

**PSEC Consistory Meeting
Meeting November 17, 2018
St. James UCC Limerick, PA**

Consistory Members Present: Rev. Anne Cormier, Rev. Jenny Smith, Mr. Tim Kissling, Ms. Jennie Strauch, Rev. Bill Worley, Rev. Craig Zimmerman, Rev. Ann-Therese Ortiz, Rev. Bill Middleton, Mr. Lee Metzger, Mr. Ray Edwards, Rev. Mark Roberts, Rev. Edward Livingston

Consistory Members Absent: Ms. Anaiya Huertas, Ms. Kathleen Stump, Ms. Sara Barra, Rev. Sharell Shippen, Rev. Bob Stewart

Consistory Staff Present: Rev. Sharon Morris, Rev. Cean James

Jennie Strauch called the meeting to order at 9:18 AM. Sharon Morris provided a devotion on Isaiah 6:8 and an opening prayer.

The minutes from the September 15 meeting were accepted.

Jenny Smith reviewed the e-ballot process; she will send out an email with this information and recommends making it part of the information packet for new consistory members in the future.

An e-ballot was initiated by Bill Worley on September 25 seeking authorization for the Budget and Finance Team to spend up to \$20,000 to secure the services of AKCG. This is for the planning phase of the OCWM marketing and public relations work to help us tell the story of our conference and its ministry to excite ownership and corresponding generosity among constituents. Tim Kissling responded with the first "yes" response to the proposal and Anne Cormier was the second. The e-ballot on the OCWM sustainable giving proposal passed with 10 voting for the proposal and no one voting in opposition.

Jennie noted that we received a letter of appreciation from Mel and Helen Jennings for the rehab work done on their home that was damaged by water.

Treasurer

Ray Edwards presented the report. We are behind approximately 2%, but that is typical for this time of year as most of the funds come in January. The treasurer's report was approved. (Motion: Tim Kissling; 2nd: Ed Livingston)

Personnel Committee

Ed Livingston reported that the committee had the opportunity to sit in on staff reviews. The consensus is that we have a strong conference team. Ed presented a motion from the committee to consider a 1% bonus as opposed to the previously approved .5% bonus, pending availability of funds. Mark Roberts seconded the motion. Ray spoke against the motion in order to honor the previous motion and its associated discussion. He noted that Budget and Finance Team support the .5%, as approved last

November, and any additional funds beyond what was budgeted would come from cash reserves, approximately an increase of \$2,275. Bill, Sharon and Cean excused themselves for this discussion. Do we need to do a comparative assessment of staff salaries? Other factors are involved such as size of conference and available endowments.

The motion to increase the merit bonus was not approved. A subsequent motion (Motion: Anne Cormier, 2nd: Anne-Therese Ortiz) was made for the additional .5% merit bonus, based on 2018 salary, to be brought before the conference body at the spring meeting, with payment to be made when funds are available. The motion passed.

Ed reported that Bill Worley received a 90% approval rating in the feedback collected from 130 conference survey responses. Consistently mentioned was the strength of his leadership and visioning. They also conducted ten local and national interviews for more in-depth feedback.

The consistory approved a motion directing the Budget and Finance Committee to conduct a comparative survey of conference staff salaries for equity. (Motion: Bill Middleton; 2nd: Tim Kissling) The results of their research is requested by the March meeting of the consistory.

Disaster Coordinator

Karl Jones' written report was received.

ACM for Congregational Development

Cean James reported that there has been an increase in the number of churches interested in Natural Church Development. Ray asked for clarification around funding for new church starts.

ACM of Search and Call

Sharon Morris' written report was received. She encouraged those present to begin working with their congregations to update the local church profile. Sharon has surgery coming up in December. She requested a sabbatical during June, July and August of 2019. Sharon's sabbatical was approved. (Motion: Lee Metzger; 2nd: Ed Livingston)

Conference Minister

Bill Worley's written report was received.

All reports were accepted.

Fall Meeting

Feedback from attendees was that it was well organized and structured. Would like to have had a reaffirmation of some kind after the vote on the unification resolution; a huge amount of work was left in an uncertain place. There is a high level of anxiety and a sense that we either lost track of or did not have a clear narrative. Cean

recommended a book, *Better Together: Making Church Mergers Work* (Tomberlin & Bird). More detailed conversations, and transparency, between the various committees within each conference would be helpful. Also, we could do more actual work together at various levels, including search and call, finance and disaster ministries. We, as a consistory, need to take more ownership. It was suggested that we follow up with PNEC to determine next steps. We need to identify any aspects of unification that are non-negotiable. The JCVDT will be meeting in December to debrief, but their work is done.

Jenny Smith was asked to draft a letter to PNEC indicating our desire to continue work on unification, sharing what happened at our Fall meeting, and proposing a meeting in which we can explore ways to move forward. Jenny was also asked to draft a letter from the consistory to the JCVDT thanking them for their work and acknowledging our desire to continue the conversation with PNEC.

We will use the January consistory meeting for the purpose of working on a narrative and reviewing the results of the JCVDT debriefing. Bill Worley will identify a location. We will suspend the regular business meeting and extend the time; 9 AM to 2 PM was proposed with lunch to be provided.

Female Clergy Compensation

Church and Ministry Council looked at the salary discrepancies between men and women clergy. Sharon met with women clergy in each association and found there is deep pain in how they are treated. The women clergy would like to meet again and they would appreciate a workshop on negotiating skills.

New Ministries Fund

Ann-Therese Ortiz, Ed Livingston, Elaine Ely, Ray Edwards and Bill Worley will meet in January to evaluate new applications.

ONA Coalition

We received a letter from the ONA Coalition asking for support for their Hope 2019 campaign. PSEC currently has 24 ONA congregations. Ray indicated that this is not a budgeted item and expressed concern about how we handle ad hoc requests. The consistory voted to make a donation of \$150. (Motion: Ann-Therese Ortiz; 2nd: Bill Middleton) Discussion raised the question of who speaks on behalf of our conference. This is another topic for our January special meeting.

Fitness Review Process

The MESA (Ministerial Excellence Support and Authorization) team has provided a set of recommended guidelines for fitness reviews of conference ministers. Bill reviewed the guidelines with the consistory who accepted the guidelines. (Motion: Lee Metzger; 2nd: Craig Zimmerman)

2019 Spring Meeting

This was originally planned as a joint meeting with PNEC. We want to work toward more sharing and relationship building so we will continue with plans to hold a joint meeting with shared worship and workshops, but separate business sessions.

Marks of Faithful Expression of a Healthy Local Church

Sharon has worked with the PNEC conference minister and others on creating an assessment tool for conversation and discernment in local churches. Implementation is not yet determined but this would be an excellent workshop at annual meeting.

Our next meeting is January 19. Bob Stewart has refreshments and Nya Huertas has devotions.

Bill Worley offered a closing prayer and the meeting was adjourned at 12:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Jenny Smith