities for churches and other groups from the United States and Canada to encounter the presence of God within the struggle for justice in the Americas and empower them to work for social transformation.**

Here is another effort of mine to explain CCIDD's vision and mission within a more theological framework around this same time in 2001.

#### CCIDD MISSION/VISION STATEMENT - MAY 2001

CCIDD, with a powerful sense of self-identity as an **ecumenically Christian** and **prophetic retreat center** witnessing to **faith, hope and charity**; defines its mission as helping **God's people** to recognize through **experiencing** both the **written** and **historical Word of God**, the powerful presence of the Holy Spirit within the struggle for social justice in the Americas, and to **motivate** them to "vibrate" with this Spirit as part of God's process of "**Kin-dom**" building.

#### ***FURTHER DEFINITION OF TERMS***

##### ***Ecumenically Christian***

Uniting with other Christians to affirm and witness to a liberating and empowering biblical vision of God working historically through people, especially the poor, to bring about the values of the "Kin-dom" here on earth yesterday, today and always. We hope this witness will help others, Christian or non-Christian, to play a positive role in forwarding God's plan in history.

##### ***Prophetic***

As in the Old Testament sense, channeling what we believe to be God's message to God's people, especially but not exclusively today to the Christian churches who we believe are not providing adequate prophetic leadership and thus contributing to continued unnecessary hardship and suffering for God's people because of the mistaken

roads that too many people of power are taking today. As in the Old Testament days, these messages are often concerned with the social, economic, political, cultural or even religious aspects of society. We wish to support today's prophets and awaken those who are not adequately responding to God's call.

### **Retreat center**

Defined as a place where one goes to focus and deepen their spirituality i.e. their capability of perceiving and assisting the work of the Holy Spirit within history. CCIDD is unique in that it welcomes both believers and non-believers who wish to place themselves in this experiential space for personal growth without any proselytizing pressures.

### **Faith**

The faith that, as Jesus transformed the ordinary drinking water at Cana into the best of wines, God can also transform us, humanity, into the fullness of community (Kin-dom) but... only with our help.

### **Hope**

Hope is very important within the CCIDD effort because it is essential to empower people after their encounter with impoverishment and suffering which is very impacting and can be paralyzing unless we are motivated and inspired by witnessing others effectively struggling against injustice and can feel part of a movement greater than ourselves.

### **Charity**

CCIDD should manifest charity (love) within all its endeavors but especially within the context of Mathew 6:33 Seek first the Kingdom of God and its righteousness and these other needs will come along with it. Indeed, the principal aim of CCIDD is to help provide vision and inspiration to bring about structural changes within society to better respond to people's needs. However, CCIDD should also use its unique situation to channel support for empowering projects which liberate people and also not forget the imperative of Mathew 25. We must also show our compassion through utilizing channeled funds for appropriate specific support (food, medicine, etc.) when those we are in contact with are in urgent need.

### **God's people**

CCIDD understands God's people as being all-inclusive although some may explicitly identify themselves as such within the tradition of the old or new biblical testaments while others explicitly relate through other faiths and still others may not profess any faith. CCIDD is open to all although a priority is given to those groups who would like to focus and deepen their spirituality along the already stated faith perception of CCIDD.

## **Experiencing**

The CCIDD retreat is primarily experiential with appropriate reflection on these experiences as well as the development of a historical and structural framework to better understand the implications of these experiences. As with a missionary, it is very important for the participant to understand the reality of the masses of people. Thus it is important to visit representative homes of impoverished and marginalized people to learn what life is like for them: their hardships, their fears, dreams and values. Only then comes the real challenge of empowerment through understanding causes of impoverishment and experiencing liberating efforts of social transformation which provide a better life for people.

## **Written and Historical Word of God**

The first is sacred scripture including the old and new testaments. We believe the bible is the inspired written expression of how people of long ago understood the historical action of their God. Since we believe that same God continues to act through people within our present historical situation (Historical Word), it is important that we enlighten ourselves thru scripture in order to better perceive God's presence today and how we can be supporting God's actions rather than being an obstacle to them. These two dimensions of the Word should be adequately intertwined within the CCIDD retreat.

## **Americas**

CCIDD has long believed that the dramatic differences of living standards between North and South are completely unacceptable to God and that American and Canadian Christians should better understand the historical role of their governments in helping create this intolerable situation and began doing something about it in response to the Gospel call. Thus, the CCIDD retreat experience is to enrich those from the North with profound experiences and gospel values found here in the South so that we can break down "barriers" and build greater justice and gospel values for all.

## **Motivate**

We believe the CCIDD experience is valuable for everybody who participates. Motivation may be at different levels and realms. It is the role of the retreat director to appropriately relate with each person at the level of social or faith awareness they bring and help them to grow so that their future life will be more meaningful for themselves and others.

## **Kin-dom**

This is referring to the rich biblical vision of the Kingdom of God but eliminates the "g" to avoid the connotations of monarchy or sexist language. These are unacceptable to many people today but we wish to leave the idea of "kin" which means family and

stress the “family of God” which needs to recognize itself and act as brothers and sisters within the values of the biblical vision. This implies both a material and spiritual sharing by God’s people.

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Our original purpose and vision (charisma) has been constant although it has had to adjust according to the historical circumstances of each period.

We originally used Chile as an interesting example of Christian struggle for greater social justice because that situation was still fairly fresh in people’s minds. However, this was soon replaced by the drama being undergone in Central America in the 1980’s. The 1990’s saw the imposition of neo-liberal economics throughout Latin America with people’s liberating struggles being at a low ebb although the Zapatista Indigenous Movement in Southern Mexico provided a refreshing breeze within the overall stagnated conditions in Latin America. We also saw a growing ecological concern sweep through Latin America and the world that may very well be a too little, too late response to the gravest danger yet to threaten God’s plan for our world.