

Sessions Action Team
Meeting Minutes for November 2, 2017
10:00-12:00

Present: Carol Zaagsma, Sessions co-leader; Marianne Ozanne, Sessions co-leader; Cindy Gregorson, Director of Ministries; Bishop Bruce Ough; Barb Brower, Director of Finance & Administration; Karla Hovde, Communications Specialist; Gail Johnson, Events Coordinator; Dave Nuckols, Co-Lay Leader; Paula Colton, Sessions Worship leader; Laura Miles, Office and IT Coordinator; Janet Beard, Conference Secretary;

1. Devotions – Marianne led devotions related to harvest and how it is different for different areas, and how our journeys are different as well. Marianne opened the meeting with prayer.

2. 2018 Annual Conference Session
 - Logo – Karla showed the current logo which she reported is 80% official! Colors/shades might change slightly because of concern about projection. Main theme colors are greens and purples.
 - Love Offering – Cindy reported that Lyndy will meet Saturday with the team to make the decision about recipients for the love offering. It was determined that it will be collected at the Thursday morning worship service.
 - Budget – Gail reported that expenses and costs were about even last year. Both childcare and children’s camp areas had enough participants to cover costs for the first time in many years. \$4500 was donated in sponsorships. Gail recommended a similar budget for 2018. One suggestion was to charge a bit more for display tables for outside vendors who are selling items.
 - ‘Big blocks’ Schedule – Cindy gave a review of the preliminary schedule. Discussion points included:
 - a. Olu Brown’s presentations – the first on Wednesday afternoon to be more “preaching”, the second on Thursday morning to be more “teaching” – focused on the conference theme related to living as people connected to the vine.
 - b. Conversation on a Way Forward - details about that session will depend somewhat on how the issue will impact the conference and how to manage that.
 - c. Service of Life in Ministry – chair/table logistics and the rehearsal were discussed. 1. Having retirees honored at the center altar (instead of up on stage), with staged movement from chair to “on-deck” spot to honoree spot will help with issues experienced this past year. This will allow retirees to sit with families at reserved tables around the edges of the center altar and avoid excess walking/standing during the presentation; the use of hand-held cameras will allow them to be seen on the video screens. 2. Paula will look at the two liturgies for the ordination/commission sections; she reported that there will probably be 10 people to be ordained and 9 people to be commissioned. 3. Because of the timing of the worship this year (Friday afternoon), a suggestion was shared to have a luncheon banquet (plated meal) served, along with some kind of light program/table discussion/TED talks, etc. before the worship to encourage people to stay. It was also suggested that light appetizers be offered along with the bars/desserts at the reception following the worship.
 - d. Act of Repentance – Bishop Ough shared that he is realizing that the more discussions that are occurring around the return of Red Rock, the more time it’s going to take to return it to the Dakotas people. Different tribes have different ideas about the logistics – so will need more time to work on this. Back-up plan for the Act of Repentance (Thursday evening) may need to be implemented – Bishop Ough will have an update and decision by the next Sessions meeting on Feb. 1. Some kind of celebration is still a possibility – including an act of repentance followed by an act of reconciliation that focuses on relationship rather than the return of the sacred Red Rock. The idea of traveling to sacred sites may be explored.

- e. Worship – There will be three worships to plan this year. Communion will be served once at the opening worship Wednesday morning. Discussion around music occurred. Paula will continue research. Paula also will continue researching a conference artist (sculpture/clay) and exploring ideas (and cost) around possibly incorporating digital art and coloring opportunities for the session.
 - f. Special interest group meals – Gail will do some preliminary contacting of groups to see about offering these during both Wednesday & Thursday dinner blocks (groups would purchase dinner meal) and during the Thursday lunch block (lunch provided).
 - g. Several pre-conference workshops may be offered.
 - h. Having the candidacy orientation meeting at the same time as the rehearsal for the Life in Ministry Worship should not overlap more than one or two people, so is fine to schedule.
3. Joint MN/Dakotas Annual Conference in 2020: There is a small group working on determining whether this will be possible and if doing this will add value and advance the mission of the two conferences. This group will give a recommendation to the Extended Cabinet who will make the final decision. Gail reported that after a visit to the site she feels the joint conference would be possible, but would not be her preference due to the timing being so close to the UM General Conference being held in Minneapolis a few weeks beforehand.
4. Meeting Schedule – 10:00am at the conference office:
- a. Thurs Feb 1
 - b. Wed April 4
 - c. Mon June 18
5. Updates for next meeting:
- a. Love Offering recipient decision
 - b. Act of Repentance Celebration planning
 - c. Interest group meal planning
 - d. Worship music/artist planning

Meeting concluded at 11:55.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Beard
Conference Secretary