2014 Grail in the United States General Assembly

‘Facing the Present, Fashioning the Future’

June 4-6, 2014
Grailville, Loveland, Ohio
Many were involved in the planning and running of the GA

**Core Planning Team**: Kate Devlin (Chair), Terri Carter, Pamela Cobey, Mary Kay Delgado, Mary Farrell, Mary Gindhart, Peggy Goederer, Cherie Holman, Maureen Tate, Beth Wasmer, Noreen Willhelm, Sharon Wood and others acted as consultants

**Spirituality Planning Team**: Terri Carter (Chair), Pamela Cobey, Tiffany Curtis, Mary Gene Devlin, Simonetta Romano, Sharon Thomson

**Facilitators**: Maureen Tate (Chair), Tiffany Curtis, Maureen Laflin, Beth Rosen, Sharon Wood

**National Office staff**: Noreen Willhelm, Carrie Bowling, Megan Faircloth

**Grailville staff**: Terrie Puckett, Dale Marie Prenatt
Contents

Introduction .................................................................................................................................................. 1
  By Kate Devlin ........................................................................................................................................... 1

Mission ...................................................................................................................................................... 5
  Synthesized by Martha Heidkamp and Katie Sellers ............................................................................... 5
  Mission Topic Next Steps ......................................................................................................................... 7

Membership ............................................................................................................................................... 8
  Synthesized by Deborah Sullivan and Carol Skyrm .............................................................................. 8
  Membership Topic Next Steps ................................................................................................................. 11

Finances .................................................................................................................................................. 12
  Synthesized by Peggy Goederer and Ingrid Farnham with input from Mary Farrell ......................... 12
  Finance Topic Next Steps ....................................................................................................................... 15

Governance Report ................................................................................................................................. 16
  Synthesized by Simonetta Romano and Beth Wasmer ......................................................................... 16
  in consultation with Maureen Laflin and Maureen Tate ....................................................................... 16
  Governance Topic Next Steps ................................................................................................................. 20

Spirituality .............................................................................................................................................. 21
  Synthesized by Tiffany Curtis and Pamela Cobey ................................................................................. 21
  Spirituality Topic Next Steps .................................................................................................................. 22

Grailville Discussion ............................................................................................................................... 24
  Synthesized by Pam Hall ....................................................................................................................... 24
  Grailville Topic Next Steps .................................................................................................................... 27

Cornwall – Presentation ............................................................................................................................ 29
  Prepared and presented by Cornwall Staff: Simonetta Romano, Sharon Thomson and Lucy Jones ... 29

Appendix A – Group Norms for the 2014 GA ..................................................................................... 34

Appendix B – Schedule for the GA ......................................................................................................... 35

Appendix C – How do you see yourself living out the Vision and Mission of the Grail? ................. 37

Appendix D – A Story of Spirituality in the United States .................................................................. 44
  By Mary Gene Devlin ............................................................................................................................ 44

Appendix E – Report by GA Finance Work Group ............................................................................. 48

Appendix F – 2014 GA Participants ........................................................................................................ 50
Introduction
By Kate Devlin

“We have very little time, so we must proceed very slowly”
- a Buddhist saying

During this General Assembly we plunged our bucket down into the depths of the well and pulled it up. This report synthesizes the discussions that we had during the GA. However, it’s important to note that we started off the week with a pre-GA workshop, “Transformation in Times of Uncertainty” with Nancy Sylvester, IHM, from the Institute for Communal Contemplation and Dialogue. The goal of this workshop was to help us prepare for the GA so that we could enter into an open space and allow for creativity and hope to bubble up like riches from the well. The power of communal contemplation is related to quantum physics. In engaging in this work we are able to radiate another kind of energy in the body; if we are truly present to the here and now, the energy can effect change. Over half of the participants in the GA also attended this pre-GA workshop and many remarked that it helped to set the tone and the mindset for the GA (Appendix F).

Knowing that we were about to embark on the weighty discussions of the GA, Nancy Sylvester reminded us of a quote by Einstein, who said, “We cannot solve the problems that are facing us with the same consciousness that created them.”¹ Additionally, a shift in consciousness is often brought about by reaching a point of chaos where we are faced with either breaking down or breaking through to a new place. The practice that we used to prepare ourselves was to sit in silent contemplation together for 20 minutes at a time. This was a new practice for some and a not so new practice for others. We attempted to stop multi-tasking, still our thoughts and sink into the centers of our very selves. In practicing contemplation, we could become open to being present. Thomas Keating and others describe contemplation as taking “a long loving look at the real.”²

In discussing examples of shifts or evolution in consciousness we reviewed how the consciousness of religion has changed over time, shifting from pantheism where the focus was on the natural world, on the magical and mythical where nature was alive, to the traditional stage. In the traditional stage there was a strong sense of loyalty, sets of rules and moral codes were defined, there was conformity to an external authority and governments began to enforce the moral codes. Next was the shift to the rational stage, the scientific revolution, the age of enlightenment and the age of reason. Beyond the rational stage, there is the shift into the emerging stage of a global, cosmic, communal and ecological consciousness, which tends to the whole, the common good and the discovery or re-discovery of inter-relatedness and encourages dialogue and community. Actually, this “new” consciousness has roots that are quite old.³

¹ Quote taken from a presentation by Nancy Sylvester, IHM
² www.contemplativeoutreachireland.com/contemplative-practices/
Each stage of consciousness can be seen as a separate loop in a spiral that transcends and includes the previous stages. It doesn’t mean that the previous stages were bad, but there was a shift to a different layer. In the Grail we speak of the “elbow of time” to mark significant junctures in our history. In many ways the “elbow of time” can be seen as a bend in a spiral. Too many people live in a split state, i.e., they experience the traditional stage in their faith life and the rational stage in other aspects of life. On the other hand, there are in the world those people who are very adept at moving through the layers of the spiral and are able to bridge stages of consciousness that can help facilitate the shift between stages for others.\(^4\)

One of the goals of contemplative dialogue is to create a space where one can speak and listen with a contemplative heart. In doing this, one can experience more complex thought patterns and, with practice, accept the invitation to a shift into a new consciousness. Of course, we had very little time in our workshop to become experts in contemplation and this new (or perhaps very old) way of dialogue. However, we were given some vocabulary and tools that we could collectively reference and these made their way into the group norms that were accepted for use at the GA (Appendix A).

Three key foci to help us engage in contemplative dialogue were 1) dispositions, 2) attitudes, and 3) behaviors. In our dispositions, we were encouraged to make our hearts soft, spacious and welcoming. In our behaviors, we were encouraged to not resist or flee from what is painful or distasteful, and to not resist the idea or the person that is problematic but to welcome in the strange and the different. We were encouraged to foster attitudes of openness, boundaries and hospitality. We need to be open not only to the other, but to ourselves. Being open to our own biases, prejudices, and world views – knowing that once you know what you are operating out of, it is easier to shift. We were encouraged to be present to the moment, to be compassionate with ourselves and our fears. In our behaviors, we were encouraged to slow down the pace of our conversations, to pause every once in a while, to listen completely to what the person is saying before beginning to formulate our own responses. We were encouraged to be curious about what someone says, especially if you have a different perspective or you feel resistant to what they are saying.

Dialogue is a conversation with those who think differently, the primary purpose of which is for me to learn from the other – a “crossing over” into the world of the other and back again. It is a whole new way of thinking in human history.

Raimon Panikkar\(^5\)

Those who experienced the pre-GA workshop worked to bridge the gap to welcome the rest of the participants of the GA. More information about the work of the Institute for Communal Contemplation and Dialogue can be found at the website: [www.engagingimpasse.org](http://www.engagingimpasse.org).


\(^5\) Quote taken from a presentation by Nancy Sylvester, IHM
In the past we had a specific process at the GAs to deal with proposals that followed a flow of presentation, clarification questions, plenary discussion, small groups for further refinement, if necessary, and coming back to a whole group for final recommendations and vote. In 2008, we adopted a different methodology for general assemblies.

The GA provides opportunities for discussion of present and future Grail issues, dialogue on matters of vision, mission, values, and recommendation of policies to Council for further decision-making. The GA also includes: experiences of community, celebration, bonding and spiritual growth; discussion of issues facing women nationally and internationally; sharing and learning about the mission and vision of the Grail as being lived out in various groups, at the Centers, and internationally. (Movement Building Scenario, adopted 2008)

In this GA, we did not have specific proposals and the process was aimed at building on the work of circle meetings over the last year and generating recommendations from consultation with participants. The topics for the sessions were taken from the sections of the Movement Building Scenario and included: Mission, Membership, Finances, Governance, Centers (longer sessions on Grailville, and a session report on the Cornwall Dream Quest) and there was an additional topic for a session: Spirituality. Each session was approximately 1½ hours, which is a very limited time to deal with the weighty topics before us and get to articulation of recommendations. Most of the topics had two sessions dedicated to them (see Appendix B for the meeting agenda). We worked to the best of our abilities and used the following outline to address each main topic:

A. Context: Why did we do what we did? Pulling from the Movement Building Scenario and current practices, how do we work/operate with regards to the following areas: Mission, Membership, Governance, Finances and Spirituality?

B. Input: Summary of the issues already identified by members over the past 1½ years of circle meetings.

C. Consultation - small group work, plenary reports and comments distilling key issues and identifying preliminary recommendations. We asked each small group to:
   - Choose a time-keeper and a note-taker
   - Pause before each woman’s initial sharing, to prepare to listen to this woman. Also allow a moment after each sharing for the group to express their gratitude to the woman.
   - Make sure everyone gets a turn to speak, and to answer clarifying questions. Then any group discussion that’s needed can happen.
   - Listen with an open heart and mind – especially to those who express opinions that are different from yours
   - Please be mindful of the group norms (See Appendix A).
D. Listening by all for what is percolating as the core issues and possible strategies to address them.

E. Articulation of preliminary recommendations - On Saturday afternoon, we broke up into work groups to focus on the themes that were bubbling up and each group tried to articulate the issues, ideas, and recommendations from the assembly.

F. Sense of the Meeting - by Sunday, we had hoped to have specific recommendations that could be shared with the rest of the movement as the sense of the meeting. We were able to generate some broad-stroke preferences, directions and recommendations. We did not create formalized plans.

The following chapters of this report present separate syntheses of the main sessions. Any report can only go so far in summarizing the entire experience of the General Assembly. In addition to our working sessions, there was an opening and closing ritual centered on an installation in the Oratory by Pamela Cobey honoring the four directions; there were photos and quotes from some of those members who were interviewed during last summer’s 70-100 gathering. We had a warm-up exercise that had members connecting to how they lived out the mission of the Grail in the US in their lives (the statements were transcribed and included in Appendix C). There was a Red Tent set up in St. Brigid where members could take a time-out. In the Caravansary, where all the sessions were held, there was a Prayer Corner, where members who wanted to stay in the room and witness the discussions could sit. There were open space offerings that included a Circle of Remembrance for those who had died; an informal discussion of Harlene Bryenton’s trip to India; hayride tours of Grailville; “Blessing the Space Between Us” - Life Journey in the Grail; a Finance Room set up and staffed by Tracey Nugent, Noreen Willhelm and Mary Farrell; and a discussion group on Grailville’s future. There were discussions at meals, at the evening Bistro and what would a Grail gathering be without a ‘Variety’ Show?!

