

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS MAINE CONFERENCE, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

**Minutes** of the November 16, 2019 BoD Meeting at the Conference Center in Augusta  
**Approved** January 25, 2020

**Members Participating:** Rev. Geoffrey Parker, Chair; Bob Sandman, Treasurer; Rev. Stephen Hastings, Clerk; Rev. Sara Bartlett; Cindy Huggins; Rev. Susan Reisert; Hariph Smith; Rev. Linette George, Vice-Chair; Steve Wight; Caroline Payson; Rev. Alyssa Lodewick; Kathy Woodside; Rev. Deborah Blood, Conference Minister

**Absent:** Allison DiMatteo

**Guest:** Diane Benekamper

### **Call to Order**

Meeting called to order at 9:03 am.

The Board Chair welcomed us and invited us to share a recent joy in our lives, then led us in prayer.

### **Approval of Minutes**

MOTION To approve the Board Minutes from October 3, 2019 was **moved** and **seconded**.

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION To refer the Maine Conference 2019 Annual Meeting minutes as corrected to the 2020 Annual Meeting for approval was **moved** and **seconded**.

MOTION CARRIED

### **Housing Allowance Resolutions for 2020**

MOTION to approve the Housing Allowances for the Conference Minister and Associate Conference Minister was **moved** and **seconded**.

- I. Whereas the Conference Minister, Rev. Deborah Blood is compensated by the Maine Conference exclusively for services as a minister of the gospel;
- II. Resolved, that of the total compensation paid to Rev. Deborah Blood for the period of January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020, is hereby designated to be a

- housing allowance pursuant to section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code; and it is further
- III. Resolved, that the designation of \_\_\_\_\_ as a housing allowance shall apply to the calendar year 2020 and to all future years unless otherwise provided.

And

- I. Whereas the Rev. Darren Morgan, Conference Minister, is compensated by the Maine Conference exclusively for services as a minister of the gospel;
- II. Resolved, that of the total compensation paid to Rev. Darren Morgan for the period of January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020, \_\_\_\_\_ is hereby designated to be a housing allowance pursuant to section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code; and it is further
- III. Resolved, that the designation of \_\_\_\_\_ as a housing allowance shall apply to the calendar year 2020 and to all future years unless otherwise provided.

*The figures in the above resolutions were redacted in public postings to provide privacy to our staff. They appear in retained minutes per IRS rules.*

MOTION CARRIED

### **Progress on Identified Goals from Consultation**

*Discussed a draft Church Support Consultants job description. The Personnel Committee anticipates final approval in December. Anticipate 5 or 6, lay and clergy, beginning early in 2020. Noted it would be good to have them spread around the State. There needs to be good communication about the existence and availability of this program.*

*We have contracted with KMA Consulting to help with HR work. We have agreed on a scope of work with them and will not exceed \$5K. They will help with employment manual; templates for staffing; staffing plan. This is for the central office, not PL.*

*We have also contracted Seven Tree Solutions to work on “mediation” or “facilitated conversation” among staff.*

Feedback on the Foreside Community talking event, concerning the Conference. That occurred on November 7.

- Good to have events where people can share their ideas and concerns. Might be a need to address faulty information, although “venting” has its value.
- Could be more intentional and organized in future events. Can we shape the input from people in ways that are more useful?

- Could solicit agenda items from people beforehand.
- There is a “breakdown” in Conference-wide communications. It would be helpful for people to offer suggestions on a solution: formats; mailing lists; what works? what would you read?
- Some conversation about Moving Forward Together. Suggestion to take what is good and working, and let go of the rest, not “declare it dead”. The gatherings leading up to MFT were good. Grassroots-led events can be richer than centrally organized and run events. Opportunity to show our Conference and others how to recreate what a conference is.
- It was suggested that we need to listen to God more and a little less to each other or ourselves – make contemplative space.
- Suggestion that it is important for us as Conference leaders to get out to the churches and be present. This may not be accepted as a substitute for the presence of the Conference Minister.
- Discussion over need/requirement for CM participation in UCC activities beyond the Conference. When is that not in the best interest of the Conference and its churches?

*Need another Conference Conversation gathering. A board member will ask the Bethel church to host it. Perhaps February 1 or 8, 10 to noon. Possibly another Conference Conversation at All Souls in Bangor in mid-March (14 or 21).*

### **Annual Meeting**

Unsure about next year’s location – probably “central or north.”

Reviewed and reflected on the Annual Meeting. Some discussion about worship and ideas going forward. IT is important and we are now in a good position to do this. A more formal evaluation of the AM is forthcoming. There was praise for those on the board who organized and led the meeting.

### **Financial Reporting**

The treasurer identified favorable trends in the budget through September 2019. PL will run a deficit, as anticipated. Income is not sufficient. We are in transition with respect to financial oversight services. Suggestion that Board members could be involved in end-of-year phone calls to churches concerning payment of Conference support. Members of the board expressed their appreciation of the treasurer’s work whose term will end after the 2020 Annual Meeting.

### **Governance Committee Update**

MOTION (Governance) to approve:

- I. The nomination of Dana Mitiguy (Cumberland) for a first term Trustee.
- II. The nomination of Josh Fitterling (Wiscasset) to the

Personnel Committee.

- III. The nomination of Stef Michaud to the PLLT Class of 2021.

It was **moved** and **seconded**.

MOTION CARRIED

### **Church Vitality Fund Request**

Two requests from Church Vitality.

ARISE out of Portland would like support from us and the Episcopal Diocese. Several Board members are going to reach out to Arise to learn more and report back to us.

We do have about \$170,000 that is dedicated to and available for this kind of “new ministry.”

There is an opportunity in conjunction with MESOM to run a workshop on Contemplative Training by Margaret Benefield.

MOTION To approve up to \$6,000 for a workshop by Margaret Benefield for the purpose of Contemplative Training was **moved** and **seconded**.

MOTION CARRIED

### **Pilgrim Lodge**

The search is going well. Second interviews are underway.

The Pilgrim Lodge Director is working on the PL Fall Appeal, which has already been sent out.

### **Development Tasks**

The Chair asked for input for the fundraising letter to Friends of the Maine Conference.

### **Communications**

The new Conference website is up and running. The next piece is to populate the resource portal. Ideas are welcome. The Conference Minister will investigate whether or not the portal can be linked to UCC-wide resources.

**Executive Session** – Board Collaboration and Commitments

The Chair moved the board into Executive Session at 12:08 pm.

Came out of Executive Session at 12:34 pm.

**Schedule for 2019-20 Term**

We will have a conference call in December to schedule next year's meetings. There will be a retreat in January.

**Adjourned at 12:36 pm.**

Respectfully Submitted,

*Stephen Hastings*

Steve Hastings, Clerk