

**Sessions Action Team**  
Minutes for September 25, 2018, 9am

In attendance: Marianne Ozanne, Carol Zaagsma, Cindy Gregorson, Barb Brower, Christa Meland, Guy Sederski, Karla Hovde, Gail Johnson, Rachael Warner, Janet Beard, Laura Miles, Bishop Bruce Ough; Dave Nuckols (via Blue Jeans).

1. **Devotions:** Marianne shared thoughts around map-making and how we are creating the map for annual conference.

2. **2019 Annual Conference Session**

- a. Theme Scripture – John 4, “The Woman at the Well”
- b. Update from the Think tank – Cindy gave overview of the think tank notes (see end of document)
- c. 2020 General Conference Delegation Balloting – we will move to electronic voting for delegates this year. Laura updated us on research she has done. She is recommending using Padgett Communications, with approximate cost of \$9000 (one day). This service could be used for all voting - Laura will research cost for their service for two or three days.

- d. Schedule, with particular attention to:

- i. Big Blocks – There was much discussion about when to schedule the CLM worship. It was decided to try to schedule it on Tuesday evening, having an opening plenary session and Clergy and Laity sessions in the afternoon, followed by worship in the evening.

Most balloting will probably happen on Wednesday. There could be a first ballot on Tuesday. It could be a manual ballot , depending on cost for electronic voting service.

There was some discussion about having a banquet lunch on Thursday, followed by Episcopal address worship with communion – ending AC with a big celebration worship.

- ii. Community Event – Much discussion. St. Cloud Rotary sponsors an event at St. George park every Wednesday, so we could tag onto that. One idea was to offer different options for people to attend, or offer time for people to socialize on Wednesday evening. Maybe start with “happy hour” gatherings.
- iii. Videos – Christa requested feedback on whether she should sign a contract with the videographer to create daily videos and wrap-up videos like last year. (Paid through Communications budget.) Consensus is yes. Maybe do a shorter wrap up video to show before benediction at end of conference worship.

- e. Budget – Gail reported that each year’s conference concludes with about a ~~\$10,000~~ deficit, and if \$9000 is added for balloting next year, that will be a higher deficit. (After reviewing the minutes, Gail revised this report – she says that we are typically within a couple thousand dollars of breaking even each year (not \$10,000), and this year we actually ended in the black – although she has no idea how!) She also reported that there is a \$45,000 cost for three meals; if one meal were eliminated, that could save approximately \$15,000.

### 3. Closing

#### a. Meeting Schedule:

- i. Monday, November 19 10am – 12noon
- ii. Thursday, February 14 10am – 12noon
- iii. ~~Thursday, May 2 10am – 12noon~~, **CHANGE:** Friday, May 3 10am-12noon
- iv. Thursday, July 25 10am – 12noon

#### b. Review assignments:

Cindy will re-work schedule, based on today's discussion, and maybe one less meal.

Bishop will research further information about the potential speaker.

Communications will be working on a logo.

Laura will research costs of using the electronic balloting for 2 or 3 days.

Gail will send budget information and coffee stats for us to consider.

In February there will be a report from the 2020 (Sioux Falls) design team.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Beard, Conference Secretary & Registrar

Annual Conference 2019

Think Tank Notes

Theme: Dare to Reach: Love Boldly

Scriptural Imperative: Reach New People

Scripture Focus: John 4, the Woman at the Well

Keepers/Stand Out Moments:

- TED Talk/Conference Preacher
- Sketchbook
- Collisions/Connections
- Way Forward conversations at tables
- Celebration Banquet
- Missional Report focused on Top Ten

What Could Be Improved:

- Liked Celebration of Life and Ministry at the end but not in the afternoon
- Concert needed a different venue

Thoughts on the Scripture:

- Encounter: going about daily life, starts a conversation; Jesus is tired, does not have everything, starting with your vulnerability.
- Experience: begins with the literal/practical. What are you thirsty for? Offers hope. Jesus listens deeply, and reflects life back to them.
- Engage/Exclaim: the disciples are astonished about who Jesus is hanging out with. The woman is astonished by this Jesus she has met.
- Jesus ministry is relational...not huge programs, but getting into interesting conversations. He spends a lot of time eating good food with bad people. There is two way learning going on.
- Where is your well? Where can you invest and love boldly?

Overall idea: how to do we create lots of space/chances for people to “collide”/meet up at the well, and engage in interesting conversations, discover living water.

**Big Ideas:**

- Could we start later on Tuesday and end with the Celebration of Life in Ministry on Thursday evening. This will most likely be the plan for our week in Sioux Falls in 2020. Do we try it out this year? It could mean an extra night for folks if they do not drive home after the Celebration. We would need time to get out of the room and turn it over, but we have the cost savings of not having to turn it back. So will lots of people leave on Thursday afternoon?
- If we started later on Tuesday, then the Celebration Banquet could be over lunch, and we could do “lunch and learns” instead of pre-conference workshops. Save a day of pre-conference gatherings that way.
- The idea was discussed of having a Spiritual entrepreneur panel on the first evening...having several practitioners who are trying new models of ministry that are reaching new people share what they are doing.
- Community Festival...how can it be for the community and a way to engage folks versus being for us out in the community. Have a 5 K and raise money for the wells??
- Late afternoon “happy hour” gatherings on Wednesday to meet new people...mix and mingle. By interest group??
- Doing something like Open Space Conversation or World Café on a social issue. Last year, it was apparent people wanted to talk about gun violence, but legislation and debate not always the best vehicle for that.
- Speaker: practical skills in how to have spiritual conversations about Jesus.

**Other Things to Be Mindful in the Planning:**

- CORR has asked to be the featured ministry area. Reaching new people is about multi-cultural awareness/competency.
- Our on-going journey on our Act of Repentance/Reconciliation. As we think about reaching new people what do we need to remember and repent of Christianity’s not always positive missionary actions?
- Will need time for GC 2019 report and GC 2020 delegate balloting, and GC 2020 hosting needs.
- GBGM 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- Potential chartering of Northern Light church.