

Regional Church Council Meeting

November 13-14, 2020

Via Zoom

Friday, November 13, 2020

Members Present: Faith Solon, Pamela Barnes-Jackson, Candis Wilson, Frances Dudley, Cory King, Gladys Davis, Alecia Hayes, Diane Bartlett, Philip Hunt, Thomas Barnes, Kevin Kaufman, Bruce Bowerman-Jett

Regional Staff: Jennie Stoddart-Bernard

Regional Ministers: Rick Spleth, Dean Phelps, Thaddaeus Allen, Eugene James

Called to Order and Devotion- Candis Wilson

“When God Speaks” – Isaiah 55:10-13

Ice Breaker

RCC Orientation and Introduction to the duties and task for the Regional Church Council

Breakout Rooms for Standing Committee Meetings

Remarks from Area Regional Ministers

Rev. Tom Johnson will be retiring as Regional Elder and moving at the end of the year. Rev. Tom Stephenson will be taking over district 8 as Regional Elder. Districts 5 in need of pastors and Regional Elder position held by Ed Allen still needing filled. Areas served by Thad Allen have 6 churches in search and call.

Closing Prayer- Rev. Philip Hunt

Saturday, November 14, 2020

Members Present: Faith Solon, Pamela Barnes-Jackson, Candis Wilson, Frances Dudley, Cory King, Gladys Davis, Alecia Hayes, Diane Bartlett, Philip Hunt, Thomas Barnes, Kevin Kaufman, Bruce Bowerman-Jett

Regional Staff: Jennie Stoddart-Bernard, Alan Dicken, Ted Nelson, Wendy Taylor

Regional Ministers: Rick Spleth, Dean Phelps, Thaddaeus Allen, Eugene James

Guest: Rick Rule, Dan Sondles, Jeff Wheeler, Melanie Harrell Delaney

Called to Order and Devotions- Candis Wilson

Breakout Rooms to discuss the following questions:

- Why is the Christian Church in Ohio important?
- Why does it matter?
- What is your deepest hopes and aspiration for the region?
- Why did you volunteer to serve?

Sharing from breakout conversations:

- Group 1: The Region is our chosen family to be mutually supportive and together we are a strong, mighty unit. Feeling and letting go of the pains of the past and make important sharing our joys and excitement. Passing that excitement on to our peers and congregations.
- Group 2: The Region is here to serve and support the churches beyond the ministry of camp. Programming which keeps our churches connected, our extended family. Here to use our gifts and talents and ensure that the region is using the gifts it is given.
- Group 3: Being a regional church and supporting one another allows us to do things together and not alone. We are not just camp. We are not just a region. We are working together. Here so that we can continue to help us move forward and to the next chapter. Collective sharing between members and our congregations to support each other.
- Group 4: The region brings unity to the congregations and that we are a part of a much larger whole. We are intertwined and interconnected. A connection to our culture and diversity that allows us to see God in those various manifestations. Intentionality to minister to pastors and to each other as sisters and brothers. To live out the gospel and in these times helping to carry the burden and add value and belonging. Deepest hope is that we can be captured by our vision and mission and move past our need to survive and thrive to being mission focused and operating in faith to build a church that is grounded on acceptance, value, belonging, significance, love and purpose.

Visionary strain running through all groups of accountability and connectiveness. One of our hopes and aspiration is that God is preparing us to bring forth a leader that is a tender of the orchard, attentive to the trees, fruit and soil.

Finance 101- John Goebel (VP of Finance, Treasury Services) and Gladys Davis

John Goebel explained how our partnership works with Treasury Services and shared the story around the ministry that he and his team does. Ohio's partnership with Treasury Services began in 2017.

PPP Loan was received in May 9. Questions regarding bookkeeping on where the funds have been recorded. Funds will count as a liability until the funds have been officially forgiven. However, all expenses against the funds have been recorded in the year. This is based on GAAP and the guidelines surrounding the Payroll Protection Program (PPP).