The time was packed with experiences and connecting with each other. At times, tempers flared and tempers cooled; some of the comments recorded here may seem inflammatory or not inflammatory enough; some comments had the support of a majority of members in the room and some had little support. What is presented here illustrates the diversity of the members who attended the GA. Council will review at its October 2014 meeting all input and build that into our Grail Strategic Plan, with goals to address concerns and suggestions emerging from GA 2014 and September 2014 circle meetings. Our discussions will continue to evolve as we work to fashion the future of the Grail in the US.

Thank you to all of the planners who worked on making the GA happen. Thank you to the team of facilitators who stayed up late and worked to adjust the schedule and the sessions to meet the needs of the members. Thank you to everyone who participated in the GA – this includes all of those who were unable to travel to Grailville, but held us in their thoughts and prayers. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this report!
Mission
Synthesized by Martha Heidkamp and Katie Sellers

VISION
Called by our spiritual values, The Grail envisions a world of peace, justice and renewal of the earth, brought about by women working together as catalysts for change.

MISSION
The Grail in the U.S. empowers women to work for world transformation by:

- building bridges among diverse faith traditions and spiritual paths
- advancing peace, justice and a world free from military dominance
- fostering international exchange and solidarity
- challenging economic systems that put at risk the most vulnerable, especially women and children
- creating communities for a sustainable future
- celebrating the arts as a means for personal and societal transformation

I. GRAIL MISSION:
   A. What is your reaction to the idea of the Grail’s work being the work of individual women in the world?
   B. How does it relate to the question of ‘What does the Grail do?’

II. Is anything unresolved for you?

III. Broad directions, recommendations, themes?
   A. Individual – we don’t always see our individual Grail work as real Grail work
      a. While we are each in process of Grail work, we need to recognize/be aware of doing this work ourselves and communicate to others what’s being done
   B. Collective work – we recognize collective work as Grail work
   C. Center-based work
      a. Projects are work of small local groups who organize them in light of Grail Mission and local/regional needs
      b. Projects articulate the Grail mission/values for all of us
   D. Non-center based
   E. Accountability – for undertaking (national/widespread) collective actions
      a. General reporting structures aren’t always in place to hold individual members accountable to having done or not done certain work, e.g. writing gov’t officials (yes/no), voted for certain Grail actions (yes/no)--e.g. write to gov’t official (yes/no)

IV. Recurring suggestions re: strategies to address these issues?
   A. Common vocabulary
      a. Oneness of identity would be enhanced by common vocabulary
         1. Radically autonomous/radically obedient (grappling with our spiritual roots of vocabulary)
         2. Owning complexity of identity necessary to create strong foundation of common vocabulary
a. To build a strong foundation depth of religious knowledge of tradition(s) will be key – so encounters are theologically deep, rich and accurate

B. Naming people’s work as Grail work
   a. Recommendation #1 from Laura Hershberger (6 Gumbo bimonthly bios)
      1. To address the disconnect between how our individual work is Grail work, help each other see Grail work more clearly by profiling Grail members or small groups that are living out the mission in a particular way

C. Collective work – proposal #2 to create a group focusing on Grail collective works/reflection/responses
   a. One of the long term challenges to do this effectively will be to own and grapple with the complexity of the multiple religious/spiritual backgrounds/cultures that are in the Grail and their accompanying expectations around group norms/practices.
      1. E.g. someone raised in a Catholic household might understand transparency in decision-making differently than a member raised in a Unitarian household. Same for issues of clarity, accountability, autonomy, participation, etc.

V. Identification of unresolved issues
A. Mission statement as the 6 listed specific elements (Arts, peace and justice, international solidarity, challenging economic systems, interreligious bridges/wells, sustainability) doesn’t capture wholly the key value of transformation (empowering women to be catalysts for change)
   a. We don’t need to rewrite anything (e.g. mission statement, visions statement, etc.)
   b. We need to respond to “what is the Grail?” by focusing on key spiritual/feminine/empowering values with 6 pillars (above) as examples/facets
   c. 6 pillars can and should be focused on collective action (“Visible Grail”)

B. Internal Grail Work – Not easy to know how to fit it into Grail Mission
   a. e.g. elder care, financial & property management, planning GA, serving on committee(s) or Council, synthesizing/note-taking, etc.

C. When can I publicly say to others that my individual work is Grail work? When do I consciously claim own work as Grail work as I’m doing it?

D. Intentionality/Formation – Ongoing process of intentionality/reflection/consciousness
   a. Are we bypassing opportunities for personal/communal growth because we are wary of idea of “formation?”
   b. Increase Consciousness / solicit support for any individual work of Grail done by individual members
   c. Authority to call/to send: either from oneness of identity or from authoritative person/team (Is there ever a reverence today about decisions being made?)
d. Part of formation is knowing work being done, why it’s being done, and with intentionality choosing again and again to keep doing it
   1. Formation – not power / not conformity – supports what?
E. Accountability – see above
F. Grail is a verb
   a. Living as women of integrity – spiritual values at all
   b. Naming issues
   c. Fighting the good fight
   d. Going to work everyday matters

Mission Topic Next Steps
VI. Identification of possible next steps re. short-term, mid-term, long-term
A. Short Term:
   a. Laura Hershberger’s Recommendation #1 – She will start with July or August Gumbo
   b. Possibly adapt by starting with spiritual values, transformation, empowering women as catalysts for change
B. Medium Term:
   a. Proposal #2 to create a group focusing on Grail collective works/reflection/responses – ways to increase our collective awareness, collective action, and community
C. Long Term:
   a. Create common vocabulary that allows us to speak freely and easily amongst one another.
      1. Given our Catholic roots, many words are theologically potent but psychologically volatile (e.g. “formation”). Establishing a Grail way of speaking – like the Grail way of being/doing – may help us be more unified in thought and action, or at least improve understanding in our diversity and pluralism
Membership
Synthesized by Deborah Sullivan and Carol Skyrm

I. Focus for session
In our Movement Building Scenario we decided that

- The Grail Group (Circle) is a basic organizing unit for collective work, visibility, support, inspiration, and deepening of commitment and participation ...can be face to face/virtual and involve women who are not Grail members. Circles are member-initiated and self-sustaining, have liaisons with national office and receive resources, planning and admin support from national staff.
- Members assume greater responsibility for connecting and networking nationally via meetings, retreats, issue based efforts etc., and they happen in various places at members’ initiative.
- Members are expected to participate in a Grail Circle, vote, make a financial contribution; and actively support goals for growth/outreach
- Staff will be hired to support outreach and movement building.

Circle discussions identified these primary issues during the past year:

- Realistic and effective strategies for outreach: “Movement Building” strategy?
- Viability of Grail circles
- Community living opportunities - new and varied

We asked members to discuss the following questions:
1. Which of these issues are most important to you?
2. What directions/ideas/suggestions should we consider as we move forward?

II. Broad directions, recommendations, themes resulting from the questions above:

Circles (11 people addressed this topic)
- Circles are good for attracting members and participants; use for outreach (2 comments)
- Need revitalization of circles (2 comments)
- Who are my other circles?
- Clarify expectations for older Grail circles
- Assessment of how the circles contributed to the preparation of the GA
- We have confusion about Grail circles
- What is the underlying confusion or questions about circles?
- Need more Circle and regional meetings
- Viability of Grail circles, particularly virtual circles
- How do you build a Grail group about topics?

Outreach (11 people addressed this topic)
- Need training of members and commitment of members to do outreach
- Effectiveness of outreach coordinator in the various regions, not just Grailville area
- Evaluate the membership coordinator role

Report of the 2014 Grail in the US General Assembly
- Should we hire a programming and outreach staff person to travel and present programs in different regions, instead of an outreach coordinator?
- Where every circle member is the same age or elderly, what ways can we imagine outreach?
- Most effective outreach is through a program
- We want to be intentional about reaching out to local groups – (partnerships?)
- Potential in Grail circles for outreach (2 comments)
- Look for potential members and invite to participate
- We as Grail members need to be involved in our communities
- Use these suggestions for training for outreach

Projects and Programs (9 people addressed this topic)
- Members have a responsibility to reach out and develop projects to attract new members
- Effective joint projects with other groups
- Not enough projects, programs to communicate about, so outreach is ineffective (2 comments)
- Members have a responsibility to develop projects that will attract new members
- How do you bring someone in when you do not have a project or program?
- More programs and projects (2 comments)
- Our focus should be on transformation of the world and this would bring in new people/potential members (2)

Membership Development, Training (7 people addressed this topic)
- Need training of members and commitment of members to do outreach (2 comments)
- Outreach and membership development have different meanings. We need to clarify these.
- Use the GA for member development as part of the GA program
- Provide training for members on skills to run our organization
- Serious investment in membership - training for Council and at the local levels; having local areas identify people in their group with strengths (to give training) so they can provide leadership
- What is the role of hired staff in regard to movement building or membership development?
- Training from outside Grail too (so that new energies, ideas, skills are generated); for instance “Facilitating Leadership Training”

Diversity (6 people addressed this topic)
- Lack of diversity – physical place keeps us from expanding diversity/ you bring who you are around and they look like us
- Need something to bring diverse women into
- Diverse mission focus on special projects
- Go as Grail to other programs in diverse communities
- Find ways to engage diverse groups with Grail programs
- In our work/program partnerships in different regions, there have been diverse participants; why has this not translated into greater diversity in our membership?
Community Living (5 people addressed this topic)
- Importance of communities for even a weekend
- Community living opportunities are important; consider traveling programs like “Women Breaking Boundaries”
- Community living is very interesting to people at this time
- Could Grail women support other intentional communities – use our expertise to support? (2)

Outliers – those without a circle or group (4 people)
- What are expectations of outliers and circles?
- Far away Grail members should set up a time to assemble together
- Outliers need to ask for help. Circles need to check in with outliers
- Don’t like the term “outliers” (although technically I am one) and hope it doesn’t catch on

Grail Regions (2 people)
- Regions do not connect with one another
- Create Grail regional exchange; consider regional meetings in western US

III. Recurring suggestions re: strategies for addressing the issues that may have emerged and implications if identified
- Circles are vital to the growth of the Grail and must be intentionally grown, strengthened and sustained.
- Projects and programs bring members together with a common purpose which strengthens the movement and attracts other women.
- Outliers need to be supported and encouraged to become fully integrated into the Grail.
- Diversity is important to the Grail Movement and must be intentionally sought.
- Membership development and training is absolutely necessary for developing strong leaders, facilitators, planners, etc. All members would benefit from this.
- Community living, even for a weekend, strengthens our Grail communities, locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. Opportunities for community living need to be sought out and implemented.
- Regional members need to meet on a regular basis for programs and projects as well as the Council requested twice-a-year business meetings. Connecting Grail regions through exchange of information, programs and rituals would make it easier to implement programs and projects. This would also bring a sense of unity to the larger Grail.
- Effective methods of outreach need to be learned through training and sharing successful strategies. Outreach needs to be done by members with the help of staff. Methods need to be evaluated and success measurable.

