

MICHIGAN CONFERENCE UCC
Minutes
Board of Directors
May 16, 2020

Present: Cheryl Burke (Associate Conference Minister), Bob Heisler (Business Manager), Ruth Moerdyk, Ralph Sims, Liz Larivee, Karen Wheeler, Judith Booker (Board President), Phil Hart (Transitional Conference Minister), Mary Ann Martin, Greg Briggs, Ivana Barrow, Judy Furman, Dan Spaulding, Phiwa Langeni, Akua Budu-Watkins

Absent: Helena Singer

The meeting was held via Zoom

Mary Ann Martin offered an opening prayer

Consent agenda: Moved and seconded to adopt consent agenda

Minutes: Judy Furman noted that she should be listed among attendees of March meeting. Moved and seconded to approve minutes as amended. Passed.

Grant Proposal: Discussion of previously distributed grant proposal from DMA Social Justice Team re: funding for Get Out the Vote (GOTV) efforts. Moved and seconded to refer the proposal to Prophetic Integrity Mission Area Team (PIMAT). Passed.

Transitional Conference Minister Report (Part 1): As Board waited for Lee Albertson to join meeting, Phil Hart noted his intention to gather staff and Mission Area Team (MAT) chairs to brainstorm about how best to use available funds under the extraordinary circumstances of the coronavirus pandemic. Providing good support to congregations might entail adjusting spending patterns for the current year. Conversation followed.

Conference Minister Search Process: Lee Albertson, Conference Minister Search Coordinator, presented a tentative timetable for search process:

- October (2020) Annual Meeting: Present the search committee for affirmation. Board should name Chair as well as committee. One search committee member should be a Board member.
- November (2020): Lee will meet with committee to lay out schedule for search
- December (2020) or January (2021): have position posted
- February or March (2021): Committee reconvenes
 - Pool will likely eventually be sifted down to 4-6 candidates
- Spring/early summer (2021): conduct interviews with candidates

- Continuing interviews and package negotiations
- Present final candidate at October 2021 Annual Meeting
- Called Conference Minister likely in place January 2022

In response to questions, Lee noted that the Conference website essentially serves as its profile, so site should be 'spiffed up.' Other conversation followed.

Financial Report: Bob reviewed previously distributed report and noted:

- Significant losses in investments January-April
- YTD 2020 giving at end of April was \$23,000 less than 2019
- Conference continues to have "adequate" cash reserves

Annual Meeting: Phil noted that Saginaw Valley State University had agreed to shift deposits for October 2020 facilities use into deposits for facilities use in October 2021. Deposit funds will not be lost. The planning committee recommends holding the 2020 Annual Meeting online. Moved and seconded for the 2020 Annual Meeting to be conducted via teleconferencing. Passed.

Other Conference Activities:

- Office will remain closed at least through October
- Staff have been meeting via Zoom
- Camp Talahi has cancelled in-person gatherings for summer; planning experimental online programming
- In response to Resolution 8 from the 2019 Synod (which originated in Michigan), the UCC Board has drafted a behavioral covenant re: the use of Synod exhibition space.
- Several coffees, informational sessions, etc. have been conducted via Zoom

New Waves UCC: Rev. Jody Betten, pastor of New Waves, presented preliminary plans for the use of Conference-owned property in Traverse City previously designated for a new church start. New Waves, located in Traverse City, has been accepted as a congregation with full standing into the United Northern Association. New Waves will eventually need the Conference to transfer ownership of the property to the congregation in order to execute these plans.

After Jody left the meeting, discussion centered largely around the need for more solid information re: financing and administration of the plans, which include a community center, Habitat for Humanity houses, and other low-income housing.

A request for more specific information will go back to New Waves.

Camp Talahi update: Horse Powered People has made an offer for the purchase of the Talahi property and have offered to split the cost of an appraisal. Bob will arrange an appraisal of the property.

Transitional Conference Minister Report (Part 2): Phil described current procedures from maintaining best practices in the administration of finances and noted continuing discernment about how best to use his time to support churches during the coronavirus pandemic and the social distancing it asks of us all.

Next meeting Saturday July 18

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Moerdyk, Secretary