

May 11, 2019

Conference Consistory

**Present:** Ray Edwards, Treasurer; Tim Kissling, Covenant Association; Craig Zimmerman, Schuylkill Association; Bill Middleton, Ursinus Association; Edward Livingston, Philadelphia Association; Lee Metzger, North Penn Association; Bill Worley, Conference Minister; Sharon Morris, Associate Conference Minister

Hospitality by Bill Middleton

Devotions: Lee Metzger

**Minutes** of March 16, 2019 were read and APPROVED.

**Communications:** None to report

**Reports:**

**Treasurer:** Snapshot: we continue to have strong giving through the beginning of this year. Finished the year of 2018 a little above budget and we will celebrate at Spring meeting.

Auditors report was presented and that will need to be approved at the Spring meeting. No April financials were given because the Consistory meeting was changed. There are some recommendations from the auditor and those will be discussed with Budget and Finance Committee. Budget and Finance will be recommending that those changes be made at a future date.

Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. APPROVED.

Motion to accept the Auditors' Report. APPROVED

**Personnel Report**

Ed Livingston gave the report. They are working on a couple policy changes that they will be recommending. Those will be brought to this body in July. The report attached will also be going to the body at the Spring Conference Meeting. Motion was made to accept report. APPROVED.

**Disaster Coordinator:**

Written report was submitted by Rev. Karl Jones. Rev. Karl Jones was recognized as VOAD Volunteer of the Year in Nashville, TN, this past week. He will be recognized at the Spring Annual Meeting. Report was APPROVED.

**ACM CD:** Written report was received. Megan McLeod is leading a new developing congregation in Philly and may be recognized at GS as a new congregation. Megan was trying to create essentially a caravan church that would move around the Philly area. She is learning the logistical challenges and learning that there is a need for a base of operation. Tabernacle is giving that. Motion was made to receive this report and APPROVED.

## **Associate Conference Minister SC**

Thanked the Consistory for sabbatical. Also thanked Brea for all of the work that will be coming to her. Some conversation followed on churches and then around accountability.

## **CM Report**

Rev. Worley is now on the Insurance Board. MESA gave a report about what ministerial authorization looks like in the UCC today. AIG wants to know how we are keeping our pastors accountable. This is directly connected to our suppliers of insurance so that we can limit loss. Diane Weible shared that when she became CM two years ago 350 pastors, 300 were non-compliant with boundary training. They are at the point of giving warnings of 6 months to become compliant or their standing will be terminated. 47% of churches in the UCC are covered by UCC Insurance Board. Our insurance company will provide an assessment. Many churches are afraid of this because they think it may incur higher insurance rates.

**Updates:** Over 200 people registered for our Spring Annual meeting as of yesterday.

#2 \$30,000 in payment and pledges to General Campaign. Hoping to announce that we have \$50,000 pledges and contributions by June at our annual meeting. That would not include Conference matching funds.

#6 on his report. St. Peter's in Frackville. Shawn VanDyke was sent an email regarding this church. Suggestion that PSEC needs to take ownership right away. Realtor has been contacted. A group will be created in SC Association and make a plan to sell the property.

H.O Davis is requesting a \$200,000 loan for a boiler to the Church Building and Loan Fund. CB&Loan did a title search and found that there is a \$4,000 lien on that property since 2011. With interest and cost we are sure it is much, much more. The floor in the parsonage has collapsed into the basement. Several thousands are due to the boiler company from the last time there was work done. Now they need a boiler. The building also needs roof work. CB&Loan made a \$100,000 loan to HO Davis back in 2014 and they still owe \$86,000. Church Building and Loan is working on helping them. They worship 230 people on a Sunday morning. The valuable of that property is in a sink hole that took out the entire community. They are built on a rock so they survived the sink hole.

The Moderator of PH, Beth Lyons was apprised of this situation. Our PSEC attorney was contacted as to what could be done. We are going to have more and more legal issues. In our Budget we need to add a "legal fees" line in 2020. Also, Beth Walker might be asked to be involved. A group needs to be formed and go to HO Davis and work with them to resolve this issue.

