

**Michigan UCC Board of Directors Meeting
March 21, 2020
Minutes**

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

Absent: Helena Singer, Phiwa Langeni

Opening Prayer offered by Ruth Moerdyk

REPORTS

Report of the Transitional Conference Minister. Phil Hart reviewed a previously distributed report. Points included:

- Identifying the current coronavirus pandemic as a turning point in the church's history
- Emphasizing that we are at a point of significant disruption for many of our ways of doing things
- The need to commit ourselves to persisting in mission and recognizing the importance of that

General suggestions raised included:

- Maintaining a "whole Conference" approach to the time ahead
- Thinking through staff responsibilities and tasks that need to be addressed as an upshot of the pandemic and its affects
- Reviewing and closely monitoring finances of Conference
- Cancelling all Conference events

Questions and comments following report included:

- Possibility of staff leading conversations pertinent to all Associations (eg, using technology in ministry)
- Continuing to see staff as a key point of contact with congregations
- Need to rethink what church might look like, how to remain engaged and connected, how to use available resources, how to build capacity for the long-term instead of only responding to immediate needs.

Moved to authorize and support the Transitional Conference minister's ability to cancel events until current public health crisis is managed. Seconded. Passed.

Financial Report. Bob Heisler reviewed two previously distributed reports: one for end of year 2019 and one for end of February 2020. Noted that OCWM increased 10% in 2019 over 2018 and that the budget was balanced in 2019 without borrowing from investments.

Moved to accept financial reports. Seconded. Passed.

Karen Wheeler, Treasurer, noted need for Finance Committee to discuss what can be done to help Michigan churches.

OLD BUSINESS

Delegation to Germany. Judith Booker noted that the planned trip to visit 'sister' churches in Germany was cancelled.

Search Committee. Moved to authorize Executive Committee to nominate a search committee for a settled Conference Minister and bring names to full Board for approval. Seconded. Passed.

Camp Talahi. The Board has received a letter of intent to purchase Camp Talahi property, including an initial offer. After discussion, steps agreed upon were:

- Bob Heisler to return signed letter of intent
- Dan Spaulding to initiate process of due diligence for assessing property value
- Bob, Dan, and Phil be added to group tasked with pursuing negotiations re: future of Talahi property

New Waves UCC. Cheryl Burke reported that New Waves UCC, in Traverse City, is in the process of seeking status as a full church within the United Northern Association. They are seeking guidance from the Board re: the legal status of the property in Traverse City owned by the Conference and purchased for a new church start. After discussion, Board decided to ask Jody Betten, pastor at New Waves, to present information at the May Board meeting re: plans for property and its uses in ministry.

NEW BUSINESS

Remote Meetings. After conversation, moved and seconded that Michigan Conference Board of Directors approve voting by teleconference for the conduct of necessary business, as determined by the Board President. Seconded. Passed.

Closing Prayer offered by Ivana Barrow

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Moerdyk, Secretary