

Southern Ohio/Kentucky District Board

Zoom Meeting

March 13, 2021

Welcome Devotions led by Todd Reish and reflections on Tim McGraw's song "Humble and Kind".

Agenda approved as presented.

Minutes from Jan. 9, 2021 meeting were approved as presented.

Moved by Ron Mack and seconded by Tom Bowser

Old Business –

- Stony Creek update

Gary Crim: Deed is being prepared. This is the last step in the process.

- Bear Creek and Mack Memorial update:

Sent appraisal to the Bear Creek group. The Committee working on this project will be meeting to review the questions raised by the group using the property.

Mack Memorial appraisal has not yet been shared with anyone interested in the property yet.

The Constance Church has been worshipping with the Cincinnati COB online. Dave will be meeting with them to determine if they wish to enter the disorganization process.

New Business

- New COVID letter:

Draft was put together and reviewed. There will be a Town Hall meeting on March 18, 2021 at 7:00 pm. Individuals will be available to discuss the state of the pandemic and local congregations. Registration is on the district website.

- Ordination Terminations:

Every 5 yrs. Ordinations are reviewed. 2020 was the year for this review in SOD. Toward the end of the year there were several people who still needed items to complete the process. Mary contacted persons and there are still a few folks that have items needed and a few have asked to be withdrawn.

Gary Cloyd has requested to be withdrawn. The Board accepted this request and voted to approve his withdrawal.

- Racial Justice Team letter to Church of the Brethren from Southern Ohio/Kentucky District

The Racial Justice Team submitted a draft letter for the board to review. After discussion, the board suggested that the letter be returned to the committee to be expanded and referred to the district conference as a foundation for query to be presented to the Annual Conference Standing Committee.

- May Meeting (ZOOM) with West Alexandria Congregation during the Board Meeting in May.

- Procedures/guidelines for saving or getting rid of District Documents:

Question has been raised regarding reviewing and consolidating documents. Currently there are no procedures for what to do with documents: what could go to other agencies and what guidance can be used for determining what can be done.

Todd requested having a committee to work on this issue. Gary Crim, Mary Boone, Karen Dillon, Dottie Woodard will be part of the committee. Dave Shetler will convene the committee and report back at the May meeting.

- District Conference Planning

Nick discussed the planning for the Fall District Conference.

- Denominational Planning Session/District Planning Paul Schrock

The group has requested to meet with the board to discuss the strategic plan. They will be added to the 05/08/2021 meeting agenda.

- Updating district computers

Both Dave and Mary are using computers purchased 10 years ago. It was moved and accepted that the district purchase new computers for the executive secretary and the support person. The camping and retreat person also needs to be included. Currently there is not a line item for this. Dave, Mary and Karen need to define what their position needs. It was determined by consensus to have the committee that is working on documents to work with them to make recommendations about the equipment needs for each position.

- Standing Conference Delegates:

Becky's term should end with the end of Annual Conference. However, the Annual Conference standing committee numbers for this district will decrease from 2 to 1 beginning with this conference. Becky will serve at this Annual Conference and Fred Bernhard will begin a 3 year term. However, Fred is willing to step down. Becky will be on the ballot for a second term on standing committee at the Fall District Conference. Fred is resigning as our standing committee delegate. Because Fred has been working with the Leadership team it is the suggestion be that he serve as an at large member for the rest of what be the rest of his term. This is approved by consensus of the board.

## Staff Reports:

- Mary Boone, Director of Communications:

--Much of what I do is the same thing from month to month: Newsletter, database, maintaining the District calendar, updating the website, zoom meetings, taking and distributing minutes for some commissions, collecting mail, processing deposit, etc. --I continue to join the Resource Development Commission zoom meetings to help with note taking and communication. This has involved sending various letters to different groups of folks within the district and more extensive record keeping and reporting as RDC works to address our budget deficit through the Ambassadors for Christ Club and other methods. --The 2020 Pastoral Ordination Review is finally wrapping up (Per Ministry Commission report). I hope to finalize ordination reviews and license renewals in the next couple of weeks. -- Spring edition of "Together" magazine is in design phase. I am excited to see it after Debbie Noffsinger does her magic! We welcome Daniel Fullen to our editorial staff along with Carrie Drees, and Ted Foster. Wendy and Miriam Noffsinger also help with editing, even though they have moved away from the district. Chris Brewer is no longer a part of the staff. If you know of anyone who you think would be helpful to the team, please let me know names. --District Administrative Assistants meet every other year for training and fellowship. This meeting was planned for April 2021 and was to take place at Bethany. Because of Covid, we have postponed the meeting until 2022.