IV. Identification of unresolved issues, i.e. items where there were opposing voices, deeper questions for more reflection/consultation of members
- Concerns over the cost of administration
- Concern over the role of the Membership Coordinator – what does she do, is it working?
- Concern over lack of measurable outcomes in reference to the Movement Building Scenario
• Concern over the focus on outliers and outreach at the expense of other members
• Concern about “commitment” vs. connection of members; should this word be reconsidered?

Membership Topic Next Steps

V. Identification of possible next steps

Short Term
• Offer local training on using our website – invite outliers to participate – (circles or regions could implement this).
• Ask regions / circles to keep outliers in mind when developing programs and events they may be able to attend with enough notice (done locally by planners)
• Share information on local community activism events within each region and put on the website (this effort could include older members with more time or outliers)

Mid Term
• Begin to implement training for Council members – Leadership and how to run an organization
• Have local circles seek out free nonprofit training, management seminars, and Webinars. Post links to these events in Friday National Grail News or Gumbo.
• Post successful programs, rituals and projects on website for regions to share – (solicit members to provide copies from their files, and if they are not already in an electronic format we can always scan them). Staff can post them to the website
• Post successful outreach and membership development ideas on website to share (solicit membership team members, mentors, etc.)

Long Term
• Identify the strengths and weaknesses of regions and or circles (ask members to do their own)
• Partner with organizations that serve a diverse population as to increase diversity (done locally by members)
• Use future GAs for member development as part of the GA program

Most of these steps, once begun, are really ongoing. Once most of our members are trained on how to use our website, they can easily show others. Once we begin sharing successful programs and ideas among the regions, it will be easy to continue.

What strikes us first and foremost is the need for intentionalty. These are all great suggestions and can be implemented in a connected, organic manner. As one Grail member wrote – “Efforts should be multi-faceted and simultaneous.”
Finances

Synthesized by Peggy Goederer and Ingrid Farnham with input from Mary Farrell

I. Overview

Finances and concerns about them formed the backdrop of much of the discussion held in preparation for this 2014 General Assembly. The Movement Building Scenario, adopted by the membership in 2009 (after over a year of deliberation by the membership and Council) acknowledged that we express the Grail Mission and Vision through the activities of Grail Centers and Groups. Looking at the history and current realities of operations, the Scenario set forth a plan to invest in Centers and Groups in order to grow the Grail and to realize the Grail’s Mission and Vision in the world. At the 2014 GA, we reviewed the actions taken in response to the Movement Building Scenario in order to evaluate their implications for future actions. Members of the Finance Team including Carol Skyrm and Mary Farrell gave a PowerPoint overview of Grail Finances on the first day of the Assembly and presented facts familiar to those who participated in the consultative process for the six months preceding the Assembly. Including:

- The Grail is rich, owning assets valued at over $8,310,000 as of the end of 2013 while all liabilities, (amounts owed) total less than $315,000, so our net worth is $8,185,000. Notably, the majority of our assets – nearly $5,000,000 worth – are in land, buildings and equipment rather than in liquid/cash assets. The balance of liquid assets are held in investments and bank accounts: $1,240,000 in the Grailville Endowment; $1,142,692 in the Health and Welfare Fund, $139,000 in checking and savings accounts and another $606,300 in other investment portfolios.
- For the past ten years the Grail-US has consistently operated at a deficit (that is spending more than the income generated each year) except for two years when donors’ extraordinary generosity allowed income received to exceed expenses incurred.
- Although the Movement Building Scenario envisioned investment in the Centers as a means to make those operations self-sustaining, the investments have not on the whole achieved their intended effects of producing self-sustaining operations. Market forces have had negative influence, particularly at Grailville with the loss of major, long term clients. Despite intensive efforts at outreach, marketing and service improvement, operations at Grailville and Cornwall continue to run at a deficit. In 2013, the Centers’ deficits amounted to roughly 1/3 of their total income.

Recognizing these trends, both Centers initiated planning processes to identify future directions. Cornwall’s Dream Quest has been active since January 2013. Grailville recruited an Advisory Group in 2012, secured a grant to investigate options under the Living Building Challenge and pursued opportunities using the resources of an inter-disciplinary course at the University of Cincinnati in Winter–Spring term 2014. Council decided to use the consultative process in February 2014 to elicit from members their concerns, questions and suggestions about the financial status of the Grail and to seek next steps to take, particularly with respect to Grailville.
Members responded enthusiastically. 124 members participated in the February consultative circle meetings. Their reports raised similar questions and concerns across the country. Council and the GA Planners identified four issues as the primary concerns raised by members in their reports:

- Deficit spending
- Transparency regarding financial decisions
- The costs of running Grail Centers with property
- Cost of current levels of administration

Over the course of a second Finance session on Friday morning, GA participants were asked to consider these four issues and to rank them in order of importance. After clarification/discussion in the whole group participants shared their concerns and questions in smaller groups of four or five. The whole group reconvened and participants were asked to rank each of the topics as first through fourth priority. The table below shows the results of this vote.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finance concerns</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
<th>Priority Level</th>
<th>First</th>
<th>Second</th>
<th>Third</th>
<th>Fourth</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Tally</th>
<th>Total Votes</th>
<th>Avg Tally Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deficit Spending</td>
<td></td>
<td>Score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs of running Centers with property</td>
<td></td>
<td>Score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs of current levels of administration</td>
<td></td>
<td>Score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transparency regarding financial decisions</td>
<td></td>
<td>Score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

62 38 37 46 482 183 2.63

The facilitators expanded the scope of the questions and asked members to discuss:
1. Identify your primary concern regarding finances?
2. What are your thoughts/suggestions/recommendations about how we might address this concern to help us move forward?

II. Broad Directions, Recommendations, and Themes

   It was often stated that our assets should support our mission and vision. There is concern, though, that we do not have a clear vision or mission, and will not arrive at one before we run out of money. It was noted with regret that there is very little, if any, collective Grail
work being done at the present time. The Grail is largely manifest through the individual vocations and commitments of its members.

Nine members convened a work group on Finances Saturday afternoon to articulate the sense of the Assembly on Finances. The work group, whose report is attached, recommended that Council be affirmed in its decision-making authority and encouraged to incorporate the input of members through continued information sharing, for example, through periodic town hall calls. This recommendation addressed two issues/concerns: a) the palpable concern regarding the perceived financial crisis and (b) the confusion of members regarding the actual state of finances and how money is being spent. Information sharing was encouraged, through a variety of means, including:

- clear, quarterly financial reports, preferably including graphic format
- mid-year projection of this year’s deficit
- report on the Council’s recommendation to cover the deficit
- estimate of liquid assets likely to be available for 2015 – 2017
- 2015 budget projection to elicit the will of the membership on asset allocation among:
  - National Administration;
  - Centers; and
  - New Projects
- Develop a mechanism to explore the will of the membership on spending capital assets, in particular to:
  - Explore sale of land to cover deficits
  - Change asset policy to free up previously designated funds or new money
  - Hold expenses to a certain limit for a period of time
  - Raise funds

The next steps to act on this recommendation were stated as follows:

Note: There was a strong objection to Council changing the asset policy. A moderate number of people held up yellow cards in response to these recommendations, indicating that caution was called for.

III. Recurring suggestions regarding strategies for addressing the issues that emerged.

There was a call for interaction between council and the membership on financial issues, with the membership able to ask questions, such as in town hall calls. It was also noted that if people did not participate in these town hall meetings, they had no cause to complain.

There was a sense that it would be a positive thing for Grail members to join together in projects and work that would be uniquely Grail and raise the profile of the Grail in the world and energize the Grail. These projects would be worthy of financial support from the Grail.

There was a sense of the assembly that the Retreat Center operations do not support our mission and vision and support for phasing them out.

It was pointed out that closing a center does remove income, and that we don’t want to liquidate capital for spending. Again, we should reduce spending.

There was a manifest desire to solve the financial problems somehow by repopulating the centers, doing long-term retreat programs, small business activities on the land, educational programs, or otherwise making the land productive. There were also frequent calls for more fundraising activities – perhaps hiring a professional fundraiser. It was noted,
however, that without being in service to some other group of people, we won’t get money from foundations.

IV. Unresolved issues, i.e. things where there were opposing voices, deeper questions for more reflection/consultation of members.

There were disparate views on the seriousness of the financial crisis, with some members arguing that the statistics aren’t that bad, resulting in confusion on the part of many. Strong concerns were voiced on changing any asset policy. This matter would need to be carefully researched.

There seemed to be significant support for selling some of Grailville’s land, particularly peripheral portions, but many voices spoke against selling land to meet operational costs. Rather, it was said that land should only be sold to fund a specific Grail mission/vision project. It was also suggested that any land sale be postponed until we have time to develop a plan for the future of Grailville.

Finance Topic Next Steps

V. Identification of Possible Next Steps

- Members could brainstorm possible collective action, and try to organize other Grail members around it.
- The Treasurer could circulate the reports requested by the Finance Work Group in *Gumbo* or on the listserv.
- The Treasurer and Finance Team could host Town Hall calls on finance issues.
- In developing the 2015 Budget, Council could elicit the will of the membership on levels of spending and on which areas to spend assets.
- Council could explore the sale of land to cover deficits.
- Council could explore changing asset policy to free up funds.
- Council could hold expenses to a certain limit for a period of time.
- Council could hire a fundraiser, or investigate other options to facilitate the raising of funds.
- Appeals to members for increased funds.

On Sunday morning, the Assembly voted to accept the report of the work group (Appendix E), not endorsing all the specifics, but affirming that it captured the concerns and came up with workable actions to address them. Members were encouraged to share specific questions and concerns with Council, the Finance Team and with each other in order to take action to address the financial concerns that we all feel.
Governance

Governance Report
Synthesized by Simonetta Romano and Beth Wasmer
in consultation with Maureen Laflin and Maureen Tate

I. Overview
The Grail has seen many changes of organizational structure through the 70 years of its existence in the USA. From the 70’s until 2003, the year when the present structure was affirmed at a GA, The Grail operated under a de-centralized structure. Each group, entity and center had a representative who was part of the Lateral Sharing Group (LSG), a national organizational body that met yearly for financial accountability and decision-making on the use of resources and assets. Reports were given, proposals and budgets were submitted for consideration and affirmation by the LSG. The General Assembly, which was held every three years, was the body for policy-making, by consensus whenever possible. A number of committees, work teams, and task forces already existed or were proposed to implement the decisions. Continuity and national leadership was provided by a volunteer, three-person Connections Team which was responsible for ongoing administration and to respond to emerging issues. By the end of the 90’s this kind of structure was felt to be too cumbersome and ineffective for following through on decisions that were made, coordinating strategic planning, and day-to-day maintenance of the movement. Thus in 2003, after a long discernment process, the GA voted to put in place a more centralized organizational structure.

