

**New Hampshire Conference  
Board of Directors  
April 8, 2017**

Present: Rev. Dawn Berry, Neal Cass, Brian Edwards, Rev. Paula Gile, Kenneth Gould, Rev. Carolyn Keilig, Philip Kimball, Rev. Edward Koonz, Rev. Stacey Kullgren, Rev. Richard Leavitt, William McIntyre, Marcie Miller, Laura Sevigny, Rev. Martell Spagnolo, and Rev. Gary Schulte

Missed: John Herbert, Rev. Dawn Garrett-Larsen (both ill)

Rev. Gary Schulte led us in a poignant media reflection of a painting of Jesus praying in the Garden of Gethsemane and pictures of the brokenness in our world ending with pictures of the cross and who is bearing it today. We then joined in the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

The agenda was reviewed and accepted. ***Paula Giles moved and Marcie Miller seconded the motion to approve February 4, 2017 BOD minutes.***

**A Review of OCWM, Brian Edwards:**

Brian researched trends shared in UCC Membership Projections 2015-2045 and UCC Giving Projections. He caringly put together graphs of OCWM Basic Support giving in NH Conference which he saw as part of his enjoyment in working with numbers! Go Brian and thank you!! Four churches account for 34.7% of receipts, and 13 churches account for 54.2% of receipts. Ten churches give nothing. Over the last 5 years there has been a slight decrease in contributing churches and a drop in overall receipts. The projection made for OCWM receipts in 2017 is \$100,000 less than anticipated.

**Noted:** There is work to be done among our churches. The pattern of giving that depends on a few churches for most of the money that is received is of concern as people age and giving declines. Brian was thanked for collecting all this data and his clarifying work.

**Of note to the Budget Committee:**

- ✚ Webinar to share this information with the wider Conference.
- ✚ Information needs to be presented in a positive way that details how we have been good stewards with the money received in Basic Support in the budget and what are the achievements and value of what is offered by the NH Conference.

Brian offered the educational model about pledging and how the church finances are developed by Church of Christ at Dartmouth: a brochure was created and letters were sent out to targeted groups for giving levels. The letter provided basic information of giving levels and median gift, and then people were asked if they could give a certain amount above last year. For three years the letter went out, two years it worked well. It is hard to judge how the interim period affected giving in the third year, or how a new pastor might respond.

Perhaps a development person could be a good resource the Finance Ministry. Living into our covenant as churches of the NH Conference may also call upon Committees on Churches and Ministry to reach out to congregations with a periodic review, as is done with authorized ministers, as a way of strengthening our covenantal relationship.

Two BOD members suggested that this discussion and information be brought to the Capital Campaign Committee, Prepared to Serve, and Annual Meeting; and also clergy days and clergy convocations for education because the BOD noted that the pastoral leadership of a congregation is vital for living the covenantal relationship.

### **Task Before the June BOD Meeting Task:**

Look at 5 things the BOD most needs to be doing for the vitality of the NH Conference to stay relevant in the future.

### **Mission Income and Spending Plan**

In light of the 2017 OCWM projection of \$516,000 which is \$100,000 less than budgeted, the BOD reviewed the MISP. We discussed possible ways of increasing revenue sources and areas to reduce expenses. In the midst of looking at the 2017 MISP, we also recognized that revenue right now is running ahead of last year. In our discussion for positive phrasing, *Martel Spagnolo noted that Carolyn Keilig is brilliant!*

**Noted:** The churches who gave nothing to OCWM seem to be correlated to pastoral leadership.

### **Actions:**

- ✓ Budget Committee will look at the 2017 budget and suggest a plan for moving forward at the June meeting
- ✓ Weekly News summarizing the BOD meeting will introduce modifying the 2017 budget in light of the revenue adjustments.

### **Conference Minister's Report, Rev. Gary Schulte:**

The CM report was posted on the BOD private webpage and covered:

- Staffing while an administrative assistant recovers from knee surgery
- 40 churches are in transition for Search and Call Ministry from the Conference; 15 of which the Associate Conference Minister is completing
- General Synod Delegates and the challenge of finalizing the roster
- UCC Manual on Ministry proposed changes
- Auto loan update that took the CM off as guarantor for Conference loans
- Listing with Premier Properties for space in the Conference Center where a limited contract through August was suggested based on performance, rather than December