- Karen Dillon, Camping and Retreats

V Winter Blast for kids of all ages was first. It was followed by an evening for ladies of the District, Conversation and Connections, sharing the gifts and challenges of living with Covid 19. The use of Zoom meetings offered us the ability to be with each other virtually. Winter Blast was on a Saturday in January with the morning for Pre-K to 5th graders and the afternoon for Middle School and High School campers. We started off with devotions, singing, and getting acquainted. The big activity was the inside scavenger hunt. Each camper was given three things to locate in their home with 5-minute search time. Then campers explained what they had brought to the group. Sometimes the search required a shape like a round object, design as something spotted, a color like red, a certain size like a gigantic object, or word like peace found on something. The game was lots of fun. People were running all over their homes, looking for the items. The sharing was just as great when people told stories and events connected with the found objects. The excitement was contagious. Other family members were caught up in the game by helping to find the items. Just like the Winter Blasts at Cricket Holler, the time flew by so fast. Before we knew it, we were having the closing and saying good-bye. It was a safe, memorable event. After the Women's Retreat in the fall, several women commented about getting together in the winter for an evening to share how everyone was coping. The Women's Retreat committee met several times and designed a Friday night session to share what the Covid 19 experience was like for women of the District. As it turned out, the program fell upon a night that was very cold, blustery, dark, and slippery. When we gathered, we were all cozy and warm, in comfortable clothes and shoes, had our tea or preferred beverages on hand, and were sitting on soft chairs or couches. We were all safe, and no one had to drive or be out in the winter weather. The evening went amazingly fast. It was a mixture of activities: lifting our spirits in devotions, small group discussions on personal experiences of Covid 19, and laughing together with a silly game of scavenger hunt. (If the kids had loved it so much at Winter Blast, I thought the ladies might also enjoy the fun,) We were all very relaxed and thankful we could meet so easily. Looking for the good in this confining time of Covid19, encouraged all of us. We left the

evening feeling happy, renewed, and refreshed. The next event for the women will be April 23, at 7:00 pm. The plan is for a time of sharing talents and more stories. It will be held through Zoom. Summer Camp Camping and Retreat Ministries is planning another summer of virtual camps. We are going to run camp in the same design as last summer's programs. We will be charging \$30 per person for camp supplies. Family Camp will cost \$50 per family. Registration will be online through the District website and with hard copies of the registration form. Camp will begin June 7 and run through July 30. The week of Annual Conference, camps will not meet. Each day will have one camp except Tuesday which will have two camps: Monday 10:00 am Pre-K - 2nd Grade with an adult Tuesday 10:00 am 3rd - 5th Grade 7:00 pm College and Careers Wednesday 10:00 am 6th - 8th Grade Thursday 3:00 pm 9th - 12th Grade Friday 7:00 pm Family Camp A new camp to be added this year is for campers who have begun college and careers. The Young Adult group is included in this camp. Tuesday 7:00 pm College and Career Camp In conversations with Bergamo Center, it is going to be possible for our Quilting Camp to meet in person. The camp will be August 18, to August 21, Wednesday at 2:00 to Saturday at 10:00. There are Covid 19 rules we will be following with masks required, all rooms are singles and social distancing will be in place. Some of the costs have risen for this camp making the cost \$400.

Karen is asking the district to begin a discussion about the future of Camping and Retreat in Southern Ohio Kentucky District.

- Scott Fitzgerald, Treasurer

Report posted online.

Glen Timmons was thinking he would be on with us at some point. Scott said are about where he thought we would be. We have received a PPP loan which was forgiven. We transferred less than expected to cover the year end thanks to the PPP. Scott indicated that we have also been granted another PPP for this fiscal year to be used for payroll. Giving from churches is down by \$2300.00.

- Dave Shetler, Executive Secretary

Dave has spoken to many pastors about reopening for worship in person. There are significant conversations happening around the district. For congregations searching for pastors there are few candidates available. Dave is impressed with the ongoing work that is happening throughout the district as people continue the work of the church.

Dave had his first virtual installation service to install Mark Lancaster at the Good Shepard COB.

Dave has decided to retire from his position at the end of the calendar year.

Commission Reports:

- Shared Ministries

We have met twice since the January meeting.

Camping and Retreats Ministry reports that Summer Camp will be virtual again this year. It will be like last year with each group meeting on a designated day of the week. These camps will be the three weeks before Annual Conference and 4 weeks after Annual Conference. It was decided to increase the

cost to \$30.00 to cover expenses. A new group will be added this year for post high school graduates and young adults. It is being formed at the request of past campers who have aged out of the camping program. In person outdoor closing activities may be held if it feels safe.

Quilting Camp is going to be held in person at the Bergamo Center August 18-21. The Bergamo Center holds strict Covid protocols.

The February Women's Conversation on Zoom went well. Another similar event is planned in April. CRM is also exploring coordinating events with the Climate Justice Task Team and the Racial Justice Task Team. Details will be forthcoming since they are in early planning stages.

Brethren Disaster Ministries reports they are continuing to send workers using Covid protocols. The past 9 months 9 volunteers went to Bayboro, NC. This site has been scheduled to close at the end of March, but there is still much work to be done there. National BDM has decided to stay there through the month of April. The Dayton site also opens in April but will be staffed with local workers only until Bayboro site closes. At this time, the group from SOKD that had been scheduled to work in Dayton is going to Bayboro. BDM is recruiting additional workers for the Dayton site through April. Housing in Dayton opens May 1 Dates to assemble CWS kits are August 19 – School Kits and Sept. 30 – Clean-up Buckets Sewing Bees continue and some home sewing has also been happening. At the last sewing bee, including the kits that were made in homes 374 school bags were sewn! There is work for everyone. Non-sewers work at unwrapping school supplies and other tasks. The Annual Golf Outing fundraiser for Camping and Retreat and BDM will be held on Aug. 14th. The outing will observe Covid protocols and Save the Date cares have been sent out. The Red Cross is hopeful that they will begin utilizing Children's Disaster Services in 2021. A training for new volunteers will be held later this year. Watch for details.