Currently we have
- A Council of Grail members, elected by members, rotating terms; NLT & Treasurer are Officers
- Investment in paid executive-level staff hired by Council; director is an ex-officio member of Council and may be non-Grail. Exec functions include: overall admin, implementation of Council’s policies, strategic planning, communications, etc.
- Council serves as a nonprofit board in relation to Centers.
- Council develops policy and makes decisions. Members decide mission, vision, values, membership expectations and sale of Grail land. Council is expected to consult with members on big issues.
- The General Assembly provides an opportunity for discussion, dialogue and recommendations of policy to inform Council work and decision-making. Issues requiring member votes are discussed and developed at the GA, with votes held following so those not present can have a voice.

The GA focused consultation of members on the following major issues that were identified by members in GA preparation, through regional and Grail circle discussions, Town Halls and listserv discussions:
1. Greater participation in decision-making
2. Change in the role of the GA in decision-making
3. Increased reliance on non-Grail administrative staff
Prior to the GA the council received inputs from membership through regional meetings\(^6\) reports, town halls, Grail listserv and other Grail communication channels, indicating that a large number of Grail members felt uncomfortable with the present decision-making process, and would have liked a greater voice within the structure, a greater transparency regarding how and why decisions were made, and a re-evaluation of the role of the GA and its implication for council work and service.

Moreover, many members thought that the cost of the present national administrative infrastructure is too high for the size of the Grail, and felt uncomfortable with having so many non-members on staff, making decisions on a daily basis that can potentially affect the life of the Grail.

On Friday, after reviewing the identified areas of concerns, participants were invited to share their thinking in small groups about the following questions:

a. Which of these issues are the most important to you?

b. What directions/ideas/suggestions should we consider to move us forward?

II. Broad directions, recommendations, themes

1. Greater participation in decision-making

Participants’ work identified the following possible directions to enhance members’ participation in decision-making. These directions could be discussed by all membership at post-GA business meetings:

- **Regional gatherings** have been very important for members to know more about the Grail organization and state of affairs. They should continue twice a year, prior to council meetings, so that the membership can give input to be considered in developing the council agenda and decisions during council meetings.

- We need to develop a **mechanism for members to elevate an issue to consultative status with the council**, and educate and inform membership on the process to ensure issues reach the Council.

- Identify which **major financial decisions** (beyond those stated in Grail structure documents re: the Grail’s mission, vision, values, membership expectations, and the sale of Grail land) should need members’ input and voting.

- **Members’ responsibilities**: In addition to annual financial contributions, members should be reminded of expectations to keep themselves informed about Grail organizational/movement issues, participate in the decision-making process, be knowledgeable of the issues at stake, Grail by-laws and policies etc., and respect deadlines when asked to give their input on Grail matters.

- **Voting on issues**: Council should provide members with information on the issues ahead of time, so that:

---

\(^6\) There is some confusion on what constitutes a “region”, and also the difference between a Grail circle (a gathering of Grail and non-Grail women for any purpose on earth) and a Grail group (Grail members only.) Regions may need to be re-defined in light of new emerging groups or fading away groups.
Governance

- Members can advise council of their questions and concerns before council votes; and
- Members can digest the information before they are asked to vote on an issue.

2. Change in the role of the GA in decision-making

In 2008 a decision was made to change the role of the GA from a voting body to a consultative body, while critical decisions (such as land sale, membership criteria and Vision and Mission) were voted on by all members. Some people feel that something has been lost with the GA not currently being a voting assembly, but this assembly did not have time for an in-depth discussion on this major change of the present structure, and concerns have been expressed by some participants about the time and energy we spent in doing and re-doing our structure.

There is no consensus or agreement on this issue.

No matter what the role of the GA (consultative or decision-making body) preparation for the GA is essential, particularly for new members. Therefore, agenda items should be known in advance and sufficient time allotted for calling pre-GA meetings to discuss the issues/themes of the GA, and collect inputs from the regions. Information from the council to the membership should be as essential and understandable as possible, particularly on financial matters.

3. Increased reliance on non-Grail administrative staff

Due to the present demographic of the Grail, there is an increase reliance on non-Grail administrative staff. This leads to one major question: who is making what decisions? The staff at the national office - and also Grailville - is mainly non-Grail, and covers positions of responsibilities that require making financial decisions, which are not always supported and affirmed by some Grail members who would like to be more “involved” in those decisions. This has created some unhealthy dynamics and tensions that we need to address and resolve. We need more clarity on who is making decisions, Grail members or staff. Although the present non-Grail staff has done very good work in these past years in reflecting and making decisions on behalf of the Grail (in consultation with the NLT and Council), we need to find ways to allow for more participation of Grail members in decision-making.

Moreover, in the present organizational structure, the position of the national director funnels all of the communication and information, from the centers and membership to the council and vice-versa. As already discussed in the sections above, finding a mechanism for membership to address their issues directly to the council, and rethinking ways for members to be part of major decisions, would help re-balancing responsibilities and powers within the organization. The Grail would also benefit by having Grail members trained and therefore competent to fill Grail council positions that involve the understanding and functioning of a nonprofit board. Likewise, it was suggested that the roles and responsibilities of nonprofit board members, nonprofit executive director, committee members etc. need to be understood by all of us as we try to function better. It is also very important for the membership, who have busy lives and competing commitments, to assume responsibility for their lack of willingness and/or ability to
be an ongoing part of the organizational structure, and to keep up with the information, and the ongoing organizational work.

Although it is widely recognized that the National Office has been working with great competence and energy to keep us legal, informed, and connected, there are members that question whether the Grail - considering the extent of its operations and number of members – can continue the current expense of our administrative office. However, then the question of who will continue the work without the services that the administrative staff provide remains.

**III. Suggestions for addressing these issues that emerged and some implications**

- **Regional assemblies** (twice a year in February and September to provide input for council meetings in April and October) and **regional representation** or have **council members be responsible for particular regions** might address some of the issues related to transparency and participation:
  - Regional meetings support the relationship between the members at large and the council, and promote a better informed membership.
  - A regional representative to the council could provide direct access for members to the council.
- **Provide training on roles and responsibilities of nonprofit board** to members as preparation for their roles on the Grail council.
- **Rotate council meetings regionally** beyond just Cornwall and Grailville.

**IV. Identification of unresolved issues i.e. things where there were opposing voices, deeper questions for more reflection/consultation of members**

While the idea of regional meetings generated a wide consensus among GA participants, the “regional representative” suggestion was definitely more controversial for two main reasons: it would introduce another level of complexity in the organization (defining regions, electing a regional representative in regions with very different number of members) and the potential expense in having an increased number of members. Some of the questions generated include:

- Presently, the council considers what is needed for the whole: what would be the role of the regional representative?
- Who will they be accountable to?
- How many regions do we have?
- Are regional representatives added to the council, or are they the council?
- How would be the NLT be elected?
- How many council members can we actually support/afford?
- Can we really afford – in terms of energy, time, and resources – another organizational re-structure?
- Is participation depending on the structure we have or on the members’ level of commitment?
- Can the movement and membership support our current cost of administrative staff?

Many further questions were raised that will need further exploration and consultation with members.
Governance

Governance Topic Next Steps

V. Moving Forward: Identification of possible next steps:

Short Term

- Prepare for regional meetings to gather further input regarding:
  - The desirability and feasibility of developing a more formal regional structure as a means to ensure regular and meaningful member participation and input
  - Explore additional strategies to enhance member participation, input in decision-making and access to Council.
- Clarify and assess the decision-making authority of members, the council and the national office, including financial decisions.
  - Levels of administrative support members consider essential to maintain our community, organization and movement.
  - Clarify and assess council composition

Mid-term

- Pending results of a member consultation on the concept of a regional structure, begin experimentation and implementation of ideas proposed by members (e.g. could assign regional representative roles to current council members or organize regional elections prior to council members term completion or roll in elected members as current council members complete their terms).
- Within budgeting parameters, assess primary administrative tasks needed as we plan for a more sustainable future; report to the membership regarding strategies deemed affordable and effective; determine what services members are prepared to support financially.
**Spirituality**

*Synthesized by Tiffany Curtis and Pamela Cobey*

**I. Focus for Session**

We began this session with a reading of a “Story of Spirituality” written by Mary Gene Devlin (see Appendix D). We then asked small groups to discuss given the current circumstances, how do we put spirituality back into the mix of the Grail in the United States?

**II. Broad directions, recommendations, themes**

- How to feel more connected spiritually?
- More shared arts: song, visual, dance, literature
- More intentional integration of spirituality into all we do
- More shared ritual, vocabulary, experience--create new rituals together
- Honoring diversity does not mean we don’t share communal work
- How do we honor our Grail spiritualities in their specificities?
- Silence/contemplation as essential
- More resources for personal and communal growth in the circles/regions (provided by national leadership)
- Spiritual mentoring/formation

**III. Recurring suggestions re: strategies for addressing these issues that may have emerged, and implications if identified**

1) form Grail Spirituality Committee--one council member and other Grail membership
2) Utilize the website more to share spiritual resources (perhaps generated by the Spirituality Committee)
   a. Songs, Grailville music, psalms, book suggestions, articles...
3) Read spiritual books together (virtual spiritual book club?)
4) Spiritual retreats
5) Bring in experts/thinkers/theologians

**IV. Identification of unresolved issues (i.e. things where there were opposing voices, deeper questions for more reflection/consultation of members)**

- “Do we need to more intentionally mourn the loss of what was in order to embrace the fullness of what is/what may be?”
- Importance of the Grailville land for spiritual deepening? (some desire for continued Holy Week celebrations, future partnerships and programs on eco-spirituality at Grailville)
- “Re-crafting how we behave...as a spiritual practice!”
Spirituality Topic Next Steps

V. Identification of possible next steps: short term, midterm, long term

SHORT TERM
- Incorporate Mary Gene Devlin’s paper into membership formation kit, to give spirituality context to new members
- Pick a common book to read this summer
  - (Tiffany’s suggestions to get the ball rolling: *Active Hope* by Joanna Macy, or *Paradoxology: Spirituality in a Quantum Universe* by Miriam Therese Winter)
- Invitations/call for members of Grail spirituality committee, to form this summer
- 5:55 pm: Think of Grail sisters practice (suggested by multiple people at GA)

MID TERM
- Continue contemplative dialogue
- Explore eco-spirituality partnerships with Xavier (Katie Sellers)
- Make resources (songs, etc) available on website (spirituality committee)

LONG TERM
- Craft common liturgies that reflect spiritual diversity of the Grail
- Develop resources/kits for spiritual retreats (to be used by regions)
- Incorporate contemplation into next national gathering/meeting

Synthesis of the comments from GA Attendees on the Synthesis Report

Most felt report was concise and complete.
Affirmations were given especially for formation of spirituality committee and for sharing of spiritual resources.

