

**PSEC Conference Consistory
Meeting July 16, 2016
St. James UCC, Limerick, PA**

Consistory Members Present: Rev. Bill Worley (Conference Minister), Rev. Barbara Pence (Moderator), Harold Albitz, Rev. Maureen Duffy-Guy, Elaine Ely, Regina Floyd, Barbara Guido, Rev. Teresa McNamara, Lee Metzger, Fred Schuetz, Rev. Jenny Smith, Rob Stilwell, Jennie Strauch

Consistory Members Absent: Rev. Dr. Jon Fogle, Rev. Cean James

Consistory Staff Present: Rev. Sharon Morris

The meeting was opened shortly after 9:00 and introductions were made for the benefit of new members. Barb Pence offered devotions and an opening prayer.

The minutes for the April 30, 2016 meeting were approved (Motion: Terry McNamara; 2nd: Fred Schuetz) with the following corrections:

- The spelling of Fred's last name is Schuetz.
- The spelling of Bob's last name is Fogal.

While the minutes correctly reported that St. Paul's UCC, Amityville was to be the location for the fall meeting, this has since changed with the new proposed location at First UCC, Quakertown. The date remains Sunday, November 13, 2016.

Bill Worley noted that Rob Stilwell is acting as treasurer until a replacement can be found and there is currently no secretary for consistory. Jenny Smith volunteered to take the minutes for today's meeting.

Communications

PSEC received a letter from the E&R Historical Society requesting a donation in memory of Rev. Linda Gruber. A donation of \$500 was approved (Motion: Rob Stillwell; 2nd: Fred Schuetz).

REPORTS

Associate Conference Minister

Rev. Morris' report was received.

It appears that many churches who are searching for a pastor seem reluctant to choose an interim because they are afraid of making a mistake. They are being encouraged to complete a new church profile, which is coming from the national organization. There will also be new call agreements and titles coming about which churches and associations will need to be educated.

The next level of Building Strong Churches is coming, hopefully with a September start. The program is for lay people and pastors, but only five churches can be in the program. COM training continues.

Conference Minister

Rev. Worley's report was received.

The update of computer system in the office has been completed. All staff have new equipment and there is offsite data backup.

Sunday evening, July 24th, Old First Reformed UCC is hosting a worship service prior to the Democratic convention to pray for peace for the event and the presidential campaign.

Rev. Worley will be attending the national youth event in Orlando, traveling by bus with some of the youth from PSEC.

Rev. Worley is considering how to respond to recent overwhelming acts of violence. He has been looking to the national organization for guidance, but would like additional suggestions. Some possible ideas are to host a conference-wide gathering to pray and discuss what we can do about it, or perhaps two sessions, one for clergy and one for clergy and lay together. Other ideas included interfaith prayer vigils in neighborhoods, and looking to Justice & Witness for information on gun violence.

Note that the conference Facebook page has changed to PennsylvaniaSoutheastConferenceUCC.

Personnel Committee

Barbara Guido's report was received.

A conference profile and job description was accepted for the Associate Conference Minister for Congregational Development (Motion: Terry McNamara; 2nd: Rob Stilwell). The timeline is to have an approved candidate before the fall meeting.

Following a review of the ACM hiring process, a vote of confidence was unanimously passed in support of the Associate Conference Minister (Motion: Terry McNamara; 2nd: Regina Floyd).

Treasurer

Rob Stilwell's report was received.

The Budget and Finance Committee met last week. The new bookkeeper is Donna Daloisio.

For the benefit of new Consistory members, Rob reviewed the role of the Committee. Budget and Finance does special assignments and reviews financial statements (profit and loss, balance, OCWM and the new financial snapshot) before Consistory meetings. The Endowment Committee meets quarterly and their statements from the money managers are on a quarterly time table.

Currently, the profit and loss statement shows that we are underspent on the budget. The balance sheet as of May 31 shows \$701,872 in cash and \$1,697,305 in investments, some restricted. The Endowment report as of March 31 shows a market value of \$1,580,146. Approximately 5% of unrestricted investments are used to fund operations.