Review of the October 2020 financials and how to read them were presented by Gladys Davis

- Regional Ministry Actuals (through October 2020): Income- \$198,381, Expenses- \$222,674 leaving a deficit of (\$24,293)
Treasurer's Notes:
 - DMF giving is down by \$11,000 as we retain a 50/50 contribution split. In June 2021 we will move to a 40/60 split
 - Payroll Protection Program provided a total cash benefit of \$54,590, which has been allocated 2/3 to region and 1/3 camp. This loan is 100% forgivable based on our payroll expenditures
 - As an additional countermeasure we reduced office expenditures by \$10,000 through reduced credit card discount fees and renegotiating equipment leases
- Camp Actuals (through October 2020): Income- \$163,132, Expenses- \$193,907 leaving a deficit of (\$30,775)
Treasurer's Notes:

- We were forced to shutdown camp in 2020 due to Covid-19 resulting in a loss of \$265,000 in Summer Camp and Off-Season revenues. \$101,000 of which was offset by food costs and payroll savings for kitchen staff and Ministry Associates
 - Keep in mind that even if there is no programming at camp there is still about \$230,000 in fixed cost each year to run camp.
 - Additional countermeasures to conserve cash were implemented by significant cuts in utility usage and deferred maintenance and repairs. Combined savings totaling \$59,000
- Cash & Investments:

Cash Balance as of 10/31	393,105
Less Regional Ministry Checkbook	128,861
Less Camp Checkbook	<u>26,445</u>
Net Available Cash for Operations	\$237,799
Investment Available Balance	\$72,323

Discussion around ministry account approval and distribution policies that may or may not be currently in place. In review of the last audit review, want to make sure that we have reviewed and established policies/procedures based on the recommendations outlined. Further review of policies will be intentional as we move forward this year.

Ministry Reports- The RCC reviewed those reports submitted in the docket for the meeting. The following ministries/committees were present at the meeting and reported and answered questions around the work they are doing:

- **Commission on Ministry- Rev. Jeff Wheeler**
Highlights: Required trainings for standing had to be suspended this year due to COVID-19. Moving forward they are still deliberating on an efficient and effective way to do them. A lot based on the Anti-Racism/Pro-Reconciliation Team. In addition, some of our presenters are willing to do online but need to make sure presentations translate and volunteers who can assist with technical support.
- **Camp Christian Committee- Bruce Bowerman-Jett**
Highlights: Green Chair Fundraiser was very successfully. Moving ahead to 2021 plans are in motion to think outside the box for use of Camp Christian and what programming can be offered. Focus on 2021 and beyond is the vision and mission for the CCC and have move toward a smaller and more intimate group of members to create a more effective approach and how we can support the staff and current programming but then back up and look at the other 10 months of the year.
- **Spiritual Life Committee- Rev. Phil Hunt**
Highlights: Last retreat was offered last year and it was a great time. Deb Bolen has retired and resigned as chair so Beckie Lyn Gregory became interim chair but due to some unforeseen personal reasons also had to resign. We are now in the search for one who feels called to lead.

Break

Regional and Standing Committee Reports:

- **Regional Search Committee- Rev. Melanie Harrell Delaney**
Committee has currently received 7 letters of interest and profiles and forwarded on to our outside evaluator, Rev. Monica Dawkins-Smith. Her role will be to evaluate the candidates for us first and give feedback on if they meet our expectations to remove any bias. Deadline for applying is November 30, 2020. Committee wants to make sure we are all on the same page and as this body being the frontline of support for the candidate there are a few questions that have come up:
 1. Is this person expected to live in Columbus?
 2. How important is Sunday morning worship attendance? Is there an expectation of travel every Sunday of the year or room for them to travel and connect as the relationship requires?

3. Will the Search Team be the pastoral relations committee of some sorts? A connector between the region and the new Regional Pastor and President

Questions from the group:

1. If you do not discern a person forward will you start the process over or force a candidate to come forward? The committee will discern a way forward and however long it takes for the spirit to find us a leader is how long it will take.
2. The Vision Committee just met for the first time today. Are you saying we need to get a vision in place before you start interviewing? The committee is moving forward based on collective information received for the region via regional assembly, RTT report, and listening sessions. The goal is that we find someone that will move forward with us in a collaborative mission and vision for the region. Anything that the RCC is visioning or conversating forward please share those with us
3. What will be the role/outline of how the RCC interacts with the candidates? The Regional Church Council will meet with the recommended candidate brought forth by the Search Committee and does the official calling of the candidate

- **Regional Support Staff**

Regional Program Director, Rev. Alan Dicken- Update since submitted report is that we had a meeting with Union County to start planning forward for what Camp and Conference will look like next season. Waiting for preliminary information and guidelines from the Health Department so that we can start creating and putting protocols in place and ordering necessary supplies and materials. The plan is to have in-person camp this coming summer. As soon as we have clear plans and ideas we will share and update everyone.

