

August 10, 2019
134th Conference Annual Meeting
Montana-N. Wyoming Conference, UCC
Camp Mimanagish, McLeod Montana

+All reports referenced are contained in the published CAM booklet

Moderator Rev. Tracy Heilman called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm.

Quorum declared, 15 voting churches represented, approximately 50 souls in attendance.

+Motion to approve 2018-2019 business meeting minutes

Moved and second; approved

Rev. Tracy Heilman, director, opened the meeting with prayer

+Rev. Marc Stewart, Conference Minister presented the State of Conference address

Brief remarks by Tracy Heilman, thanking Marc Stewart for his leadership and guidance

+Terri Goodsell, Treasurer, presented the Treasurer's Report, 2020 budget and Financial Task Force Report. Motion to accept (Susan Watterson) and second; approved.

+Tracy Heilman presented Moderator's Report

+Lynne Spencer-Smith presented nominations report

Board of Directors additions/changes, all other as presented

Correction to title from Faith Development to Faith Formation

Central – Lay – At Large Nominee for Nell Game Counter Ebby, 1st Congregation UCC, Billings

Committee on Ministry additions/changes, all other as presented

Tom Scheetz corrected spelling

Explanation given for Dwight Welch as he lives out of the western region

Intermountain Children's Home board needs on representative from our conference

+Tracy Heilman presented Wholiness Project

+Lynn Spencer-Smith Stewardship Report (58:55)

+Trudi Downer, Committee for Outdoor Ministry Report

Axel Blodgett and Clair Hatch will be youth members on COM

Tawni Lehman– Human Resources Report; explanation of role of moderator of HR and the work completed over the past year.

+CMC – Marc Stewart presented report in Rick Thompson's absence

+Pam Peterson – Faith Formation, report as presented

Motion to accept reports, moved (Roger Lynn) and second, passed

+Additional Reports: Anniversaries recognized as presented in report

General Synod Report given by Nick Knoblauch; printed report by Lynne Spencer-Smith is available for distribution and on file.

Carol Shively presented greetings from the United Church Funds board and Global Ministries; honored Doug McClellum for his service on the board.

+Dwight Welch and Kim Woerste presented reports on Campus Ministry

Marc Stewart presented guest Rev. Dr. Felix Villanueva to coach a discussion on what the future holds for the conference.

Take the things we do well and expand them. Center for the development of Rural Ministry. Infiltrated in our leadership are many Native peoples. Progressive religious presence in every four- year university in Montana. New Church starts in rural Montana. ONA conference and 100% ONA churches. Statewide implementation of OWL curriculum. Sanctuary centers for anyone seeking refuge. Congregations will model what it is to be center of conversation on dialogue of differences. Safe place for children to evolve and be encouraged. Honor our diversity of all of God's children. Developed a model for open and respectful dialogue. Reach out to hate-groups to call them in. Vibrant Youth Ministry program that offers exploration in Faith Development that produces clergy and other church leaders. Community of leaders in the Stewardship of all creation.

What will our roles be? Show up and take part. Seek partners. Walk the walk and talk the talk – lead by example. Support and advocate for OCWM. Coach for compassion. Believe it is possible. Tell our stories. We are a people of the story.

*Become the center for the development for Rural Ministry

Know needs of local communities, use local resources, surveys, pilot project in 3 churches, what makes RM unique? What are the challenges, not just white communities.

Bring together ecumenical partners into the conversation. What brings us together and what are the road blocks? How do we work over, around, through them? Why are our smaller population bases affecting this? What revitalization programs are there? How can we use them?

People object to the "Rural" label. Is "Small church development" more appropriate? What is the YOUTH interested in? Climate change? Find projects that can be done in a small rural area that affect climate change – preservation, recycling, cleaner air – directly affect all of MT-Wy; find things that youth and church can be together.

Define Rural Churches w/survey. Do you consider yourself a RC and why? Looking at the work that has already been done w/viable congregation work, begin to work on what work from that work applies to these congregations?

Have the stories at the crossroads define the local space. Walk into the offices and have conversations. Coordinate time w/social organizations to create story telling space. How can the small town then go forward? Together in the struggle.

Ask Nick Knoblauch, what will keep him in Broadus?

Define Rural; gather people for a meeting (impossible?); establish 3 meeting areas instead of just one; focus on the positive and on what things are working already?

Be aware of our language – truth tellers to help us understand our privilege and how that affects ministry in other parts of the state.

Define Rural.

Mission of the Conference. What resources do we have? How can we share them? Web based?

Exercise: What is one thing that we can do right now that can make this happen?

“If I only have an hour, I will spend the first 55 minutes determining what the right question is to ask.”

Feedback: Excitement! Engagement in mission! Creative energy! Unifying! Common themes are amazing! We need to challenge and be challenged. Establish deadlines. Focus on ONE thing. Majority rule worked; sometimes consensus is needed. All of the topics that didn't win can come under 3 major themes, especially RM.

Point of information

Michael Obbenhour correction, added as active retired clergy from Illinois

Election and installation of slate of officers, committee members and CMC.

Motion to accept the slate of officers, committee members and CMC as proposed by the nominating committee. Trudi Downer made the motion, second, approved.

Installation of those present by Marc Stewart.

Correction made to spelling of Rev. Susan Watterson's (retired) name in reports. So noted.

Meeting adjourned

4:20 pm