The OCWM YTD is behind budget, but less than 1%. There is a new fundraising committee being created. The 20/20 vision calls for increasing OCWM giving. Bill would like to increase the awareness in congregations of what OCWM is and what it does. Congregations are giving out of a sense of duty and obligation, not passion about what God has done for us and what God is doing in our lives and churches today. The lack of inspiration ties back to not knowing the mission of the UCC. Perhaps it is time to change the way we do giving, but we need clear communication about what we are doing and what value is accomplished. The committee is working on a socially responsible investing policy.

All reports were accepted (Motion: Jennie Strauch; 2nd: Barbara Guido).

DISCUSSION

Annual Spring Meeting Follow Up and Debriefing

We received many positive comments on the event and the following suggestions:

- Improve the sound system.
- Better timing for feedback on Bylaw revision proposals, perhaps a listening session or Friday evening pre-hearing.
- Improve the process by letting speakers know that they will be called on and respect the three-minute limit.
- Reactions to the workshops with some to be invited back.
- Possible speakers and workshops on transformation.

Next year's spring meeting will be at West Chester on June 9-11, 2017. The theme is "Be Transformed."

New Ministry Funding Requests

A committee was formed (Terry McNamara, Rob Stilwell, Elaine Ely, and Bill Worley - ex-officio member) to review the several requests that were received. There is approximately \$151,000 in the fund. The committee will use a decision matrix (including timeframe, cost, other source of funds, link to 20/20 goals, and people benefitted) to decide which requests to fund and to what extent. Due to time constraints (churches need to be notified within two months of July 1st), the committee will communicate with the consistory via email. Bill will communicate to applicants that they will hear back by September 1st.

General Synod Resolution for Revised Manual on Ministry

General Synod requests that the draft revision to the Manual on Ministry become provisional for a two-year period. Will PSEC sponsor the resolution in 2017 in Baltimore? Bill suggested putting this on the agenda for the fall meeting and a motion to do so was passed (Motion Jenny Smith; 2nd: Fred Schuetz). Bill will try to have preview meetings to give people a heads up about all three items for the fall agenda.

PNEC and PSEC Merger Retreat

The possibility of merger has been talked about for three years. Bill suggested having a joint retreat to decide whether or not to move forward with this idea. A motion to

do so was passed with one opposed (Motion: Elaine Ely; 2nd: Regina Floyd). The proposed date for the retreat is Friday and Saturday, September 30-October 1, 2016.

PSEC Consistory Retreat

The planned date for the Consistory retreat is Friday and Saturday, February 3-4, 2017. Currently planned is a speaker on effective boards as well as doing some logistical planning work.

Disaster Ministry Team and Response to Orlando

Bill pointed to the need for policies on how we will respond if there is violence in our conference/congregations. There is a need to work with disaster teams in each association, and possibly also with Justice & Witness. We need to expand the focus beyond natural disasters, with the caveat that we are not first responders. A motion to request the disaster teams to research what response has been taken and look for best practices from previous situations, e.g., Ferguson MO, Baltimore MD, Newtown CT (Motion: Barbara Guido; 2nd: Rob Stilwell).

PSEC Fall Meeting

A motion was approved to move the location for the fall meeting to First UCC in Quakertown on Sunday, November 13, 2017 from 3 to 5 pm (Motion: Elaine Ely; 2nd: Fred Schuetz).

Bethany Children's Home Capital Campaign

Bethany is working with a company to raise \$200,000. Individuals would pay \$1,000 to repel off of a building, something that Sharon Morris sounded interested in doing. It would be in addition to our regular annual contribution to Bethany of \$3,000. This would be a 2017 budget item. A motion was made and carried. (Motion: Barbara Guido; 2nd: Jennie Strauch).

Four Association Merger

The Reading, East Berks, Schuylkill and Heidelberg associations have agreed to pursue the possibility of merging into a new Association. The proposed creation of a staff position to do Christian Education and communication is tabled for now. Instead, they will focus on a constitution and bylaws. They will meet on October 30. At that meeting they may vote to officially dissolve their associations individually, then vote as individual congregations to decide to be a member of new association. We need to understand how the merger impacts representation on consistory, currently two representatives per association.

Maureen gave a closing prayer shortly before 12 pm. Sharon Morris took photos of Consistory members for the PSEC website.

The next Consistory meeting is on September 17, same location and time.

Respectfully submitted,
Jenny Smith