

**Pennsylvania Southeast Conference
United Church of Christ
Consistory Meeting Minutes
July 16, 2022 Hybrid Meeting
PSEC Office and 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!

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1. Rev. Miles gave the devotions.
2. The meeting was called to order by Moderator Mr. Charles Kuthuru at 10:12. Mr. Kuthuru welcomed the new Vice Moderator, Rev. Melissa Burkhart and youth representative, Alisa Unell. The following members were in attendance: Acting President Rev. Kevin McLemore, Rev. Cean James, Treasurer Rev. Bob Fogal, Rev. Frances Merkel, Ms. Beth Walker, Ms. Mary Loiselle, Rev. Ken McDowell, Ms. Donna Fried, Rev. Kevin Fruchtl, Rev. Alan Miles, and Secretary Robin Hightower.
3. The Work of God's People
 - a. Mr. Kuthuru called for the approval of the agenda. Ms. Donna Fried made the motion and Rev. Fran Merkel seconded it. The motion carried.
 - b. Mr. Kuthuru called for the approval of the March 19 minutes. Ms. Walker made the motion to approve the minutes with correction. Ms. Loiselle was present at the January meeting. Ms. Mary Loiselle seconded the motion. The motion carried. The deadline date on the new ministries grant is June 30, not June 1. The minutes were corrected.
 - c. Reports
 - i. Treasurer. Rev. Fogal reviewed the various YTD financial reports distributed prior to the meeting, pointing out specific items that merited consistory members' attention. Particularly notable was the OCWM report that showed a \$10,490 shortfall for June 30. However, many churches sent June contributions totaling \$34,000+ after June 30. When added in, OCWM contributions surged ahead of budget by more than \$24,000. Also, Tammie Wisniewski has not taken the usual endowment draw that she typically does in June due to the severe stock market decline.

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Doing so would have had a negative impact on the amount withdrawn. Since the overall cash situation of the conference is strong, postponing the endowment draw will not impact any conference ministries or programs.

- ii. Personnel Committee Report. Rev. Burkhardt met with the candidate to fill the open slot on the Personnel Committee. Rev. Susan Hanon (Pleasantville UCC) will fill the opening on the Personnel Committee. There is now a full committee. Ms. Walker approved the motion to accept this action. Ms. Fried seconded the motion. The motion carried.
- iii. Disaster Ministry Coordinator Report. Ms. Walker moved to accept the report. Rev. Merkel seconded the report. There was no discussion. The motion carried.
- iv. Stewardship Task Force Report. Ms. Walker inquired about the Wisconsin Foundation. The United Church Fund is the financial ministry of the UCC. The UCF is socially responsible. The question asks where the Wisconsin Foundation is putting money. The response was that the money is put toward the Pension Board. Ms. Walker is discouraged by this as we have the UCF. Rev. McLemore will investigate and have Carol come to the September meeting. A motion was made by Rev. Burkhardt to accept this report with follow-up. Ms. Loiselle seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and the motion carried.
- v. Associate Conference Minister for Congregational Development Report. Rev. James reported that Open Table UCC will have its first service on Sep 11. He will ask the Conference to advertise the first service. Mr. Kuthuru made the motion to accept the report. Mrs. Hightower seconded the motion. The motion carried.
- vi. Associate Conference Minister for Search and Call Report. There were no questions or discussion about the report. Ms. Fried moved to accept the report. Rev. Merkel seconded the motion. The motion carried.
- vii. Conference Minister Report. The CM is on sabbatical leave. No report.

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4. Old Business.

- i. Lay Leadership Education Team. The team started before the pandemic and then stopped. It is now revived and there is a desire to do something for the Fall and Spring. There will be a meeting of Consistory presidents. The following ideas were suggested.
 - a. best practices about stewardship: more electronic
 - b. safe churches-working with children, gun safety,
 - c. needs of community
 - d. someone from Insurance Board
 - e. best practice on running a meeting
 - f. what is your role on consistory
 - g. best practices on managing finances, embezzlement
 - h. what is going to be ways churches measure success-where God is calling us
 - i. workshop on shared ministry
- ii. PA Council of Churches Capital Campaign pledge request. Rev. McLemore will meet with Rev. Dr. Larry Pickens, Executive Director of PA Council of Churches in August.
- iii. Ms. Walker raised the issue of broadening the use of church closure funds.
 - a. Student loan relief
 - b. Shared ministry. The future is shared.
 - c. Develop the use of international pastors
 - d. Tech supportThese ideas will be explored further.

5. New Business

- i. Approve Becky Comer as Covenant representative for Church & Ministry Council. Ms. Fried made the motion to approve this action. Ms. Loiselle seconded the motion. The motion carried.

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- ii. Approve North Penn representative for the Church & Ministry Council, Rev Elaine Ely. Ms. Fried made the motion to approve this action. Ms. Loiselle seconded the motion. The motion carried.
 - iii. New Ministries Fund Committee Report. Rev. Merkel reported that there have been four requests: (1) Salt and Light UCC to establish "Bethesda's Pool" a ministry of healing, wholeness and restoration in an amount of \$12,000.00. (2) St. Paul's UCC Pottstown is requesting money to support a diaper bank and to install shelving and start-up supplies. This comes to the amount of \$5000.00. (3) St Paul's UCC Blue Mountain requests \$3000.00 to begin another type of worship called Pizza Church. (4)Rev. Zack Jackson requested money to begin a Conference wide podcast, but the request was not approved. Ms. Walker moved to approve the first three requests. Ms. Fried seconded the motion. The motion carried.
6. Rev. Merkel moved to adjourn. Rev. Fruchtl seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 11:38am.

Robin A. Hightower
Secretary

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