- One member concurred with resurrecting a spirituality committee and forming a spiritual book group as good next steps. Also she called attention to the spirituality handbook compiled by Simonetta Romano in 2006.
- One member affirmed including Mary Gene Devlin’s synthesis of spirituality in the US Grail to the formation materials for exploring members, as well as having a council committee.
- One member wrote: “I think creating a Spirituality Committee is a good idea. I would like to have a way to share spiritual resources. I was happy that some book suggestions were included. *Active Hope* by Joanna Macy, and *Paradoxology: Spirituality in a Quantum Universe* by Miriam Therese Winter.”
- One member wrote: “This was a short, but concise report which I think captures where we are as a Movement and what we do well in the Grail. We do rituals very well, and it would be important to me that we provide more resources for personal and communal growth for regions/circles, allowing for diversity and providing spiritual retreat formats. I like the idea of reading common books and developing eco-spirituality with partner groups.”
Some clarifications were requested.

- It is important that we clarify circles/regions. What is a circle? How does that fit into regions, etc.?

- Request for clarification: future eco-spirituality partnerships could be explored with Xavier and Katie Sellers can do that--this is a mid-term next step under section V.

- The language about "spiritualities in their specificities" under section II: It is noted that we have many spiritualities (and faith traditions). (Some would argue that we also have a Grail spirituality that is common and undergirds us.) But broadly, how do we work across spiritualities? How do we get to know more about each others' spiritualities and use the gifts that can benefit all of us by knowing them? How do we honor, grow from, use to the advantage of the world our spiritual diversity?

- In section V it was suggested that Grail sisters stop for a moment of prayer at 5:55 pm in whatever time zone they are in--if one did that it would be "a practice."

Some opinions were shared.

- One member wrote: “One of the recommendations is for more resources for personal and communal growth to be provided by national leadership. Perhaps national leadership could help channel such resources but surely individuals and or groups/circles should be able to share ideas and resources with the whole movement. We should not be like sheep, wholly dependent on others.” This writer also opined that questioning a need for intentionally mourning that which is lost, is “a strange way of looking at reality.”

Some further suggestions and questions beyond what came from the GA were offered.

- I think we need to include more knowledge of the life experience of Grail members including more mature and new [members.]. I do not think we will profit by not knowing or ignoring the total life of the Grail and our history.

- What are the implications of spiritual mentoring and formation: Programming? Mentoring? Groups? Outliers?

- How do we judge a need for mourning?

- One member pointed out that a similar spiritual committee was proposed in 2007. She wonders if we made progress and if not why not.
Grailville Discussion
Synthesized by Pam Hall

After reviewing all the notes, files, and newsprint produced by the small group discussions at the General Assembly, the following issues seemed to be percolating the most among Grail members concerning Grailville.

I. Partnerships: What are they, and how can they help?
   A. Partnerships should be created with plans in line with the Grail mission/vision.
   B. Current partners should be considered in decision-making that affects them.
   C. More opportunities for building partnerships should be explored.
      1. Partners could provide knowledge and expertise, and/or management
      2. Partnerships could provide fundraising opportunities
      3. Partnerships could provide opportunities for movement building

II. Is the Retreat Center Viable?
   A. What is the net income/deficit generated by the retreat center?
   B. Can it be saved?
      1. University of Cincinnati student projects for a new retreat center could be turned into proposals with financial plans for building, implementation and sustainability.
      2. New proposals could be submitted
   C. Which is better: closing it down quickly or phasing it out?
      1. Members have affirmed easing out of the work of running a retreat center by June, 2015
   D. How will Grailville programming continue without a retreat center?

III. Visions of Grailville
   A. Grailville is a big place which could incorporate and integrate multiple proposals for different uses, such as:
      1. Housing for community living
         a) Grailtown: a mixed housing development, possibly part of a larger farming/agricultural community
         b) Ecovillage
      2. Agriculture: lands dedicated to farming
         a) Members at the GA affirmed that the 150 acres used for organic farming be protected
         b) It was suggested by members at the GA that Council affirm that the CSA lease, pasture lease, and any other current leases be extended for two years
      3. Woodlands and natural habitats are left undisturbed
   4. Grail Education Center
   5. Arts Center
   6. Retreat Center or dormitories
7. Home for the Grail
   a) Members at the GA affirmed to protect the oratory and the cemetery as spiritual home places
B. Sell the whole thing or parts of it. Most members agree this should be considered as a last resort.
   1. Who do we sell to? Are we good stewards of the land if we sell to a developer who wants to build a strip mall?
   2. Deed restrictions or protective easements should be considered but could hinder sales of property
C. Keep the whole thing as an appreciating asset, but shut down retreat center and mothball buildings and structures to reduce costs as much as possible

IV. Members want a voice in deciding the fate of our beloved Grailville
   A. Are there enough channels of communication between the council and the membership? What are they and are they used effectively?
      1. Email
      2. Phone
      3. Grail Forum on the dashboard
      4. Newsletter
      5. Snail Mail
   B. Is there time for council to hear and evaluate members’ concerns?
   C. Members want to be informed regarding implications and outcomes of proposals, especially financial.
      1. Financial information that is easily understood by the general membership.
      2. Members want to see that outcomes of proposals are financially sustainable into the future.
      3. If members have a clear understanding of the processes and probable outcomes, they are more likely to be on board with decisions made by council.

V. We need money! Better known as Fundraising.
   A. What are the costs associated with each proposal? (This should be included in the financial plan of each proposal).
   B. New fundraising plans are needed for raising income to address the short-term deficit, so that we are not in danger of depleting our liquid assets.
   C. Any new Grail projects should include fundraising plans.

VI. Criteria for evaluating Grailville proposals:
   A. Is the proposal compatible with the Grail mission?
      1. Can the proposal be incorporated into a mission-oriented collective Grail work?
      2. Does the proposal include regional Grail mission work?
   B. Each proposal needs a business plan, including:
      1. Financial plan
2. Strategy for implementation, including a timeline with benchmarks and deliverables
3. Accountabilities and Responsibilities
   a) What are the responsibilities of the Grail in this proposal and how will the Grail be held accountable?
   b) What are the responsibilities of partners in this proposal and how will they be held accountable?
C. How does the proposal affect current residents and existing partnerships?
D. How does the proposal deal with existing buildings and structures?
E. Will the local community, Loveland and surrounding areas, work with us and support us?
F. Will the proposal attract new members?
### Grailville Topic Next Steps

From the Sunday morning GA discussion the following was presented:

---

**Proposals for Grailville**

Based on show of support on Saturday morning

- The Oratory and Cemetery are protected as one of our Spiritual Home Places
  - Team can begin to work on a proposal to be submitted to the newly formed Grailville Future Committee (see below)
  - Interested persons invited to sign up

- The 150 agricultural acreage for organic food production be protected and used
  - Extend CSA lease, pasture lease and any other current leases for two years
  - Committee calls for other proposals to be submitted

- Easing out of the work of running a retreat center
  - A timeline of operation through June, 2015  (This will be evaluated and perhaps changed by Council)
  - Committee calls for proposals for lease or sale or partnering (RFP- request for proposal)

- Partnering should be explored
  - Committee encourages this exploration and calls for proposals

---

**Additional proposal**

- A Committee be formed – Grailville Future Committee
  - Have the authority to make recommendations to the Council
  - In place by July 15, 2014 to begin work face to face  (needs to be budgeted for)
  - Role
    - Develop clear criteria for proposals
    - Call for proposals
    - Create timeline for 1)concept proposals and 2) final proposals
    - Review all proposals and make recommendations
    - Invite participation of Grail consultants/ expertise and other professional expertise as needed  (budget needed for this)
    - Invite input and participation of Grail membership (sign up sheet here)
    - Determine meeting schedules and ways of working
    - Develop a budget
    - Other duties as required
  - Who is on this committee
    - 3 members from local area and 2 members from Council  (To be selected by the Council based on expertise, etc. and be a committee of Council)
    - Proposals not to be submitted by members of the committee
    - Supported by Grailville and National Staff

---

*Report of the 2014 Grail in the US General Assembly*
The *Grailville Future Committee* is being formed, which will have the authority to evaluate and make recommendations to council concerning the disposition of Grailville. This committee will be in place by July 15, 2014.

The committee will carry the considerable responsibility of presenting the most beneficial and viable options to council for the transformation of our cherished Grailville. They will need much help and support from all of us. When they are ready, they will be requesting formal proposals in the hopes of bringing our inspired visions of Grailville into reality. We need to respond by crafting solutions that are feasible and financially sustainable. There has been much work done already by dedicated Grail members. This body of work can serve as a knowledge base for creating or refining proposals.

This won’t be an easy process. We have to come together and share in this awesome responsibility of creating the best future for Grailville.
Cornwall – Presentation
Prepared and presented by Cornwall Staff: Simonetta Romano, Sharon Thomson and Lucy Jones

Cornwall Dream Quest 2013 – 2014
Envisioning the future of the Grail Center in Cornwall

What is a Dream Quest?

- A process aimed at:
  - Centering into the deepest, higher self
  - Enabling deep, wholistic listening (body, mind and soul)
  - Seeking and Receiving guidance
  - Inspiring, freeing the imagination, thinking beyond the ego
  - Envisioning new possibilities

Why a Dream Quest at Cornwall?

- Present leadership and staff getting older (60 plus)
- Exploring and preparing a transition into the future
- Leadership is not ownership
- Need to enter into a creative envisioning space as a community, and develop a community supported plan
- Growing financial struggle

Main sources of income and expenses

Sources of income:
- Retreat Center rentals
- Donations
- Program fees
- Sale of products

Sources of expenses
- Property maintenance
- Office/administration/management tools
- People work compensation and benefits

How much does on-going maintenance cost?

We use and maintain 5 main buildings, 2 sheds, and 44 acres of land

To keep everything in good shape and functional we have to:
- Repair, rebuild, repaint
- Mow the lawn, labyrinth, trails
- Have cleaning products
- Have electricity, phone, Wi-Fi
- Furnish & refurbish
- Remove the snow or fallen trees
- Buy all sorts of supplies (trash bags, tissues, toilet paper etc.)
- ...and more

Total average yearly maintenance cost $ 62,000
How much does it cost to have the tools for running our operations?

To organize and administer our work (programs, events, and the retreat center business) we need to:

- have an office fully supplied with computers, paper, markers, newsprint etc.
  - Have a web-site
  - Print, mail, ship ...

The total average yearly cost of our office is $25,000

How much does it cost to have the people for running our operations?

The average yearly total is $125,000

How much do we earn from rentals?

- Hermitage
- Hospitality House
- Phoenix

Average yearly income is $103,000

How much do we receive as donations?

- Avg. member giving is $25,000 yearly
- Avg. non-member giving is $13,000 yearly

Total avg. donations $38,000 a year

How much do we make in program fees and sales?

- Tot. average yearly program fees income is $11,000
- Tot. average yearly sales income is $3,000

In conclusion...

