

**Pennsylvania Southeast Conference
United Church of Christ
Consistory Meeting Minutes
July 31, 2021 via ZOOM**

Conference Vision— a unified body of Christ moving in one direction to effect for good and for God the lives of all people living in Southeast Pennsylvania.

Conference Mission— to strengthen local churches and pastors by making the five Associations of the Penn Southeast Conference agencies of connection and accountability.

Conference Goals— 2020 Vision Statement

Who is PSEC ?— PSEC is the link that connects our church’s various and diverse ministries both locally and globally. Together, we provide our local churches, pastors and congregations with the training and inspiration they need to carry out our church’s wider mission. We are stronger together; therefore, we embrace diversity, and above all, we spread God’s love!

1. Moderator Rev. Tony Villareal called the meeting to order at 9:06 am. The following members were in attendance: Mr. Charles Kuthuru, vice moderator, Robin Hightower, appointed secretary, Rev. Bob Fogal, appointed treasurer, Rev. Bonnie Dalious, Mr. Tom Wright, Rev. Jeff Wargo, Rev. Elaine Ely, Ms. Beth Walker, Rev. Kevin Fruchti, Rev. Ken McDowell, Rev. Susanne Schwarz-Green, Ms. Donna Fried and Rev. Susan Minasian. Revs. Worley and James were excused.

2. Robin Hightower gave the devotions. The title was “Meetings” by Tony Robinson. This was the Stillspeaking Daily Devotional on February 24, 2020.

3. An **orientation for the new members** was led by Rev. Tony Villareal. He expressed the following expectations of the members:

- a. Express and live a life of Christian faith
- b. Be open to one another
- c. Be in good standing in the local church
- d. Attend all meetings to include special meetings
- e. Participate; review advance materials
- f. Come as an individual open to where God is taking us
- g. Report back to your association anything that could impact the association
- h. Communicate to the executives of your association
- i. Support the Conference and OCWM
- i. Have liability of decisions. Take responsibility of the decisions we make and believe that the Spirit will guide us
- j. Become familiar with Governing documents
- k. Be familiar with the Conference Structure
- l. Be familiar with the 6 Habits of an Effective Board

The members asked of the Executive staff of the Consistory that they keep in mind that all the members have other responsibilities.

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Beth Walker and Robin Hightower briefly reviewed common **Robert's Rules**.

4. **Work of God's People**

- a. Robin Hightower and Rev. Bob Fogal were appointed secretary and treasurer, respectively.
- b. The meeting agenda was approved.
- c. The minutes of May 15, 2021 were approved as presented and will be filed.
- d. There was no communication to review.

Reports

- a. Rev. Fogal reviewed the **Budget and Finance Reports**. It was noted that Conference OCWM giving is holding. There were no changes or corrections. The reports will be filed as presented. There was a recommendation from the Budget and Finance Committee that a 1.5% salary increase be ratified. There will be a special meeting to approve the increase in the recommended salary guidelines for 2022 for the conference. This meeting will be held via Zoom on August 26 at 7:00 pm.
- b. **Personnel Committee Report**
The report was received with an action. A meeting is requested by the Personnel Committee to approve the increase in the recommended salary guidelines for 2022 for the Conference. The meeting is scheduled via Zoom for August 26 at 7:00 pm.
- c. **ACM Search Committee Report**. Rev. Minasian reported on the search for her successor, indicating that she will end her position as interim ACM by year's end. Several candidates have been interviewed and now the committee is conducting second interviews. The Search and Call process was reviewed. The report will be filed as presented.
- d. **Disaster Ministry Coordinator Report**. The report was accepted.
- e. **Stewardship Committee Report**. No report.
- f. **Associate Conference Minister for Congregational Development Report**. No report.
- g. **Conference Minister Report**. Received and filed.

Old Business

- a. **Clergy Compensation Guidelines Taskforce Committee**. No report
- b. **Medical Indebtedness Project**. Valuable to get the information at the next meeting. There is not enough information to decide.
- c. **Fall Meeting**. The Fall meeting will be held on **November 14th**. Registration will take

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place beginning at 2:30 pm. The Meeting will be conducted from 3:00 to 5:00 pm. A motion was made by Rev. Jeff Wargo. The motion was seconded. The motion was to hold the Fall meeting remotely considering the COVID situation. Discussion followed. There was one abstention, one no. The motion carried. Rev. Villareal will take our concerns to the Conference staff.

- d. **Approval of Chair of Nominating Committee.** Consistory voted unanimously to approve Rev JoEllen Mauger as Chair of the Nominating Committee.

New Business

- a. **Report on General Synod**

The Conference was well represented. There was a lot of discussion by the members on becoming a contemplative church.

- b. **Approval of B&F, Endowment, Personnel Committee members.** Motion made by Beth Walker, and seconded, to accept the members of these committees now appointed. There was no discussion. The motion carried.
- c. **Purchase of Conference Room Furniture.** Rev. Villareal noted the reduction of the Conference office space has been completed. The rent was reduced. In the new space, a wall was removed to increase the space of the conference room. A motion was made by Rev. Fogal, and seconded, that an expenditure up to \$2500.00 for furniture may be made. There was no discussion. The motion carried.
- d. **Possible Consistory Retreat.** There was a lot of discussion. The members do not want to have a several days, away from home, retreat. "Getting to know you" will be included in each meeting.
- e. **Annual Spring Meeting 2022 – Theme for Planning Team.** How to become a contemplative church? Some of the members expressed they are uncomfortable with contemplation no action. Actions may be social justice and outreach. Contemplation can equip us to care for the vulnerable. Use church buildings as mission centers. These sorts of questions need to be asked.
- f. **Strategic Planning.** A team is meeting on a regular basis. Churches were polled via the association meetings this past spring. The Conference is still receiving information from the latest poll. The goal is to have the strategic plan in effect by the end of the year.
- g. **Recommended Book.** Beth Walker recommended Who will be a Witness by Drew Hart.

Adjournment. Rev. Fruchtl made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded. Donna Fried will offer the devotions at the September 18th meeting. Rev. Minasian offered the

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closing prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 pm.

Robin A. Hightower
Recording Secretary