

Commission on Archives and History

February 11, 2020

Minutes

Attending: David Werner, Thelma Boeder, Mary Beth Nelson, Mary Bakeman, Heidi Heller, On conference call: Hilda Parks, Randy Koppen, Dan Foster, and Judith Clark

Each member provided a brief update on any changes in their lives since our last meeting.

Hilda shared a devotion on the hymn “Be Thou My Vision,” which is one of her favorite hymns. The hymn is of Irish origin and originally had 8 verses. It first appeared in a Methodist hymnal in 1964 with 4 verses and today has only 3 verses because one of the verses had more masculine language. Hilda shared that the hymn got her thinking how vision is connected to history and that we need to live with hope for the future and trust in God’s word as He said in Jeremiah 29:11 – “For I know the plans I have for you.” We need to trust in these words and look with vision into the future.

Judy agreed to do the next devotion.

The minutes of November 12, 2019 were approved with two minor changes.

The Commission’s duties as outlined in the *Book of Discipline* were reviewed. We are fulfilling our duties as laid out. At the moment, there has not been much need for us to work with other Methodist-related denominations because Minnesota has so few. It was pointed out that this might change in the coming year depending on the outcome of the General Conference. If changes happen, we will determine how best to work with other related denominations. Thelma will continue as the Conference Historian. We also continue to work with ethnic congregations in ensuring their records are preserved. Overall, the Commission concluded that we are holding to our duties as outlined and are faithful to our charge.

David asked for potential ideas for quarterly articles in MN Connect. We discussed possible recognition of churches celebrating major milestones, something on the Jurisdiction Commission on Archives and History (JCAH) Convocation in July or special services at Historic Sites during the summer months. It was also suggested that maybe we could do something on Bishop Ough and Bishop Sally Dyck retiring and recalling their service to the Minnesota Conference, but it seems more likely that recognition will come from somewhere else in the Conference.

It was decided to focus on JCAH Convocation and the Historic Church’s summer church celebrations. Mary will share with Thelma and Heidi the flyer she has received on the Convocation. Thelma will follow up with Christa and Karla about doing a short article promoting the Convocation. The Historic Church celebrations would be a good focus for a summer article and we can look closer at this during our May meeting.

No new survey responses have been received from ethnic congregations. Hilda and Randy will follow up and possibly send out a reminder to the 9 churches that have not responded.

David W. talked with Ben Ingerbretson about the newly planted churches documenting their origins. Ben indicated that this would not be possible because church planters do not have the capacity to take on the task along with their other work. Heidi mentioned that we do get electronic newsletters from a few new church plants and that might be the best way to document some of the new churches until they are better founded and members can get involved in documenting their history. Heidi will determine the new plants

and see if they have newsletters available and if they do, she will sign up to receive them and maintain files on them.

It was asked if we have been documenting all the news stories related to The Grove. Heidi indicated that she has been capturing the various articles for the archives.

David W. shared that when he initially followed up with Church in the Maples, they were very interested in receiving help in reconstructing their origin story that was lost in the fire. He has not heard anything more at this time, but it might be too difficult and too busy a time for them to respond.

Update on the MNAC's Historic Sites

- Site of Kaposia – Mary shared that the plaque was there when she visited the site on 2/2020.
- Ottawa Church – Hilda shared that the necessary funds have been raised to replace the steeple, but work will not likely happen until the spring.
- Red Rock – Newport UMC continues to oversee the maintenance of this site.
- Market St. ME – Thelma shared that the plaque was on the parking ramp when she stopped by in December. The General Conference sign is currently in the archives and for now, it will stay there.

Thelma shared that she has added an image to the First Finnish ME Facebook page. She also plans to continue adding more items to the page.

No new requests for an application and guidelines for the nomination of historic sites have been received.

David L. had shared information he found at the Olmsted County Historical Society. Based on the information found it appears likely the First UB Annual Conference was held at John W. Fulkerson's farm.

No significant anniversaries are coming up in the MAC.

Thelma's document "Planting United Methodist Roots in Minnesota" is up on the MAC website. Thelma has determined that you can search the document, but since it is a PDF it might not be as straightforward for all individuals to determine that.

David L. had emailed Heidi and indicated that he is continuing to work on Memoirs, but responses are slow in coming in. He might contact others in the NCJ Conference to see if they are also having challenges in getting responses.

Randy sent out three letters recognizing congregational anniversaries. The letters were sent to Path of Grace -130th Anniversary, Camphor – 100th Anniversary, and Delano – 150th Anniversary.

Heidi shared that the majority of the library was moved to the basement in January. The archives will be gaining an additional 144 square feet of archive storage in the coming months. Additionally, the building will be changing out the archive UV lights to LED lights, smoke detectors will be added, and radon testing will be done.

Heidi has received a question from the Alaska Conference Historian wondering if any gathering is being planned for archivists and conference historians during the General Conference. Although nothing is formally planned, we might want to consider it. Heidi will forward the email inquiring about it onto Thelma and she will follow up with Fred Day at GCAH and the individual who contacted Heidi.

The UM Historical Society is still dormant. Its status will need to be resolved in the coming year and determination made of what to do with the remaining funds. Heidi had contacted Laurie Boche about potentially getting a grant to cover the cost of some of the items suggested in the General Collection Assessment. Laurie said she would get back to Heidi. Thelma will mention the grant idea to her when she meets with Laurie soon.

Thelma will pull together a list of contacts and events for the active fellowships at the UM Historical Sites. This list could be a good starting point for an article in MN Connect on their activities this summer.

At the Annual Conference Ministry Fair we will be highlighting Thelma's work on "Planting United Methodist Roots in Minnesota." The initial plan is to have a laptop or two available for individuals to search the document. Heidi and Thelma will work on this. Heidi will also follow up and determine when the Ministry Fair is scheduled to be held.

The JCAH Convocation is in Iron Mountain, MI and we need to send two delegates. David W. is not able to attend. David W. will check with David L. to see if he is interested in attending. Heidi and Thelma also expressed interest in attending. We will vote on delegates during the May meeting.

The next meeting is on May 19, 2020. Heidi will reserve the room for the meeting. The following meeting will be on September 15, 2020.

Adjourned