- Total average income per year $157,000
- Total average expenses per year $211,000
- Average deficit $54,000 (covered by Cornwall Portfolio and the National Grail)
Major Maintenance projection

- No major work needed
- Desirable improvements for energy efficiency, fire safety, and aesthetics could average $100,000 in the next three years

What was the context that supported the idea of a Dream Quest?

- Three strategic goals since 2005:
  - Build relationships and partnerships with the Cornwall community
    → Many new friends, a local advisory committee and six new Grail members
  - Strengthen bonds with the northeastern Grail Community
  - Achieve financial viability

What was the context that supported the idea of the DQ?

- Strong Spiritual Community
  - trust, acceptance, friendships, a common language, and a common culture

How was the DQ organized?

Cornwall leadership team

- Invited already engaged Grail members to participate in the Quest
- Developed and facilitated first gathering process
- Ensured a “core team” was established after first meeting

When was the DQ held?

- Four weekend gatherings at the Grail Center:
  - January 2013
  - June 2013
  - January 2014
  - September 2014
Who has participated?

Core group:
- Teagan Blackburn
- Pam Cobey
- Lucy Jones
- Kate Devlin
- Silvieta Romano
- Beth Rosen
- Carol Slemmer
- Carol Glyn
- Sharon Thomson

*committed to full participation, planning and facilitation

...and many Grail members present in spirit and prayers.

What process did we follow?

First gathering
- Intentions: Spiritual discernment → what is this place wanting to become? What is Spirit calling us to do?
- Activities: prayer, silent meditation, walking meditation, deep listening to the house, and the land, dreaming, envisioning, connecting with collective unconscious, imagining...
- Invitation: No right or wrong, egoless, abandoning previous agendas, no boundaries
- Hopes: Collecting the “dreams”, sharing them, and looking for how they might integrate into a larger picture, a “collective dream.”

Second gathering
- Intentions: Continuing discernment process, sharing our Cornwall stories, contemplating the dreams, seeding the imagination, working through anxieties and fears
- Activities: prayer, rituals, silent meditation, deep listening
- Invitation: continue listening to the place and each other, holding together the two souls of contemplation and action
- Hopes: continue shaping the collective dream, identify common threads and themes

Third gathering
- Intentions: Spiritual discernment → flesh out and begin to concretize some possible future directions for the Cornwall Center
- Activities: prayer, meditation, small groups work on developing scenarios from each major identified theme/seed ...
- Hopes: starting to develop possible scenarios, identifying resources needed, and realistic personal/collective leadership/commitment

What was the outcome?

Four scenarios of future evolution/transition:
- a) International Center
  - b) Sustainable Living & Learning Center
  - c) Inter-Faith, Inter-Spiritual Center
  - d) Responsible Transitioning

- Historical international connections
- Hospitality Charisma
- International enrichment programs fostering international connections:
  - For younger Grail members
  - Intergenerational
  - On a theme
  - As a follow-up to CSW
  - Use the Grey House
  - Women’s learning residential community
  - Interacting with local/regional/national Grail and friends of the Grail
- Volunteer Grail staff/facilitators/resource people
b) Sustainable Living & Learning Center

Using the Grey House for programs:
- On-going learning experiences, or week-long experiences
- Programs on sustainability, the arts, spirituality, combined with experiencing community
- Programs for young women, mentoring them in all areas of Grail activism
Resource people: Volunteer Grail and friends


c) Inter-Faith, Inter-Spiritual Center

- Build a large space for inclusive, inter-spiritual, interfaith events and programs
- A dome, ecologically sound
- Attract people because we are the only place offering “inter-spirituality” opportunities
- Safe space for sustaining women who are still working/living in male-dominated institutions
- Developing women’s spiritual leadership
- Starting small with an interfaith service on Sunday


d) Responsible Transitioning

What if the vision is there, but not the staff and the finances?

Options:
- Selling but making sure that the buyer travels on a similar road towards similar goals
- [Grail Village?]
- Create a museum dedicated to women and the work of the Grail
- Partnering with other organizations (time-share the property)

Main Outcomes Summary

Radical transformations:
museum, dome or temple, Grail Village, leasing the Phoenix, selling the property to like-minded organization

Keeping at least part of the tradition alive: continuing to exist as a Grail center offering Grail programs
- Search for new sources of income (new programs)
  - Staffing options:
    → residential community
    with volunteer help from members and friends
    → no on-going residential community

The Quest continues...

- Three main lines of inquiry to pursue:
  - Do we need a Grail center in the Northeast region?
  - Does a Grail center need Grail staff?
    → if so, who will they be?
  - Does a Grail center need a Grail residential community?

What’s next?

- September discussion focused on the three main lines of inquiry
- Invite Grail members and groups to submit business plans based on DQ scenarios
- Cornwall Grail Leadership:
  Support the work of members
  → developing and implementing new programs
  → developing business plans
Appendix A – Group Norms for the 2014 GA

- Check that you are hearing the other person correctly
- Listen to the other, listen to yourself and then speak
- Do not interrupt, make sure the speaker is finished
- Stick to the parameters we have given ourselves
- Make “I” statements
- Be experiential and concrete, not too global
- Be careful how you ask for a response – “How do you respond to this?”
- Speak only once on a topic until everyone who wants to speak has had a chance.
- Be on time – if late, enter quietly
- Avoid “chit-chatting” with your neighbors
- We can call a time out (take time to breathe)

Added after some members experienced the pre-GA meeting

- Speak into the microphone
- Soften your heart
- Focus, don’t multi-task
- Talk from your core / center
- Love each other
- Step into each other’s vulnerabilities
- Listening without interruption – listen to the whole of what a person says, Incorporate pauses after questions and group sharing as well as in small group sessions for deep listening
- Practice deep listening, contemplative inquiry, give time for silences into the communal process
- Have facilitators incorporate intentional moments of silence throughout each session
- When in small groups use intentional pausing before speaking and gratitude for speaker after
- Acknowledge differences respectfully, differences are healthy, talk to the person with whom you have difficulty
- Include and transcend as expressed in the spiral – what people feel most passionate about and of the Grail
# Appendix B – Schedule for the GA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mini-Schedule</th>
<th>5:00 PM</th>
<th>Reception</th>
<th>Gazebo/ House of Joy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sunday, June 1</strong></td>
<td>6:30 PM</td>
<td>Supper</td>
<td>Dining Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When</td>
<td>7:30 PM</td>
<td>Sharing session</td>
<td>Caravansary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What</td>
<td>7:00 PM</td>
<td>Private meditation</td>
<td>Oratory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where</td>
<td>8:00 AM</td>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td>Dining Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monday, June 2</strong></td>
<td>All Day</td>
<td>Red Tent Open</td>
<td>St. Brigid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When</td>
<td>9:00 AM</td>
<td>Opening Ritual</td>
<td>Oratory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What</td>
<td>10:20 AM</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Laetare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where</td>
<td>10:50 AM</td>
<td>Welcome</td>
<td>Caravansary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tuesday, June 3</strong></td>
<td>11:15 AM</td>
<td>Mission</td>
<td>Caravansary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When</td>
<td>12:30 PM</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Dining Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What</td>
<td>1:00 PM</td>
<td>Small groups meet</td>
<td>Various</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where</td>
<td>2:00 PM</td>
<td>Soul Moment</td>
<td>Caravansary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wednesday, June 4</strong></td>
<td>2:05 PM</td>
<td>Membership and Finance Realities</td>
<td>Caravansary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When</td>
<td>3:30 PM</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Laetare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What</td>
<td>3:45 PM</td>
<td>Grailville Part 1: Scenarios</td>
<td>Caravansary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where</td>
<td>5:00 PM</td>
<td>Free/Open Space</td>
<td>Various</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thursday, June 5</strong></td>
<td>6:30 PM</td>
<td>Supper: Welcome of New Members</td>
<td>Dining Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When</td>
<td>7:30 PM</td>
<td>Free/Open Space</td>
<td>Oratory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What</td>
<td>7:00 AM</td>
<td>Private meditation</td>
<td>Oratory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where</td>
<td>8:00 AM</td>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td>Dining Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Friday, June 6</strong></td>
<td>All Day</td>
<td>Red Tent Open</td>
<td>St. Brigid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When</td>
<td>9:00 AM</td>
<td>Soul Moment</td>
<td>Caravansary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What</td>
<td>9:15 AM</td>
<td>Membership: Movement Building Scenario</td>
<td>Caravansary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where</td>
<td>10:30 AM</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Laetare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grail General Assembly</strong></td>
<td>10:45 AM</td>
<td>Finances, Part 2</td>
<td>Caravansary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When</td>
<td>12:30 PM</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Dining Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What</td>
<td>2:00 PM</td>
<td>Soul Moment</td>
<td>Caravansary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where</td>
<td>2:05 PM</td>
<td>Cornwall</td>
<td>Caravansary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:15 PM</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Laetare</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30 PM</td>
<td>Governance: Movement Building Scenario Review</td>
<td>Caravansary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:00 PM</td>
<td>Free/Open Space</td>
<td>Various</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:30 PM</td>
<td>Dinner</td>
<td>Dining Room</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:30 PM</td>
<td>Circle of Remembrance: Janet Kalven, Elise Gorges and more</td>
<td>Oratory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evening</td>
<td>Bistro</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Saturday, June 7</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:00 AM</td>
<td>Private meditation</td>
<td>Oratory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00 AM</td>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td>Dining Room</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Day</td>
<td>Red Tent Open</td>
<td>St. Brigid</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00 AM</td>
<td>Soul Moment</td>
<td>Caravansary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:15 AM</td>
<td>Spirituality</td>
<td>Caravansary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:45 AM</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Laetare</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00 AM</td>
<td>Grailville Part 2</td>
<td>Caravansary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30 PM</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Dining Room</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00 PM</td>
<td>Soul Moment</td>
<td>Caravansary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:05 PM</td>
<td>Work Groups</td>
<td>Various</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30 PM</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Laetare</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:45 PM</td>
<td>Group Reports</td>
<td>Caravansary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:30 PM</td>
<td>Free/Open Space</td>
<td>Various</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:30 PM</td>
<td>Supper</td>
<td>Dining Room</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00 PM</td>
<td>Talent Show and Party</td>
<td>Laetare</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sunday, June 8</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:00 AM</td>
<td></td>
<td>Oratory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00 AM</td>
<td>Mass at St. Columban</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30 AM</td>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td>Dining Room</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:45 AM</td>
<td>Sense of the Meeting</td>
<td>Caravansary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00 AM</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30 AM</td>
<td>Closing Ritual</td>
<td>Oratory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30 PM</td>
<td>Lunch and departures</td>
<td>Dining Room</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C – How do you see yourself living out the Vision and Mission of the Grail?

As a warm up exercise, members were asked to write down on post-it notes how they saw themselves living out the Mission of the Grail in their own lives. These notes were transcribed by Kate Devlin and Linda Suter.

