

**Conference CORE Team
Minutes of Meeting – December 1, 2016**

The Conference CORE Team met in the Epworth Room at Montgomery First United Methodist Church on Thursday, December 1, 2016. Beginning at 9:30 a.m., members enjoyed refreshments and a “meet and greet” time. (Attendance roster attached)

At 10:00 a.m., the business session was convened by Rev. Nancy Watson, Director of Connectional Ministries and CORE Team Chairperson. She welcomed members and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

Rev. Watson then gave a devotional based on Matthew 3, reminding the Core Team of its special relevance for us during this Advent Season. Rev. Jeremy Steele then led the group in prayer.

In preparation for making 2018 budget recommendations for consideration by the Council on Finance and Administration, Rev. Watson reviewed the handouts, *Our Mission, Vision, Strategy, and Focus*, and *Budgeting Teams*. Frank Dunnewind reported the good news that as of October 31, 2016, apportionment payments have increased by 3.36% over the previous year at the same time. If the trend continues, the conference will surpass the percentage that has been received over the last ten years. Frank asked CORE Team members to share the good news with members of their congregations.

Rev. Nancy Watson, chairperson of the Mission Budget Team, reported on the 2018 mission budget recommendations listed on the handout. Rev. Tim Trent moved the approval of the 2018 mission budget request in the amount of \$1,603,062; Frank Moore seconded, and the motion passed.

Beverly Maddox, chairperson of the Leadership Budget Team, reported on the 2018 leadership budget recommendations, noting that funding for pension and health benefits for new church start pastors will be paid by the Board of Pension and Health Benefits, reducing the requested amount reflected on the handout from \$200,000 to \$170,000, which represents level funding of that line item. She also reported that \$5,465, which represents level funding for the Board of Laity, was inadvertently omitted from the handout. Rev. Tim Trent moved the approval of the 2018 leadership budget request in the revised amount of \$2,019,099; Beebe Frederick seconded, and the motion passed. Bishop David Graves expressed appreciation for the increased funding for campus ministries, noting the emphasis the 2016 General Conference placed on the role of extension ministries in disciple-making, adding “and extension ministries” to paragraph 120 of the *Book of Discipline*.

Frank Dunnewind, chairperson of the Administrative Budget Team, presented the 2018 Administrative Budget Requests listed on the handout. Frank Moore moved the approval of the 2018 administrative budget request in the amount of \$2,821,400; Rev Tim Trent seconded, and the motion passed.

Beebe Frederick then moved that the entire 2018 budget request in the amount of \$6,443,561 be adopted as approved; Frank Moore seconded, and the motion passed. The recommended budget will be forwarded to the Council on Finance and Administration for action.

Rev. Nancy Watson then led the team in a review and discussion of the recommended allocation of 2017 mission and ministry funds listed on the handout. She reported that, after almost a decade of discussing the necessity of doing so, the team approved a plan to shift financial support of local missions from the conference budget to the local area. The plan calls for reducing conference financial support by 10% in 2017, another 10% in 2018, and another 10% in 2019. No conference financial support will be provided thereafter. Clara Ester emphasized the need for a well-organized effort to communicate the plan to the pastors, stressing the need for enthusiastic support of these missions within the districts in which they are located. David Saliba noted that promoting and supporting these missions could be helpful to district superintendents in their role as missional strategist for the district. Susan Hunt noted that, at present, no more than 22% of the total budget of any of the local missions is coming from the conference budget, and the conference plans to employ a grant writer to help the local missions apply for funding from other sources. Furthermore, each member of the Mission Team has agreed to become an advocate for one of the local missions. Following the discussion, Clara Ester moved approval of the recommended 2017 allocation for Local Missions in the amount of \$144,578.70; Lisa Hunt seconded, and the motion passed. Shirley Woodie then moved approval of all 2017 mission budget allocations in the amount of \$445,828.70; Dan Pezet seconded, and the motion passed.

Rev. Lance Eiland called attention to the 2017 conference calendar and encouraged members to take a copy and to pray for the pastors and churches listed therein.

Rev. Watson closed the meeting with a prayer and blessing of the meal. Members enjoyed a delicious lunch prepared by the food ministry staff at Montgomery First United Methodist Church.

Respectfully submitted,

Shirley H. Woodie
Acting Secretary