

## **President's Report 2018-Great Lakes Region**

- I. This has been an eventful year and The Board has initiated actions and made decisions we believe will allow us to better serve all the ministries and leaders in The Region.
  
- II. At the 2017 conference we elected new officers and assigned liaison roles:
  - a. President-Rev. Ray Nelson
  - b. Vice President-Rev. Kurt Condra
  - c. Treasurer-Carl Nawrot
  - d. Secretary-Rev. Glenda Walden
  - e. Youth & Family Liaison-Rev. Megan Smith-Brooks
  - f. Conference Liaison-Rev. Deb Hill-Davis
  - g. LUT Liaison-Tom Sylvester
  - h. Alternate Trustee-Rev. Vareta Foster
  
- III. Regional Conference
  - a. To facilitate healing and reconciliation, Rev, Cynthia Vermillion-Foster facilitated a healing service. I appreciated UWM and the members' participation as we move forward together.
  - b. Shariff Abdullah provided the keynote.
  - c. Faith Rivera provided music.
  - d. Rev. Deb Hill-Davis spoke at the LUT luncheon.
  
- IV. To better define the two distinct roles of Regional Representative (RR) and UWM Consultant, The Board created two new job descriptions and separated the roles to allow for better coordination.
  - a. The Board dissolved the position as it was defined previously and solicited resumes for the new RR position.
  - b. We received a number of applications and interviewed three candidates and reviewed references.

- c. At the August Board meeting trustees voted to offer the position to Rev. Greg Coles. He accepted. The new RR began duties on September first.
- V. Face-to-Face Meeting in Davenport, Iowa
- a. We approved the budget for 2019.
  - b. We expanded hours and accountabilities for Administrative Assistant, redefining the role as Web/Office Administrator. Cindi Cousineau continues in the position, with added responsibilities for all electronic communications, and document management and retention. Shifting these functions from board to staff eliminates costs and inefficiencies of ever-changing board composition and provides for better coordination and continuity year-to-year.
  - c. The Board decided to recommend that the full membership vote to approve The Region join UWM as an affiliate member. Rationale for affiliation:
    - i. Be able to offer non-credentialed employees the retirement investment option.
    - ii. UWM would be able to provide services during times of conflict. Last year during the conflict resulting in Trustee resignations, UWM provided guidance during the process and offered expertise in facilitating the healing circle. (As a non-member entity of UWM, it was under no obligation to assist The Region during the process. Support we received was provided voluntarily by UWM staff, on their own time.)
    - iii. Provide a model for better integration and Unity in Unity.
    - iv. A potential concern is that an IRS provision of affiliation would allow the UWM Board to place someone on the GLR Board under certain circumstances. (In practice, we already have a UWM Board Liaison who participates in discussion but does not vote (John Mahon).
- VI. To better serve members, The Board established a scholarship fund to assist those wishing to pursue licensure and/or ordination. In addition, we authorized the creation of a grant fund to assist ministries in times of transition and/or conflict.
- a. To ensure funding levels are sufficient, roll-out for both programs is June 2019.

VII. Updated technology

- a. The Board approved new computers for the Bookkeeper Rev. Diana Repko; Treasurer Carol Nawrot; Youth & Family Training Director, Rev. Chase.
- b. Approved migrating document storage from Dropbox to Google Drive to resolve space and admin limitations.

VIII. To better communicate, trustees take turns writing a monthly blog for our newsletter and website. We also began promoting events hosted at local ministries with regional/sub-regional appeal via Facebook, e-news and website.

IX. Carl and Diana will cover this in greater detail, but I want to acknowledge that contributions are up, and exceeding budget projections.

- a. Attendance levels at youth rallies and retreats continues to lag. The Board is monitoring this closely to determine whether it's a cyclical transition as youth age out and others have not yet come of age.
- b. This will be a topic for discussion with the YFM Event Director, Tyler Pritchard to see how The Region can encourage and support youth participation.