Building bridges among diverse faith traditions and spiritual paths:

- Participated in the Metanoia program
- Hope for the Flowers reading across all separations
- Maintaining sacred Grailville
- Community groups
- Transformative activities spiritual and otherwise
- Co-creating the next culture by raising my own vibration
- Joining/attuning to/with others in the “field”
- Interfaith community/labor organizing
- Interfaith chaplain
- Women’s ritual circles
- Zen meditation
- Host Seders among Christian & Jews
- Have brought in theologians from many traditions to hospice
- Help organize Interfaith services in ....for Thanksgiving Day 13 yrs. Ria
- Transforming the world
- Interracial work
- International inner faith
- Small church group with various spiritualities
- Forming a community B. Gibbons
- Planning Holy week celebration
- The seedlings group in Boise, Idaho
- Interfaith Council participation in local area
- Building Bridges
- Organized a session with women who do Buddhist practice , M. Gindhart
- Inviting women of diverse spirituality into our circles
- Working in interfaith program to assist foreign-born persons
- Active in Unitarian-Universalist Church
- Living at a retirement place with diverse faiths or understandings re Why? How? - My aim to listen and know that positive remarks and encouragement re persons’ outlook can count re support, understanding that person’s need in life.
- Day of Quiet Programing
- Live and participate in an inter-faith retirement community-Peg Linnehan
- Being Jewish in the Grail- Beth
- Building Bridges among diverse faith traditions
- Member of small house church
Appendix C: Living the Vision and Mission

- Listening and speaking to others about inclusion of diversity of spirit
- Cornwall Metanoia
- Facilitate healing of mind, body, spirit- Sharon W.
- Creating & celebrating prayer & ritual times (interspiritual) at Cornwall center
- Build bridges & Traditions
- Completing Priestess training with Triple Spiral Pagan Women’s Circle
- Touring the Sikh cultural center in Cincinnati to learn about their beliefs
- Seeking spiritual paths that honor the sacred in all of creation-including humans
- Hospitality
- Designing international Grail programs for dialogue between women of various spiritual paths-Marian
- Build bridges- faith communities
- Deepen in spirituality in ways true to my Catholic traditions and open to other traditions
- Organizing Grail Circle in local community
- Developing interspiritual rituals and celebration open to all

Advancing peace, justice and a world free from military dominance
- peace, justice, silent sitting doing for peace and justice
- I want to work in advancing peace and justice especially for women, but I don’t know how or where to start
- becoming peaceful within....bringing peace into the family
- teaching dispute resolution skills and conducing / facilitating disputes -- Maureen L.
- Move-on.org support / Southern Poverty Law Center -- support / Carter Center - support....DNC support
- Sharing story of Hope for the Flowers -- anti climbing over others and sharing
- advisory council chair, Miracle Clubhouse -- Dayton, OH, erasing stigma of mental illness and creating community and jobs for clubhouse members -Ginny Deters
- Following the political reality and support justice in society
- work as team member of the Grail link at the UN / P & S
- I frequently contact governmental officials & organizations trying to protect people, their rights and our environment
- advancing peace participate in weekly peace vigil on street corner - Mary Gindhart
- studying peace & conflict studies / Alternatives to violence project / Palestine solidarity / Honduras
- Peace awards for high school students
- work on personal spiritual growth
- peace action letter writing, demonstrating, $$, political volunteer
- working with pact: people acting in community together to address the most urgent community needs e.g. foreclosing, street violence, etc, etc,
- creating peaceful environment where learning can happen
- participating in a public demonstration for peace every week on a busy corner in Claremont, CA and engaging in other peace efforts - Peg L
Appendix C: Living the Vision and Mission

- Standing weekly with a group asking for peace opposing war since 2003 – Ria
- working on a class action law suit on behalf of residence of a mobile home park which continually violates water and sewage laws - Maureen L
- mothering
- involvement in catholic peace fellowship peace/ justice work within parish church
- Annually attend Ask to close or end making ...at Livermore Labs in CA. some years (3x) arrested – Ria
- advancing peace, justice and world free from 1) building and participating in social justice movements, 2) teaching college students, 3) politics and spirituality, 4) talking to everyone and writing about it

Fostering international exchange and solidarity
- participation in international exchange by attending formation programs in Portugal
- GWIA -- girls and women in the Americas
- hosting members of the international grail in our home, giving money
- reading conversations with others, attend conferences to learn from others
- interviewed etc. oral history project international grail, hosted international grail, Boston Grail trying to figure out solidarity with Honduras and Ecuador, Church supports hospital in Haiti
- supporting St. Teresa's school in Tanzania
- World reach out via world wide with message of sharing via Hope For the Flowers
- Fostering international exchange and solidarity -- international commitment process
- hosting programs for CSW girls and international visitors
- serving as a member of the Grail's International leadership team
- Read interesting publications, financial contributions
- International exchange, wrote article for crossroads about Jeannette Loanzon's monograph on taking global UN principles to local legislation
- Lien+ Conference calls connecting with Brazil, South Africa, Portugal, US, Paraguay, Australia, Philippines, Mozambique, and Uganda – Kate
- one reason I am involved in the UN especially CSW is to enable Grail members internationally to meet and share deeply with each other
- working with the international grail finance team / meeting Grail sisters and learning of their work and helping to support it
- inviting and hosting international students in our home
- Equator - indigenous women's group support, cultural friendships, anti-oppression work
- sharing the grail vision with women where ever I go and an ambassador for the Grail
- support for the Girls school in Tanzania
- I support St Teresa's school and donate money to the Grail
- helping to plan and staff 2 international Grail formation programs in 2014 Uganda and Portugal
- supporting and participating in intercultural education and the arts
Appendix C: Living the Vision and Mission

- encourage international:
  ---exchange
  ---experience
  ---knowledge of the lives of women around the world
- editing crossroads, the international Grail magazine
- international council for grail
- contribute money to St Teresa of Avila school in Tanzania
- reaching out to local Latino community and other "minority populations" to increase diversity in ecovillage we are building
- international exchange
  --hosted northern Irish teens
  --nothing recent
  ---contributed to Tanzania school
- building bridges with people of other faiths and spiritual paths
  --- modeling and inviting through invitation people to describe and advance/deepen their own spirituality

Challenging economic systems that put at risk the most vulnerable, especially women and children

- Caring for a brother
- Gardening and teaching to create alternative food systems that are more just
- another reason for UN/CSW involvement
- women and children
- coordinator of local food bank - Terri C
- Volunteering at a daytime shelter for poor and homeless women
- Econ Justice
- Challenging oil and gas corporations through voter initiatives banning fracking
- giving meaningful work to several individuals in need so they support themselves and their families with dignity
- advocate for new Americans with accessing their rights and needs with governmental, legal and medical assistance
- Challenge Economic systems: by standing advocating educating, visiting with senators and assemblymen for single payer healthcare – Ria
- Protecting the health of families by banning fracking in cities through voter initiatives
- community building and development in Philadelphia
  ---Work with eldercare & health and welfare fund
- providing financial and emotional support for young women who otherwise would not be able to get an education
- working in a community clinic to educate and orient patients /low income to services
- grail food justice group
- caregiving for vulnerable elders
- support for women's lunch place & Rosie's place
- education OCECD
– challenging economic systems via labor movement, 2) occupy Wall Street, 3) to raise wages, 4) tax the rich – Jackie
– work for those at most risk, work for parents for public schools, leadership training for parents
– healthcare advocate & educator - Sharon W
– living simply and caring for the environment - Barbara Gibbons
– At community we are designing: ecovillage living as social and financial safety net for single mothers & young indebted unemployed people - catalyst.ecovillage.org – Teagan
– working w/ communities and unions & NGOs (training) - empower to action - organizing and building power
– "one man's greed means another man's need" message of hope for the flowers song of mine
– -environmental justice, mothers out front, Freeganism/cooperatives/ used clothing only / writing about neo-liberalism
– teaching financial literacy to under served women
– providing tools to improve school readiness for children 0-8 years of age and their parents to learn to navigate the school system
– work women in DV divorce etc. matters
– work for several democratic or progressive candidates
– local political advocacy
– girls leadership formation at CSW
– challenging economic systems, working as part of grail working group at UN on post 2015 agenda to include equality for women and girls
– helping people earn their High School Equivalency Certificates
– voting against and supporting through my profession leaders who walk the walk to educate children with thought and great care
– Work on climate change issues locally, statewide, nationally and internationally- Joyce

Creating communities for a sustainable future
– Hospitality,
– sustainability,
– building communities,
– growing food, education, Beth W.
– Caring for those in need around me.
– Community garden,
– where shop, how eat,
– composting,
– recycling,
– Thrift store.
– Staff member at Grailville.
– Sharing plants,
– support Nature Conservancy,
Appendix C: Living the Vision and Mission

- garden organically,
- recycle,
- compost all vegetable waste.
- Sustainability local food.
- Raising Chickens at Grailville.
- I am a part of the Transition Food Group that works the kitchen garden at Grailville.
- Participating in women’s circles in my town.
- Empowerment of women thru personal and societal growth actions, Joyce.
- Environmental Activist, Terri C.
- Building bridges daily in living in community,
- being peace in oneself – is fostering peace in world, live daily life with awareness of all beings.
- Gardening in Grailville – CSA.

Celebrating the arts as a means for personal and societal transformation
- I am a performing musician, I bring art to the world
- painting as transformation
- music and liturgy
- drumming in the grail, playing in a band
- singing, painting, supporting the arts in my community
- arts / grail projects why here why now, photos 70-100, prayer stations in oratory, healing arts
- doing art, fostering it with others
- helping with music and working with Terry marshal at GV 2x per month
- ceramic work
- singing with chorus promusica
- helping create the Grail international arts retreat 2015
- supporting and encouraging music/theatre with children and community
- teach piano and bell choir - both offer opportunities
- healing and the arts
- supporting the arts and creating art
- we are the world, the world is a reflection of the individuals who live here
- loving beauty and creating art and order
- designing and illustrating the work of many poets and helping that work to become books in the world
- encouraging and providing training of younger colleagues in the arts
- writing publishing arts, keeping sculptures available
- support local artists and art programs
- supporting arts programs at Cornwall
- applying artistic values and perceptions to all our work at Cornwall
- celebrating life-living with Northern CA grail for 30 years and also with local group
- encouraging others with their individual creative exploration
– singing
– quilting is one spiritual practice that I practice
– I love to create art, I encourage everyone in the family to create - support local artists
– speaking and being aware of needs for justice, centering, being myself, being aware and helping when I can those needing it
The Grail in the United States has moved in waves, like waves of feminism, like the waves of immigration to the United States. It has been a fluid experience, with no clear beginning and end – one wave coming up on another as it happens in the ocean, sometimes rapidly, sometimes with spaces in between.

