

October 1, 2017

Greetings from the Consistory of the PSEC,

At our recent meeting we received the report of the Personnel Committee who set guidelines of 1.5% salary increase for Pastoral Staff across the Conference. This report, together with the budget proposal, resulted in considerable discussion, as we are sure it does in your local setting. We received more information about the rationale behind the report, which we felt should be shared with other decision makers. We also wanted to share with you the decision which we reached which will be presented as part of the budget at our Fall Meeting on November 18th.

We heard from the Personnel Committee that their salary guidelines for Pastors were based on several considerations:

- salary increases across the nation are projected around 3% for 2018
- there will be a 7% increase in the healthcare cost for those participating in the UCC's plan
- the great concern of the ability of churches to support those numbers given the reality of their budgets.

Our discussion centered around the concern that the recommendation might unintentionally have us and our congregations balance our budgets at the expense of our staffs. This poses a dilemma which will require prayer and creative thinking to resolve. Our resolution was to propose a two-step solution which will be presented to the gathered body at the Fall Meeting. First, we endorsed a 1.5% salary increase for Conference Ministers and support staff, as set by the Personnel Committee in the Conference Salary Guidelines. Second, we authorized that, if resources are available and that the performance review is satisfactory, an additional .5% salary increase be granted at the end of the year to the entire Conference staff. Our hope is that consistories and boards of churches will also consider an additional .5% raise for their pastors should their performance review warrant it as well.

These are uncertain times. Projecting finances a year in advance is nearly impossible. We are charged with the responsibility of being stewards not only of our finances but also of the people we serve and the people who serve us. We share this information so that you might make your decisions with the best available information and some insight on how our consistory is attempting to balance our responsibilities.

May the Peace of Christ be with you,

Barbara Pence
PSEC Moderator

Raymond Edwards
PSEC Treasurer

Barbara Guido
Personnel Committee, Chair