

Rocky Mountain Conference, United Church of Christ
Annual Meeting 2015
Business Meeting
Saturday, June 13, 2015

The Business Meeting of the 2015 Rocky Mountain Conference Annual Meeting opened with singing the song "Weave" led by Cory Kibler at 9:45 a.m.

Cory recognized Lisa Callahan for all her hard work, and led us with a deep breathing exercise to get everyone centered and focused.

Sue Artt led us in the song "Dream God's Dream," followed by Words of Welcome from Rebecca Kemper Poos.

Tamara Boynton checked in regarding registrations and welcomed new arrivals to La Foret.

Rebecca then called the meeting to order.

- Lisa verified that our bylaws state we must have one-third of the churches represented to reach a quorum, and we have well over that number.
- Two churches were granted Voice with Vote:
 - Community Spirit UCC - present
 - Chadash UCC - absent
- Three individuals were granted Voice without Vote:
 - Gordon Gilles – Cornerstone Fund
 - Lorin Cope – Eden Theological Seminary
 - Judith Roska- Spiritual Direction
- Tracey Dawson was appointed Parliamentarian.
- Jan Hepp was appointed Timekeeper.
- **MOTION: Rebecca moved to adopt the Standing Rules (which have been posted on the RMC website since April). There was a second; no discussion; Motion approved unanimously.**
- Rebecca recognized the following groups and individuals involved with preparing for the Annual Meeting, and thanked them for their hard work and dedication to make this meeting a success:

the Southeastern Association and meeting planners; all staff at La Foret; and the Annual Meeting Design Team.

- Rebecca reviewed the personnel changes since the 2014 Annual Meeting:
- In memoriam: Jean Wade, Michael Kirchhoff, Jeannine Lamb, and Barbara Gates
- Conference office changes: Lorraine Elsen and Chance Percival no longer work for the Conference, and new Conference staff were introduced: Cory Kibler – Communications Director, and Lisa Callahan – Office Support Coordinator.

State of the Conference – Sue Artt:

- RMC was \$34,000.00 in the black at the end of 2014.
- OCWM is tracking well ahead of what was planned. Thank you for the giving – it empowers local and national conferences.
- RMC is on target to end 2015 with a nearly balanced budget. We are submitting a 2016 balanced budget for approval, contrasting with other conferences running yearly deficits of \$300,000.
- Over 160 people are in attendance at this Annual Meeting
- All of these speak to the vitality of RMC.

In responding to the lengthy discussion midday Friday regarding the Search Process and Sue’s candidacy, Sue explained how she had relied on Spirit to direct her move to from Illinois to Colorado without job or place to live. She talked of how she arrived at her position with RMC, and she clarified the difference between interim, acting and designated conference ministers. She acknowledged the fuzziness around how her “acting” title would be resolved, and that had she and the Board understood this in the fall 2013, they might have sought to name that resolution – but it wasn’t done then and so here we are as a Conference, wrestling with how to move forward in naming the permanent Conference Minister. Sue affirmed that she is still committed to following Spirit as Spirit calls newness into the life of the Conference, and invited others to join her in that faith commitment. She concluded with a passage in Acts, and led us in prayer.

Speak Outs:

- Tamara reminded everyone of the intergenerational camps at La Foret this year.
- Alice Silver spoke about the Colorado Faith Communities to End Gun Violence. This is a newly-formed, ecumenical coalition consisting of more than 25 congregations from all areas. Their agenda is two-fold: (1) working to prevent the Colorado legislature from repealing gun safety measures and passing new, less stringent measures; and (2) looking at the public health aspect of gun violence and working with the medical community to promote gun safety and safe storage of firearms.

Review of Conference Finances: Finance Committee - Matt Huntington and Jan Hepp:

- RMCUCC is in great financial shape, and will present a balanced budget for 2016.
 - Salaries are now aligned with the National UCC standards. We have made some staff changes and are now paying less for the Conference Minister than in 2010.
 - Staff compensation and benefits were discussed.
 - Matt thanked everyone for contributing to OCWM, which is going up for several reasons:
 - We are more radically connected between the Conference and the local churches;
 - The Capital Campaign is complete;
 - Our Vivid Description came from cluster meetings that were held around the Conference, resulting in increased contributions to OCWM. RMC sent 22.4% of our OCWM overage to National UCC.
 - The Budget Summary of the 3-page Financial Report was reviewed and discussed.
- Motion: "The Conference Finance Committee moves approval of the 2016 budget as presented. The motion comes from a Board Committee and does not need a second."**
- Motion passed.**

Speak Outs:

- Tamara spoke about the importance of supporting Youth Outdoor Ministries and camp.
- Mark Lee discussed the Visiting Scholars program to be held October 16-18, 2015.
- Nikki Frontz, who is Chair of UCC Fellowship, an independent organization at Iliff, explained how to support colleagues in ministry.