In the early days, it was a wave of a collective culture, a communal culture, a particular kind of Catholic culture. The Grail in the United States, with her center at Grailville, was a kind of utopian community with a vision of the transformation of the world. The individual was absorbed into the collective like a village in the 2/3 world, where the collective is most important. The spirituality of the Grail was integrated within the Catholic Church. The women were officially independent of bishops and pastors, although in many places, there was a connection with the Church. This was true in all the Grail countries in the world. They lived a life that sang the great hymn of the Catholic Liturgy each year – the Mass, the Sacraments, the seasons, the fasts and feasts, the processions and the psalms.

The City Centers were like satellites to Grailville with a similar collective culture, but in urban settings. We were sister movements with groups like the Catholic Worker and Friendship House. Ours was a women’s organization doing various kinds of work for social justice with a great emphasis on beauty – in the visual arts, in music, in hospitality, in food growing, preparation, serving. Much of this cultural heritage is with us still.

As in any culture, a shadow side existed: in a collective, hierarchical culture, individuals can be hurt and there was pain. There were things one didn’t talk about—deep things—and with the striving to be women who fit the Grail model, there was a silencing of energies that found their way out in hard work, sometimes to exhaustion, and in secret sorrows and tears. But mostly memories eliminate the shadow and linger on the glory, and glory there was.

About a decade ago, I spoke with one of the older members of the Grail in the United States who had moved in theological circles, teaching and writing. We were having “supper table discussions” at each evening of the GA on the subject of spirituality. I asked her whether the women shared spiritual experiences in the “old days.” Oh no, she said. We lived a life based on the Church Year, steeped in the literature, philosophy, plays, poetry and prayers that explored and expressed the Catholic faith – the richest, “best,” of it all – celebrating what was later adopted in part by the Second Vatican Council. But one’s deepest thoughts about God, and experiences one might have had, were very private.

The mid sixties saw a shift in world culture that reverberated within the Grail in the United States. In many Catholic organizations, religious orders, diocesan clergy, there was a change.
The windows that brought in the fresh air that Saint John XXIII called for, brought in sunlight and rain, excitement and darkness too. There began to be a movement outward by people who lived within institutional customs and religious life, a movement outward to taking individual responsibility for their own actions.

This was a second wave—a rough wave, sometimes a wild wave. Coinciding with the post-Vatican Council years, when the Year School morphed into SAG, the doors and windows of the Grail in the United States were flung open like those of the Church with whom she had so identified. Within the Grail, several things began to happen: some women left the Grail, some women who were not Catholic wanted to join the Grail, and there were some women who left the Catholic Church but wanted to stay within the Grail. Through the sixties and seventies these happenings continued to whirl around – to be dealt with in meetings, long conversations, and much work. Many decisions fell into place. A Jewish woman became a Grail member. A few women who had left the Church asked if they could still be in the Grail and after soul searching in meetings large and small, the Grail in the United States invited them to stay. Other women who were not Catholics, including some ordained ministers, gradually began to join the Grail too.

The Grail opened up to women who brought new perspectives. Her newfound Protestant ministers took their turns presiding where only Catholic priests had stood behind the altar before. The culture shifted, too: the hierarchical form moved into lateral leadership and Grail women developed structures allied with their non-authoritarian perspectives. In 1975, the vote to open the Grail even farther to women of faith beyond the Christian, to those who’d found themselves outside a faith they’d had before, and to those who were seekers of some way to open to the holy, changed the culture even more. Many women thrived on this, and new members joined us. How amazingly daring it was for the Grail to challenge herself to move to a new culture! But what exactly was it?

It’s not hard to imagine the seismic shifts that occurred during those years. Would there be a Mass at the opening of a GA? Were Catholics out of date? On what would we base Grail spirituality with the diversity that grew with every year? What had we lost? As many in the Catholic Church experienced, there was pain to losing the beautiful Latin Masses and the solemnity of the Liturgical celebrations, so too Grail members felt a longing for a oneness they had had when everyone was Catholic.

On the other hand, there were new and exciting programs connected with psychology, ecology, ecumenism, and all the movements of those tumultuous days – Civil Rights, the Vietnam War, the Peace Movement, Feminism, Gay Rights. They continue today as each new wave of consciousness and conscience is raised. The Grail has been involved in all of this. Our spirituality had broadened and deepened to move within these waves, and our membership had opened up to include many religious traditions and experiences of searching for a way to express our longing for the holy, the sacred, the divine of many names including feminine ones.
Appendix D: A Story of Spirituality

In the twenty-first century, what had been whispered about before began to be spoken out loud. It’s hard to tell whether this is a “third wave” when we are right in the midst of it, but it has moved beyond those heady days of the sixties and seventies and most of the late twentieth century. Some Catholics in the Grail met to support each other in today’s world. Many experiments were tried. How to work with the Grail in the rest of the world, which continues to have a Catholic face, is a challenge for all of us. A National Spirituality Team formed at the GA 2003. The first work of that team was the creating of a questionnaire about our Spiritual Diversity. That work, now 10 years old, is still relevant in helping us evaluate how we have grown in this decade. (This can be found on the Grail in the USA web site under the section “More Grail Documents.”)

The next work of the expanded Spirituality Team was to create the National Meeting of 2007 which was called “Towards Shared Spiritual Practices.” At this meeting (report available on the web site under “National Meeting Reports”), there were two themes. First was finding women with whom we shared spiritual practices such as meditation, walking, gardening, journaling, going to Mass, reading, and then spending time practicing with them. This theme was so successful, that it has been used at most meetings national and local ever since.

The second theme was working towards a shared spiritual practice, searching for ritual elements and prayer that we hold in common and to work towards celebrating them. This part opened up several needs which are recorded in the report of that meeting:

- Participating in spiritual practices that are not our own
- Sharing personal stories
- Addressing racism and classism within the Grail
- How to “Get naked” with each other – become known to each other
- Celebrate together
- Become authentic in small groups
- Sharing pain and humor
- Strong need to be close to each other
- Participate in Agape
- Regional meetings
- Dialogue/conversations to re-discover, incorporate [spiritual work of the Grail]
- Be sensitive to language
- Social justice work as spiritual practice
- Find a way to talk about Catholic traditions in the Grail
- Deepening in our own spiritual practices with other Grail women
- Use of water, Grail cup in ritual
- Connecting with the suffering of the world

Some of these needs have been addressed in the intervening years. In the United States, we can pick out what we have done. An International Spirituality Forum was held in Portugal in 2007 with the United States contingent representing our diversity. The Txintxa Process was
established at the International Council meeting in 2008, and there have been common themes in the area of Spirituality discussed and reported in all Grail Countries in the world. There were intense discussions in all Grail Countries and at the IGA 2011 about the International Vision Statement whose final form expresses an International Grail that embraces diversity.

The shadow side of this present wave seems to be connected with lack of trust, fear, negativity, and doubt. Basically, unconscious feelings and motivations will always be with us, and so being aware of this can help us as we work together to continue to realize that our Grail vision and work need to be based on and integrated with our spirituality. This has always been true, even though that spirituality has moved and changed over the years.
Appendix E – Report by GA Finance Work Group

Recommendation from the Finance Team Work Group, based on what emerged from the whole General Assembly
Participants: Sharon Woods, Duane Welsch, Sharon Thomson, Marie Sutter-Sinden, Lenie Schaareman, Una Mae Hargrave, Becky Hill, Peggy Goederer, Mary Farrell
We recommend: Affirming Council to make the best financial decisions based on regular ongoing information shared with Members and opportunities for input, e.g. periodic town hall calls.
This recommendation addresses two issues/concerns: the palpable concern regarding the perceived financial crisis and the confusion of members regarding the actual state of finances and how money is being spent.
Next Steps to act on this recommendation
1. Information sharing to include Quarterly 2014 Budget Report in simple format, graphic if possible
2. Mid-year 2014 Report with projected year end deficit
3. Report on how Council recommends covering the 2014 deficits
4. Report the amount of liquid assets that will remain for 2015 – 2017
5. Develop 2015 Budget options in order to elicit the will of the membership on levels of spending and in which areas to spend assets:
   • National Administration.
   • Centers
   • New Projects
6. Mechanism to explore will of the members on spending capital assets in general on particular items
   • Explore sale of land to cover deficits
   • Change asset policy to free up funds (previously designated funds, new monies, etc)
   • Hold expenses to only a certain limit for a period of time
   • Raise funds
Who?: Treasurer to circulate the requested reports, in Gumbo or on listserv
Treasurer and Finance Team to Host Town Hall calls on Finance issues
Mechanisms for 5 and 6 to be developed.

Comments/Questions/Responses from the whole:
❖ Regarding the periodic Town Hall calls, if people don’t participate – can’t complain
❖ Concern about raising money from foundations for what we currently do. We are a membership organization serving our members. Unless we are serving a wider social need we should not expect foundation support. WE are the ones we have been waiting for.
❖ Suggest 3 levels of budget depending on situation
❖ Question about Council changing the asset policy – go back to the education recommendation from Group 2 – Membership. Speaker doesn’t know the level of
expertise of Council members and would feel uncomfortable saying yes to that element of the proposal

- Fund raising pamphlets/mailings should set a target gift level
- Can we make anything to make money?
- Fundraising is needed
Appendix F – 2014 GA Participants
(◆ also attended the pre-GA workshop)

Julia Almaguer
Judith Blackburn◆
Carrie Bowling**
Harlene Bryenton◆
Wendy Budzynski
Terri Carter◆
Theresa Chupp*
Rose Mary Clark
Pam Cobey◆
Vivian Corres◆
Tiffany Curtis
Ria De Groot◆
Mary Kay Delgado
Ginny Deters
Kate Devlin◆
Jackie DiSalvo◆
Mary DiVito◆
Pat Dolan◆
Megan Faircloth**
Ingrid Farnham
Mary Farrell◆
Ceci Figueroa◆
Joy France
Barbara Gibbons
Mary Gindhart◆
Peggy Goederer◆
Pam Hall◆
Una Hargrave
Martha Heidkamp◆
Bonnie Hendricks
Laura Hershberger
Becky Hill◆
T. Rose Holdcraft
Cherie Holman◆
Sharon Joslyn◆
Maureen Laflin
Mary Lu Lageman◆
Peg Linnehan◆
Mary Kay Louchart◆
Terry Marshall◆
Fran Martin◆
Carol McDonnell
Anne Mercier◆
Joyce Minkler◆
Megan Monteleone-Morrison
Beth Murphy
Tracey Nugent**
Trina Paulus◆
Simonetta Romano◆
Beth Rosen◆
Rosa Ruiz◆

Lenie Schaareman◆
Debora Schak◆
Elizabeth Schickel-Robinson
Marian Schwab◆
Katie Sellers
Carol Siemering◆
Carol Skyrm◆
Emily Snyder
Audrey Sorrento◆
Ann Steffy
Deborah Sullivan
Linda Suter
Marie Sutter-Sinden
Nancy Sylvester
Maureen Tate◆
Sharon Thomson◆
Beth Wasmer◆
Carol Webb
Duanne Welsch◆
Nicky Westrick
Francine Wickes◆
Noreen Willhelm**◆
Jean Wilson
Sharon Wood

*Explorer
**Staff