

## Summary Notes Conference Board 5/15/24

### Issues Discussed:

#### **Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Martin Nuscher reported that financially we are off to a good start in 2024. Year to date revenue is more than 130% ahead of 2023 at the same point in time, and OCWM giving is similarly ahead of last year and ahead of the budgeted amount for this year. Expenses are only at 91.5% of this point in 2023. Another positive indicator is the fact that donations from PNEC congregations that pass through the conference to affiliated organizations are running at 335% ahead of 2023, perhaps because some PNEC churches delayed their usual end-of-year remittances in 2023.

Unfortunately, the transition of the staff payroll account to an outside vendor during the first quarter is still causing minor accounting inconsistencies which takes a good deal of the Treasurer's time to track down. Also, the time required to project budgets and finances for both a state-wide merger and the possibility that PNEC will continue to stand alone has delayed some more routine accounting chores.

#### **Sub-Group Reports**

Wider Church – Bonnie reported that the recent Clergy Convocation held last week was very successful with 91 clergy in attendance. Likewise, the Campbell Lecture presented by the authors of "Hear Us Out: Six Questions on Belonging and Belief" at DeSales University was also well received. Bonnie will attend the installation of Rev. Marsha Williams (for whom she has served as a mentor) as the Conference Minister of the New York Conference at the end of this month.

Generosity Team – The Ambassador program is going well although they continue to seek more ambassadors for non-participating churches. The Friends of the Conference Special Offering at Pentecost is scheduled for 5/19/24 with flyers, worship materials, and instructions for remitting donations having been sent to churches.

Conference Meeting Planning – The June meeting is ready to move forward, and the group is now focused on the November conference meeting. The Technology Team of the Meeting Planning group just met, welcoming Bill Costello as a new member of the group. The fall conference Meeting will take place at St. John's UCC church in Laury's Station, and will feature the vote on merging all the PA Conferences.

Keystone Study – They are now shifting their planning to equip the 12-14 associations which would result from a positive merger vote to do much of the work of governance, committees on ministry, meetings, finances, search and call, volunteers, training and other supportive functions. Since PNEC is both a Conference and an Association already, our structure, responsibilities and independent functioning may serve as a model for the other current conferences to realign their associations. It is thought that regional staff will support and equip

associations to do the work assigned in their area, which may enable a reduction in what has been conference staff personnel and eliminate duplicate positions across the four offices. But the Associations will be largely autonomous and, while the regional staff may aim to suggest procedural details for more uniformity among associations, they cannot dictate the way associations do their work.

Our current PNEC Board would shrink in the number of members and only govern our association. There would be a statewide Keystone Board of about 16 members and there would be a Keystone Conference Nominating Committee. This initial outline of structural changes will be further refined before it is presented at the joint informational meetings/discussions to be held at Penn State in June.

Board Retreat Planning – At the combined meeting of the PA Conferences in early June, each conference will have time to meet with their own delegates to conduct individual conference business, such as electing individuals to serve on the Board and various committees and teams for the next term. This would usually be the agenda for the spring meeting, which got delayed to plan for the larger, combined meeting. One of the next important meetings of the PNEC Board is the annual board retreat which will be held in July this year at the conference office. It is a combination of orientation for new Board members and a planning session for mapping tasks, creating a timeline and coordinating dates for the meetings throughout the upcoming year.

Recognition of Members and Officers who are Leaving the Board - Several individuals who completed their terms of office were recognized and thanked for their service.

#### **Decisions Made/Actions Taken**

The Board voted unanimously to accept the Treasurer's financial reports for the first months of 2024.