Things that happen to one church has an effect on all of our congregations.

The role of Consistory regarding these issues is that the Consistory needs to clarify what constitutes a crisis moment in a congregation and what is the trigger that allows the Consistory to partner with the Association to respond to that situation.

It is Bill's desire to talk about these things in his State of the Conference. He will end it by stating several items that the face the PSEC. One of those might be to create a group who will be given the authority to enter into such situations.

How do we talk about these situations publicly? What do we say at Annual Conference meeting at St. Peter's Frackville, HO Davis and Calvary, PH being closed.

MOVED and seconded to approve Bill's Report

**Discussion:**

Generation of Service Campaign: a letter will be going out to 112 congregations who have yet replied to asking them to participate. We are hoping to reach our pledges of \$50,000 so that can be announced at Annual Spring Meeting.

**2020 Vision Plan**

Of the 17 elements of the plan, PSEC had focused on 5 items.

1. Turning our churches inside out to focus on local community transformation as much as church tradition.
2. Goal of increase active participation in 80 of our church.
3. Developing an expectation of pastoral excellence among the Authorized Pastors of the conference.
4. Preparing the birth of 6 new vital spiritual communities through recruitment of excellent entrepreneurial leaders to lead the effort, recruiting partner churches to provide support and infrastructure, and raising funding to adequately empower the movement.
5. Creating a Member in Discernment Academy.

When you look at the original 17 items, there is a lot of good news. 11 items were all or partially completed. Do we need to rethink our strategic planning? The 2020 plan was ambitious. We realize that we spent a lot of energy on the conversations around merger with PNEC.

Conversation was around the need for a plan in order to move forward. Encouragement around creating another future plan. When we revision, it should remain both aspirational and be practical.

How does the Consistory move forward? A retreat?

Bill has talked with personnel about his possible second term/re-nomination. He does not want his re-election to be an election on his personality. He wants the election to have substance. So, he will create a list of items that he would like to work on in PSEC so that his election has substance. That will help him know if he is the correct leader for the next election.

Building capacity for leadership is his passion. Building capacity of leadership in laity is where the focus might also be.

### **Annual Spring Meeting**

Budget, Personnel and Endowment Committees are all appointed by the Consistory and then elected at Spring Meeting. Consistory will need to approve these members:

**B&F:** Ray Edwards, Robert Stilwell, Rev. Dr. Jill Bierwirth, Caroline Dunleavy, Blaine Price.

**Endowment:** Ray Edwards, Scott Muirhead and Steve Yost

**Personnel:** Ed Livingston, Fran Merkel, Rebecca Stauch, Sue Bertollette, Barbara Guido

Motion: Members of the B&F, Personnel and Endowment are approved for election at Spring Meeting. Motion was made and seconded and APPROVED.

**Offerings:** Offerings from Spring Annual Meeting. It was moved and seconded to have it designated for Youth to attend 2019 General Synod and 2020 National Youth Event.

APPROVED

**Consistory Assistance:** There is a roster for you to sign up to help with Annual Meeting. You are needed to count offering, extend hospitality, guide individuals, etc.

### **General Synod Resolutions**

Two brought to our attention was “Stewardship of Exhibit Space as a Resource for a Mission of Justice”. This resolution asks for Faith & Welcoming to be prohibited from Exhibit Hall.

Discussion ensued.

“Oversight of the Local Church and its Covenantal Relationship with the Association in which it holds standing as a Local church of the UCC”. Calls on GS to create language for the UCC Constitution to help Association to invite churches out of the denomination.

**Fall meeting for the Conference** is confirmed for Ursinus University on November 17. Testing for a web meeting will be done through workshops or other events first so that all will have confidence that this can be attained for a future Fall Meeting.

Craig Zimmerman was thanked for his service as he has gone off as Moderator at Schuylkill association.

At July 20 meeting we will be welcoming new members elected at our Spring Meeting.

We will send out emails in order to get someone for hospitality and devotions for July.

Respectfully submitted, on behalf of the Consistory Secretary,  
Sharon S. Morris