2016 Clergy Compensation Guidelines – Tamara Boynton:

- A new model for clergy compensation was offered last year, and she has received a lot of feedback regarding how it works. She then reviewed what is encompassed within the clergy compensation, and opened conversations regarding the guidelines. Changes to note are as follows:
 - A Table of Contents and Resource List have been added to the Guidelines posted on the RMC website.
 - A 2.2% COLA increase has been incorporated.
 - There are two compensation graphs: one for urban corridor churches, and the other for rural and mountain churches.
 - Compensation recommendations were run based on the contract and budget, as opposed to years of ordination. Professional benefits have been expanded, including sabbaticals.
 - Part IV – Associate and Authorized Minister Guidelines: after looking at the available research, it was determined that churches are closed systems and most associates are paid in relation to the senior pastor.

The Guidelines need to be updated on the RMCUCC website, as the last draft is draft from 2014.

We will not be voting on the Clergy Compensation Guidelines, and it has been tabled until next year.

Nominating Report and Elections – John Rostykus

- John discussed the nominating report and election procedures, and expressed his appreciation to all who are willing to serve. He reminded everyone that there are still some open positions, including space for one more youth on the Board of Directors.
- Mission Teams: it became apparent that the Mission Team explanations and expectations were not clear. This matter has been put on hold. The Mission Teams will continue with the current staff through the end of 2015. Beginning in 2016, we will be forming new Task Forces to replace the Mission Teams, so the slate is shorter than in the past.
- Synod Delegates: Sue went over the delegate election process per UCC Constitutional provisions and next year's requirements by association.
- **MOTION: "The Conference Nominating Committee moves election of the slate of Board Members and Committee Members as presented." Motion passed.**
- Synod – Jan Hepp named and acknowledge this year's delegates, and shared delegation t-shirts. There are about 35 extras to sell for \$20.00 each.

Speak Outs:

- Jane Anne Ferguson spoke regarding testament and enduring faith, and meeting spiritual needs. There will be an "our Whole Lives" training session for leadership at Plymouth in Ft. Collins on August 14-16. Jane also invited everyone to talk to her about the book she wrote: "Forty-five Days with Jesus," including study guide for churches.
- Tracy Lynn Mosely spoke regarding First Congregational in Pueblo's sudden loss of their minister last year. She is reaching out to all who helped support their small church, with great appreciation for all the prayers and support – it meant a lot.
- Joyce Alms-Ransford, Executive Director of Archway Housing, gave a brief presentation of Archway's history, properties and current projects. There is a fundraiser on September 18th at the Museum of Nature and Science.. Archway currently has an opening on their Board of Directors. They would like to be more involved with RMCUCC, and would like to have a member from RMCUCC serve on the Board of Directors.
- Kristina Lizardy-Hajbi, Director for the Center for Analytics and Data (CARD) spoke regarding the importance of UCC Yearbook reporting. Annual membership reporting is used to determine the number of Synod delegates representing RMCUCC. We had a significant decline in the number of congregations responding. If we increase the responses next year, we will have a pizza party at next year's Annual Meeting.
- Malcolm Himschoot, Minister for Ministerial Transitions at MESA in Cleveland, explained the importance of MESA and what they do.
- Lorin Cope, Eden Theological Seminary, spoke about the importance of our continued support of seminary. He invited everyone to visit Eden – take a tour, share a meal – and find ways to be

engaged and bring Eden to you and your church. If you know someone considering seminary, please urge them to consider Eden.

- Judith Roska explained spiritual direction, which is a contemplative practice where all gifts are welcome. It is a specific action, an ancient practice, and a one-to-one unique listening practice. She is currently offering spiritual direction and invite all to speak with her.
- Gordon Gilles, President, UCC Cornerstone Fund, spoke regarding the services Cornerstone offers by providing loans for church expansion, renovation and improvements. Cornerstone financed La Foret a year ago, which was made possible by investments. Expenses for La Foret can be decreased by investing in Cornerstone and designating proceeds to the La Foret. Please consider investing in Cornerstone.
- Chris Gilmore spoke regarding the Colorado Communities to End Gun Violence. He has all the documents needed to help congregations join and partner with them.

Conference Minister Search

- Beth Robey-Hyde, Chair of the Search Committee, spoke regarding the process and status of the search for a permanent Conference Minister. The Committee has begun preparing a Conference Profile and has the Job Description from the Board of Directors. Members of the Search Committee were introduced, and invited anyone with concerns to discuss those concerns with any members of the Search Committee at lunch.

Annual Meeting 2016

The Utah delegation issued an invitation to the 2016 Annual Meeting to be held at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City, hosted by the Intermountain Association.

The meeting was adjourned by Rebecca Kemper Poos at 12:13 p.m.