

August 15, 2021 UMC Congregational Meeting, 6:30 pm

Present: Rick Stehouwer (Moderator and Chair); Pastor Kate Heinzl; Cathy Bresee (Moderator Elect); Ken Litwiller (Secretary; Minutes) and Laura Litwiller; Meredith and Ben Wideman; Paulette McLane; Elaine Mercer; Carolyn Brubaker; Rodney Brubaker; Leah Witzig; Kwadwo and Fran Osseo-Asare; Nel Kopp; Evelyn Stauffer; Karl and Evelyn Bartsch; Terry Yoder; Mary Derstein

Opening: Rick called the meeting to order then read from 1 Corinthians 12:20-26 (NRSV)

²⁰As it is, there are many members, yet one body. ²¹The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." ²²On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; ²⁴whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, ²⁵that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. ²⁶If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.

Rick emphasized the equality and value of the members of the body. We can rejoice and be grateful for all who have volunteered.

Review and Approval of 2021-05-16 Minutes: Rick referred to the posted minutes by Cathy Bresee. There were no corrections to the minutes. Fran moved to approve the minutes and Laura seconded the motion. All present approved of the minutes; there were no objections.

Approval of Covenant between UMC and Pastor Kate Heinzl: The extension for Pastor Kate was affirmed at the May 2021 UMC Congregational Meeting with her term extended for three years. At today's meeting, Rick presented the Covenant for approval. He noted that the Covenant is very similar to the previous Covenant; there were some changes concerning Personal Retreat Days.

No concerns were raised concerning the Covenant. Cathy moved to approve the Covenant; Elaine Mercer seconded the motion. Leah raised a question concerning voting using the chat function rather than with a show of hands. After discussion, we agreed to respond by waving hands or saying aye to approve the Covenant; no vote is needed. There were no objections; the motion carried.

Affirmation of volunteers for UMC positions: Rick presented the slate that has been posted on the UMC web site and several additions were made. As there were no competing candidates for positions, Rick noted that there was no need for confidential voting. Leah moved to affirm the list and Elaine seconded the motion. There was no discussion. Meeting participants supported the motion by saying "Aye" or by waving hands. There were no objections.

Pastor Kate drew attention to remaining vacant positions including Secretary and the two finance positions who assist the Treasurer. Nel Kopp reviewed some congregational history where there were vacancies on the slate; the moderator had suggested that programming could end for those departments; this motivated UMC participants to volunteer their services.

Rick will post the updated slate on the UMC Web site.

Action on proposal regarding UMC involvement in Out of the Cold: Leah Witzig reviewed the highlights for UMC involvement in Out of the Cold (OOTC) over the past year. There was a shortage of UMC volunteers so that a small number of people did a lot of work. Leah then presented three recommendations from the OOTC Committee as a motion for this UMC Congregational Meeting:

- A. That UMC no longer serve as a host site for OOTC.
- B. That UMC members serve at other OOTC sites.
- C. That UMC continue to be generous with monetary contributions to OOTC program.

Fran noted that OOTC began as a program for the coldest months of the year then evolved into a year round program. This led to burnout of the UMC volunteers. This was complicated by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mary and Leah have shared serving on the OOTC Board; they are stepping down from that role. Rick extended the gratitude of UMC to Mary, to Leah, and to others for their service with OOTC.

Pastor Kate encouraged someone from UMC to continue to serve on the Board of OOTC so that our voice will be heard. Board members do not need to come from hosting congregations. The Board members do have detailed job descriptions including fund raising. Leah noted that many of the meetings have been on Zoom.

Laura and Ben co-seconded Leah's three point OOTC motion. There were no objections; the motion carried. Leah will convey this decision to the OOTC Board on Monday night meeting.

Pastor Report: Pastor Kate has posted her report on the UMC Web site. She highlighted the following:

- A. Working with the Leadership Team
- B. Decision making on how to meet for worship during COVID-19
- C. The Church Around the Table initiative

Pastor Kate expressed appreciation for the journey and welcomed UMC participants to meet with her as convenient. She has been increasing her involvement with the State College community. She is grateful for a renewed covenant and humbled by the privilege of serving UMC.

Leadership Team (LT) Report: Rick mentioned that the focus of the LT has been on discernment filling the UMC slate and on decision-making concerning ways to conduct worship during COVID-19

Treasurer's report: Treasurer Jim Rosenberger could not be present at this UMC Congregational Meeting; he has posted detailed reports on line for the 2020-2021 budget. Rick led the meeting in a discussion concerning approval of 2021-2022 budget. A proposed budget was approved in May; several changes have been made since then. For example, Camp Hebron has been cancelled and new equipment has been included to facilitate Zoom worship.

Fran raised the issue that the UMC elevator does not always work well. Mary, on behalf of the Meetinghouse Committee, noted that elevators are sensitive in operation; repairs are very expensive; and the repair crew comes from a distance. Pastor Kate noted that similar elevators in other locations have similar challenges. Rick noted that modifying the building and installing the elevator had a high financial cost. Mary will carry this concern back to the Meetinghouse Committee.

Elaine moved to approve the budget and Nel Kopp seconded. There were no objections.

Other reports: the following have posted written reports on the UMC Web site and did not present reports in this meeting: Elders; Worship Committee; Meetinghouse Committee; Adult Sunday School Committee; Children and Youth Committee; and Creation Care Committee.

Request from Good News Theological College and Seminary (GNTCS): A former faculty member at GNTCS has passed on a request from the pastor of Somanya (Ghana) Mennonite Church to assist a member who had her beauty shop burned down. Mary has followed up this with energy and detail and has learned that the need is authentic. Pastor Kate noted that an email will come out soon calling for an above budget opportunity to give toward this need. She expressed that this request symbolizes the close relation that we continue to have with the GNTCS.

Closing: Rick reminded us of the Zoom “Congregational Conversation” meeting scheduled for August 19 at 7:00 during which we will discuss worship in a time of COVID 19. Pastor Kate closed in prayer thanking God for UMC connections in worship and service in the past, present, and future. She expressed gratitude for those who have served during the past year and those who have agreed to serve in the next year.