Outreach Coordinator, Wendy Taylor- Currently working on dropping off blanket boxes. Due to the virus, we have been trying to do things a little differently to keep youth involved, our volunteers safe and provide service. Have been able to do collections and drop off in each quadrant of the state to assist in the needs and programs of the Free Store. This year the plan is to service about 65-70 kids with Christmas Bags/Boxes. Still in need of items for Christmas. See Wish List and collection places posted online. Hope is that we can highlight live the work that is being done when we put everything together on December 17.

Regional Administrator, Jennie Stoddart-Bernard- Currently working on an Advent Devotion with Rev. Dicken. This year we are trying to incorporate some video devotions. Christmas Offerings is coming up so working on things to ramp up giving and resource materials. Ministerial Standing forms due at the end of the year to get completed before yearbook reporting, so providing assistance and technical support during the process for ministers and the COM team. The Renewal Initiative is going great and as good as I anticipated with the majority of the donations going to "Where Needed Most", which is being split 50/50 between regional operating and camp operating. To date the Initiative has raised over \$114,000.

Campsite Manager, Ted Nelson- Monroe Lodge bathroom renovations include new non-slip flooring, new painting for cleanliness, no-step shower access and new countertops made from Camp Christian trees at improved accessible heights. All doors were already compliant. Further accessibility compliant improvement ideas would be additional concrete across camp to allow for better access to dining hall and wheelchair accessible dock and patio out by the lake.

- **Regional Elders, Rev. Philip Hunt-** Regional Elders have been meeting monthly and continuing to assist the Visiting Regional Ministers and there assigned congregations. Being frontline works for our clergy during COVID-19. New Regional Elders for District 2-Gene Fisher, District 3 West- Terry Bartlett, and District 8- Tom Stephenson. In the process of honoring those who have recently retired (Tom Johnson and Ed Allen).
- **Personnel-** During this season of COVID-19 some cancellations of programs and events had to be cancelled and some hardships for our staff. Big appreciation to our staff for all their hard work in 2020.

In addition, we were able to meet our task of updating the Employee Handbook. The Executive Committee approved the necessary changes and will be forwarded to the RCC once finalized for ratification.

Lunch

Election of Officers

Nominations were received from the floor for the following offices:

Moderator- Candis Wilson

Moved by Alecia Hayes and seconded by Pamela Barnes-Jackson for Candis Wilson to be Moderator for another term. Vote was unanimous

Vice- Moderator- Bruce Bowerman-Jett, Frances Dudley

Votes: Bruce-7, Frances-5

Secretary- Diane Bartlett, Alecia Hayes

Votes: Diane-6, Alecia-6; Due to a tie Alecia Hayes conceded

Assistant Secretary- Cory King

Moved by Alecia Hayes and seconded by Gladys Davis for Cory King to be Assistant Secretary for the ensuing year. Vote was unanimous

2020-2022 Officers are as follows:

Moderator: Candis Wilson

Vice Moderator- Bruce Bowerman-Jett

Secretary- Diane Bartlett

Assistant Secretary- Cory King

The previous RCC created a new volunteer position of Regional Treasurer to have an in-house approver of invoices and oversee the finances. Currently this position is being held by Gladys Davis. What is your pleasure for this position going forward?

Moved by Phil Hunt and seconded by Faith Solon for Gladys Davis to remain the Regional Treasurer for the 2020-2022 term. Vote was unanimous

Approval of the Minutes

Moved by Pamela Barnes- Jackson and seconded by Bruce Bowerman-Jett to accept the August 13, 2020 minutes with any necessary corrections. Motion carried.