The District Young Adult Group met in February and have a meeting schedule for April 21. They are planning an overnight weekend retreat to be held July 10 & 11 at King's Island. They will enjoy the park on Saturday and then hold some sort of worship service on Sunday. More details will be forthcoming. District Educational Workshops Group has not met.

Fundstream Initiative: Pat Krabacher has raised \$400.00 through her online auction. She plans to take the unsold items to a consignment shop and is hopeful that she will be able to contribute a little more.

- Resource Development, Glenn Timmons

Resource development is more than taking up an offering, writing letters, seeking donors, and developing budgets.

Resource development is about establishing and maintaining relationships, building trust, envisioning the future together, gift discernment. Resource development is what the community of faith does after we have said "yes" to Christ.

The relationship of the board with our congregations is a two-way street. As a board member you are called to lead and listen – lead, as led by Christ, and listen to the stories of how congregations are seeking to be faithful to Christ's Story. This task is more than any one staff person, board member or commission can do.

For the last two months, RDC has gone beyond the usual agenda as defined in the first paragraph above. Based on what we are learning from our human experience of a pandemic and the increased use of technologies that has kept us together while we are apart, the commission is having early conversations that have led us to using the language of paragraph two above.

From the board to our congregations:

The RDC is working to enhance, with the use of technologies, what the board and the commissions are doing to support congregational life and aspects of ministry that we can/are doing together. While we have in place a system of communication for events and activities, a learning of this past year is that an image and verbal narrative of those who are carrying out district ministries help to humanize the mission and ministry of the board to even a broader audience. The use of technologies carries the message to more people than any one individual can do. Some examples of this include the Thursday morning Zoom meetings, the virtual Racial Justice and Climate Justice efforts which have reached more people than in-person gatherings. While RDC has not fully developed this focus, we are bringing the idea to the board today for your consideration.

To whet the appetite, we offer a practical way to share the board or your commission's focus and effort -- the development of an "elevator pitch."

From congregations to the board:

Like the district board, every congregation has a story to tell, a story to be heard. Everyone, regardless of location and persuasion, wants to be heard, to be listened to. This is particularly true, regardless of the reason, when one feels isolated or is insulated. When one feels heard, bridges are built, community can be developed, barriers can be overcome even when the culture beyond the church is toxic. This is something of what the text above looks like.

To lean into this effort, the commission is asking for your support and help for what we might call a "spring planting."

1) As a board member we are inviting, even asking, you to approve this effort as a board and then as an individual. While the end goal would be to engage as many people as possible, a starting point is to invite each of you to identify a person you may know in another congregation with whom you can begin a conversation, establish a relationship, listen to the stories told, elicit hopes and dreams, invite mutuality when/where possible. The task group of the commission will give more flesh to this vision, develop further support structures, and provide training as needed, if and when you approve. To get an idea started we offer another practical method -- the development of the "buddy system."

2) For the Commission to approach a broader membership in the support of the Ambassador's Club, we would ask your help in sharing a name/address and e-mail of a person in your congregation whom you think has a vision of the larger church beyond the congregation. You may share this information with Mary Boone or me at: [gtimmons1@woh.rr.com](mailto:gtimmons1@woh.rr.com)

3) In the meantime, the Resource Development Commission wishes to express its deep appreciation if you have contributed to the Ambassador's Club. To date, 45 persons have given or pledged \$14,405. By August when we have added up the numbers, we hope the totals and number of ambassador contributors will have increased.

If you have not had opportunity to personally share in the Ambassador's Club effort, we would ask you to prayerfully consider such a gift. Any gift, large or small will make a difference as our District makes a difference in the lives of people.

Submitted by Glenn Timmons, Chair, Resource Development Commission

- Ministry

Have met and reviewed the list of people who still have needs for ordination renewal. They are looking at offering CEU for some of the pastors' zoom meetings. They are offering point 1 CEU in a Dropbox for previously recorded meetings so that people who are unable to participate live.

- Missional/Renewal

They are offering Lent meetings on Tuesdays. The Racial Justice committee developed the letter that was discussed earlier in this meeting.

They are beginning to talk about what the after-pandemic church will evolve.

There are still a few Racial Justice sessions that will be available. There have been between 50 and 60 individuals each week.

- District Mission Ambassadors

BRC: Covid positivity rate in Darke county is 6.5 and going down. They have opened for short visits and are able to supply gowns for visitors. Todd was able to do a walking tour of the updates to the BRC that are underway.

Dottie moved to accept reports and Sarah Friedrich seconded the motion. Board accepted the motion.

The next board meeting was scheduled for May 8, 2021 on Zoom.