- Database review and revision: Stan Brallier of the Congregational Church of Laconia, United Church of Christ, is working with our staff to review and revise our existing database. His work is a gift!
- Climate change march in Washington D.C. on April 29
- Friends of NH Conference appeal was sent in late March with a \$31,000 goal, and every BOD member is encouraged to participate
- Spring Assn meetings dates were listed
- ONA Celebrations coming up were noted
- Gatherings for active clergy are offered pastorally by the CM

***The BOD supported the limited contract until August 31 with the present Realtor.***

The Tamworth Congregational Church will be leaving the Carroll-Stratford Association and the Candia Congregational is leaving Rockingham. The Bath Church has been approached by a non-UCC pastor who suggested that she could serve them along with her church. Cultural issues, theological issues, and building issues where the Fire Marshall has closed the sanctuary confront Bath; and yet, they have sent a \$1,000 check to OCWM.

Concern was expressed about the developing UCC Manual on Ministry and a seemingly limited opportunity for input. Gary indicated that letters of concern should be sent to Rev. Rachel Hackenberg and Rev. Malcolm Homshoot at the national setting. It would also be helpful for those concerned to gather to develop talking points that address issues. The Rev. Emily Heath, Exeter Pastor, will continue to be on the UCC Board when Gary's term is completed.

Stacey inquired about the transition in Outdoor Ministries. She observed that there has been little mention of the new Acting Director on FaceBook and wondered who is managing the page. Mollie had been doing that with other duties, but her limited contract is finished. Registrations for Horton Center are down 30% from last year at this time, and staffing is not complete. Leslie's husband has recently been diagnosed with prostate cancer, and prayers are raised for them as they sort through medical options and cope with what is before them. The Report from the Acting Director of Outdoor Ministries is posted on the BOD page.

**Report of the Treasurer**

In the absence of John Herbert due to illness, Neal reviewed the financial report posted on the BOD page. Operating revenue is up \$13,100 over last year in this first quarter.

**Ad Hoc Visioning Team**

Neal reviewed the history of the team that was voted October 2016 by the BOD.

- Started as a Capital Campaign Committee beginning with visioning
- Moved to October vote of the Board:

- The Board of Directors created an Ad-Hoc Visioning Team to:
  1. Consider what the Board needs to be faithful to its coordination and communication function in the visioning area.
  2. Identify, create, suggest and advocate for opportunities for visioning to happen throughout our Conference structure and its processes
  3. Be on the agenda of every Board of Director meeting with a report and/or education moment related to visioning.

After much discussion of purpose and implementation and to whom the Visioning Team would be related, ***Martell Spagnolo moved Dick Leavitt seconded the motion: When the Ad Hoc Visioning Team has an actionable item or a discovery that they want to share with the BOD, the Team may present it in writing for posting before the BOD meeting for discussion.*** Motion passed with one no vote.

### **Appointments and Elections**

The Nominating Committee recommended Evelyn Robbennolt Jones to fulfill the BOD term of Martel Spagnolo. **Martel moved that she be elected to the BOD.** The motion passed.

Havenwood Heritage Heights presented Lisa Snow Wade and Valerie P. Blake for appointment to the HHH BOD. **Marcie Miller moved and Carolyn Keilig seconded the motion to appoint Lisa Snow Wade and Valerie P Blake to the HHH BOD.** Passed

The Nominating Committee recommended Glenn Vodra as a Youth Delegate to General Synod. **It was moved by Carolyn Keilig to appoint Glenn Vodra as a Youth Delegate to GS.** Motion passed.

2018 budget committee includes Marcie Miller, Neal Cass, Brian Edwards, Lydia Frasca, Ken Gould, and Matt Van Wagner from the budget committee. They will use a larger budget summit approach and have a webinar to disseminate information prior to NH Conference Annual Meeting.

### **Capital Campaign Consultants**

Full Harvest Fundraising, LLC was recommended by the Capital Campaign Committee to conduct a Feasibility Study in preparation for the campaign. It will be conducted by Peter Heinrichs and Susan Lewis, principals of Full Harvest Fundraising. The total financial commitment of the NH Conference would be \$12,000 for the Feasibility Study. The agreement takes effect on April 19 through the production of the report. The money for the report was authorized at the Annual Meeting.

### **Other**

The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of HHH will be observed on May 4, sometime in the afternoon.

#### Evaluation of Meeting

- ❖ Good discussion about OCWM even though not as structured as anticipated
- ❖ Martel's send off was notable and his presence and work appreciated
- ❖ WE really like getting out earlier and lunch

Paula Gile closed the meeting with prayer at 2:03 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dawn C. Berry, secretary