Moved by Gladys Davis and seconded by Pamela Barnes-Jackson to accept the September 14, 2020 minutes with any necessary corrections. Motion carried.

Business Items:

1. By-Law Revisions

Previous email vote of the RCC regarding the by-law revisions failed due to not all previous RCC members participating. Short discussion over the changes proposed and if any additional changes are needed.

Note: RCC has decided we need to review all current policy and procedures and create a manual to make sure all policies are held in one place.

Moved by Gladys Davis and seconded by Cory King to accept the proposed revisions to the by-laws.

2. MOU with Partnering Regions

Agreement to remain in effective on a month-by-month basis at the same rate as 2020. The regions are hoping that this renewal will not exceed more than 5 months but will give Ohio a little more time to call a Regional Pastor and President and allow for a transition period.

Moved by Phil Hunt and seconded by Faith Solon to extend the current MOU Agreement with the area regional ministers and their regions.

3. Disciples Christian Church in Boardman/Youngstown Reversionary Clause

The church is looking to move to another location and selling their property. The church is looking for the revisionary clause in their deed to be released by the region in order for them to be sole proprietors of their property. Informal request was given to the moderator by Gladys Davis and Thad Allen but no exact information was given or verbiage needed for legal documents. Did ODEC help with the initial deposit for the property? Should we include a clause for that amount to be returned?

Moved by Faith Solon and seconded by Phil Hunt to table the revisionary clause request for Disciples Christian Church in Youngstown, OH until a representative from the church can be contacted for more information and research can be done regarding ODEC's interest in the property. Motion carried.

2021 Budget Review

Key Assumptions:

Region

- DMF bounces back to \$300,000 gross with our share being 50% through May and 40% June-December
- Christmas Offering conservative for 2021 based on 2020
- Distribution from non-owned endowments held by CCF same as 2020
- No operating campaign
- Partner Region fees end by May 1 upon call of new Regional Pastor and President
- No staff raises for 2021
- Allocation of time/salary for Regional Administrator and Program Director be reflected accordingly between Regional and Camp budgets to get a true picture of cost (Program Director only budgeted through August)
- Travel budget for RPP based on Search Committee request and allocation for Program Director to travel with new RPP (Note: will look to see if some of the moving expense can be booked in 2020 instead of all in 2021)
- Electric cost continues to be allocated between Camp and Region to count for usage by regional office

Camp

- Summer Fee rate increase projected for 2020 used for 2021

- Income budget based on 88% of 2019 actual (Need attendance to increase going forward but had to account for effects of Covid)
- No Green Chair Fundraiser
- No staff raises for 2021
- Campsite Manager salary are allocated between salary and contract labor due to reduction in hrs
- Budget accounts for 8 Ministry Associates
- Entertainment budget re-established for summer end event for Ministry Associates
- Maintenance and repair budget for Campsite Manager at \$2,000/ month
- Increase in cleaning supplies due to deep cleaning requirements around Covid for May- September
- Deficit of \$60,773 for 2021

How do we cover the deficit? We cannot for 2021. Bruce and the Camp Christian Committee has some good ideas and changes they would like to implement that could possibly take effect in 2021 but depends on Covid. Finance Committee talked about doing an Endowment Campaign in 2021. Immediate change would be an increase in attendance for the 2021 camp and conference season.

Moved by the Finance Committee to adopt the 2021 budget as proposed. Motion carried

Is there a way that we can send something out to let our congregations know the fixed cost around Camp Christian? We had talked about doing a narrative budget for 2020 but due to more expenses than income we did not publish anything. Gladys stated that she owes Jennie something for the Christmas Offering so she will include this fixed cost in her narrative.

Business Items from the Floor:

- Family Camps/ Tent Camp- Have we looked at this as an idea for use? Planning was underway to offer tent camps this fall but interest groups did not follow through and now it is too cold to offer. Could we market these family camps to college students? What about offering the lodge for extended families to meet during Christmas break if the lodge is ready by December 1?

Important Calendar Dates (see calendar in docket)

- RCC Meeting Dates for 2021: February 6, May 15, August 7, November 6

Closing Worship- Led by 2018-2020 RCC Officers