

Commission on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW)
 First United Methodist Church
 Sartell, MN
 June 29, 2019

PRESENT: Linda Kotschevar, Joyce Prudden, Sandy Meyer, Susan Clark Harris, Rennae Peterson, Wilma Joan Roberts, Debra Jene Collum, Co-Chair & Faye Christensen, Co-Chair

Devotions – Rennae gave devotions with the theme of Change. Change is hard for all of us--- especially change as it relates to the church. When change hits, we feel that our security has been ripped away. Then we may let the stormy waves of fear or anger overtake us. Yet, we know that God always goes with us & will never forsake us. We sang together “Change My Heart, O God.”

Minutes of Oct 20, 2018, Peace UMC, Shoreview. The minutes were discussed and approved with an update about the expanding language resolution. It was not brought to the MN annual conference since it was decided that the time was not right for it. We knew that the LGBTQIA resolutions were coming before the floor and the two co-chairs decided to not detract from that issue.

Monitoring: Susan gave a report based on the MN Annual Conference 2018 Journal: She compared the past 4 years and found that there is a significant increase in women as deacons, elders associate members. Also, an increase in women in LLP positions. There is a decrease in men in the same categories.

The numbers as reported in the Annual Conference Journals 2015-2018

Journal	Deacons	Elders	Provisional Deacons	Provisional Elders	Associate	Full timeLLP	Part TimeLLP	Total Clergy
2015	25	135	3	6		13	16	576
2016	25	137	3	6		13	16	583
2017	27	133	4	9	1	14	18	578
2018	26	134	3	7	1	15	26	583

Budget: Faye distributed the expense voucher forms. The mileage rate has now been raised from .14 to 34.8 cents/mile. This is according to Barbara Brower, MN AC Director of Finance & Administration. We received a grant from the MN Church & Society to cover expenses for our pre-conference seminar speakers as well as the “Green Card Voices” exhibit and “Faith & Fact” materials from the Gen. Conf. Church & Society.

2019 Pre-Conference Seminar: It went very well in spite of the fact that anything which could have gone wrong, went wrong just weeks before hand: Our Islam 101 speaker, Zen, pulled out a few weeks before and Hudda, our speaker about experiences of Muslim women (as well as teaching us how to wrap a hijab) was in Turkey on June 18, thinking that the seminar date was July18. The “Faith & Fact” cards were ordered on May 10, but the person responsible moved to Seattle shortly thereafter & colleagues had problems tracking down the order;. The exhibit people came a day early & put the “Green Card Voices” up in the wrong room. By the grace of God, things went remarkable well: on all fronts: Hudda's husband and sister stood in for her and did a remarkable job on short notice; the “Faith & Fact” cards arrived on June 17, the day before the seminar; The exhibit was moved to the correct room right before the annual conference started. This was the most challenging seminar COSROW has every done! Everything worked out well in the end.

2020 MN Annual Conference in SD: Faye has been in contact with Nicole Anderson, Dakota's COSROW chair about our two conference COSROW's possibly working on a pre-conference seminar next year. She is very open to that idea and said that a huge topic in the Dakotas is missing and murdered indigenous women. Nicole stated that Dr. Susan Jenny, a Dakotas pastor, would be a good speaker. Dr. Jenny does a lot of work with a group which intersects with race and gender within the Native community. We would like to meet with Rev. Nicole as well as other Dakota COSROW members. We discussed Oct. 18 as a possible date (NOTE: A new date will need to be determined since Nicole is getting married on that date!!! She will send us other possible dates). We decided that Marshall, MN would be a good location to meet with the Dakotas COSROW, sometime this fall. The MN COSROW group decided that members who are interested in working with the Dakotas COSROW will have their expenses paid for a fall meeting as well as a pre-conference seminar and attending the joint Dakotas/MN annual conferences in Sioux Falls, SD, in June 2020.

2020 General Conference in Mpls., May 5 – 15, 2020: Volunteers are needed for many jobs, e.g.:

- Greeters
- Drivers
- Prayers Room Hosts
- Skyway Guide
- Off-site Venue Hosts
- Translators
- Administrative support
- Etc.

Sign up to volunteer: gc2020welcome.org.

UMW & COSROW: Rennae's term is ending in Dec. Joyce Prudden has volunteered to be our COSROW rep to MN UMW. Thankyou, Rennae! Thank you, Joyce!

Church Women United: Sandy Meyer is now the president of Church Women United in MN. She has asked Debra & Faye to do a workshop on Sept. 14 at Discovery UMC, Chanhassen on the topic of expanding language "When Language Gets in the Way of Faith."

RCRC: Joyce Prudden stated that Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, stated that the national RCRC has all new leadership and that the MN chapter is not too functional at this time. They have lots of money, thanks to a special gift, but not the strong leadership. Joyce stated that she will no longer be COSROW's representative to RCRC, noting that the 2016 General Conference in Portland, OR, discontinued support for RCRC. Joyce will still remain UMW's representative.

ERA: Debra attended NOW as COSROW rep. Gender is not protected in MN nor in the USA. Women are not treated with equal respect nor do they have full rights. 96% of Americans believe that women should have equal rights and most people in the U.S. (over 80%) believe that the ERA was ratified decades ago. Not so! The COSROW members discussed the fact that the Equal Rights Amendment has still not become part of the U.S. Constitution. The following states have not done so as of May, 2019: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North & South Carolina, Oklahoma, Utah and Virginia. We need only ONE more state to ratify the ERA, & put it into the U.S. Constitution. MN ratified it for the federal constitution decades ago, but did not ratify it for the MN constitution, so there is a big push to have that done ASAP. in MN.

Debra Passed out videos and material that could be used by COSROW members in their legislative districts. It is hoped that these materials will be used at churches, town hall meetings and other places

where people could see the importance of contacting their House representatives so that the ERA can be included in the MN Constitution. For more information: <https://www.eramn.org/>

19th Amendment: 2020 is the 100th year for women receiving the vote in the U.S. How can we celebrate this? Faye will talk with Dawn Hare, General COSROW, about celebrating this in some manner at the COSROW display area at General Conference in May, 2020.

Videos Shown:

- Quicksand by Guante, spoken word heard at Annual Conference
https://youtu.be/0R_RmGKg6c0
- Awareness Video from the NC COSROW clergywomen. Comments made by men to clergywomen. Men read the sexist comments and then react to them.
<https://vimeo.com/335862568>
- Song from Aladdin movie, “Speechless” <https://youtu.be/mw5VIEIvuMI>
- “Legalize Equality” short film by Kamala Lopeq-Heroica Foundation “Equal Means Equal.”
<https://demand.equalmeanequal.org/page/contribute/legalize-equality-dvd-donation>.