

Council on Finance and Administration (CFA) Minutes
Minnesota Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church
Minnesota Church Center
122 W Franklin Ave, Minneapolis, MN

May 21, 2020 Minutes

Members Present: Tom Biatek; Jane Gilbert; Brenda King; Linda Gesling; David Parker; Deb Marzahn; John Mitchem; Sharon Fields; Randy Koppen; Keith Peterson; Connie Sheely and Steve Richards.

Members Absent; Paul Hoekstra and Daniel Wetterstrom.

Officio & Services: Bishop Bruce Ough, Barb Brower Director of Finance & Administration and Treasurer, Cindy Gregorson, Director of Connectional Ministries, Kathleen Keller, Controller and Sheri Meister, Executive Director of the Minnesota United Methodist Foundation.

I. Opening Matters

John Mitchem called the meeting to order at 12:30p.m. The agenda was adopted by consensus. The consent agenda including minutes of the meeting and executive session held April 16, 2020 were approved by consensus.

II. New Business

John Mitchem requested that we all respond to John Wesley's question, "how is it with your soul?" and Deb Marzahn opened us in prayer.

Cindy Gregorson gave the report of the Director of Connectional Ministries. Cindy explained that the Annual Conference will be held virtually August 29th with clergy session on August 28th. Cindy also reported that because of the postponement of General Conference, the new quadrennium will not officially begin until January 1, 2022, therefore we are asking all our elected team members to extend one year to sync up with the new quadrennium. She also reported that we gave out 105 Dare to Reach grants.

Sheri Meister gave the report of the Executive Director of the Minnesota Foundation. Barb Brower gave the report of the Treasurer. Barb thanked the churches for their continued connectional support during the pandemic. She reported that April year-to-date apportionment receipts were 2.67% less than last year at this time but that the Minnesota Conference collections seem to be better than most other conferences.

Kathleen Keller provided an overview of cash and cash reserves. Kathleen estimates that with a 75% apportionment collection receipt rate for May and June, available cash reserves at June 30, 2020 will be \$564 thousand in addition to the reserve requirement of \$927 thousand. This would also include paying back in full the PPP loan of \$574 thousand. Conference expenses have declined to about ½ to a third of typical expense helping achieve this cash buffer.

Cindy Gregorson led the council through a working document of activities supported by the 2020 budget. She outlined the activities that are essential to the conference based on *The Book of Discipline*. Cindy then asked the council to provide a sense of where we would like the judicatory to be 2-3 years from now. Suggestions included the following:

- Use the changing technology to provide an online community for worship – perhaps a cohort of 4 or 5 churches together.

- Online worship is not going away so figure out how to support or guide local churches in this area.
- One suggestion was to divest camps but then another comment was that camps were vital to our youth ministry.
- Concern that churches are closing and we have smaller churches. The major costs to the church are the building and the clergy so how can we empower the laity to lead? How to support lay leaders house churches.
- Invest in IT support for the conference and local church for online learning and teaching. But, also do not forget the connectivity issues of our out-state churches.
- Continue to invest in new church development and evangelism.
- Re-think our financial model from apportionment based to fee for service.

Barb Brower reviewed the Camp Minnesota campaign to the Conference to support camps during the COVID-19 financial crisis.

Cindy Gregorson reviewed the return to work protocol leadership developed in response to COVID-19. The protocol follows the State of Minnesota Governor's guidelines.

Being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Brower