

Northwest Regional Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Regional Board Meeting
April 4-5, 2008

Minutes

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Regional Board of the Northwest Regional Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) was convened at United Christian Church in Yakima, Washington, on April 4 and 5, 2008. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM on April 4 by Cherilyn Williams, Regional Moderator.

Members in attendance were Cherilyn Williams, Moderator; Marvin Eckfeldt, Vice Moderator; Debbie Starkey, Treasurer; Steve Coleman, Secretary; Rebecca Hale, Transitional Interim Regional Minister and President; Lauri Clark-Strait; Laura Jennison-Reed; George Roper; Sally Smith; Doris Steeg; Veronica Wiebe; and John Williams. Bill Jennison was a special guest for the Saturday afternoon session, where he presented the report of the Annual Fund Committee. In accordance with Article IV, Section E of the Northwest Regional Christian Church Bylaws, dated March 2004, a quorum was available for both days of the meeting.

The Friday evening session of the Regional Board meeting for the Northwest Regional Christian Church (NWRCC) was opened with a time of prayer led by Debbie Starkey.

REPORT OF TRANSITIONAL INTERIM REGIONAL MINISTER AND PRESIDENT:

Rebecca reported on the following items;

1. Thanks: Rebecca thanked all of the many people throughout the Region, who are doing extraordinary jobs in so many different areas. These include, among others, the RISE Team; the Vision Team; Cherilyn in her many roles, including Regional representative to the General Board and work with the Washington Association of Churches; Bill and Connie Robey for Journey of Discovery; Ed Martin and Marvin Eckfeldt for work on trust agreements and Marvin also for the New Beginnings program; Loren Arnett and Tom Quigley for efforts as ecumenical elders; Dawn Marie Turner and the RYC for the amazing retreats; Bill Jennison and the Annual Fund Committee; and the Regional Board members. The board extended their thanks to Rebecca, also, for all of her contributions.
2. Pastoral Changes: Sally Smith in Prosser is retiring from Central Christian Church and Roger Lynn is leaving United Church of Moscow, but is uncertain as the next step God is leading him to. Active searches for a new Pastor are being conducted by FCC Anchorage, FCC Coeur d'Alene, University Christian Church in Seattle, and for an Associate Pastor at FCC in Tacoma.
3. Prayer Requests: Rebecca asked that a number of people be remembered in prayer as they deal with various health problems and other personal and congregational issues. Other prayer needs were mentioned by board members.
4. Washington Association of Churches (WAC): Five marathon meetings have been held with judicatory representatives as to the future of the Association and its state-wide ecumenical ministry. A major issue is whether or not public

advocacy is an appropriate role for the WAC or whatever organization might succeed it. Various roles for an ecumenical group have been explored, e.g. facilitator, public good, convener. As a part of the process, the present WAC board will resign effective May 31, 2008, and be replaced with a group whose responsibilities are still being determined. The School of Theology and Ministry at Seattle University will likely play a major role in the process that emerges.

5. Church Roster Update: Genesee Community Church will be removed from the NWRCC roster this year. It is a complicated procedure. United Protestant Church will also be processed for removal. United Church in Craigmont, Idaho, said they thought all steps had been accomplished a few years ago. Rebecca concurs. There may be some property still owned by the Region. The church in Craigmont is doing the title search, so any issue can be cleared up. The Regional relationships of a few other congregations are also being explored.
- 6.¹ Moses Lake: We have received official notice from Faith Community Church of the unanimous vote of their congregation to withdraw from its affiliation with the NWRCC and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The following motion proposed by Rebecca was then moved by Steve, seconded by Marvin, and unanimously approved by the Board:

The Regional Board of the Northwest Regional Christian Church (NWRCC) accepts the desire of Faith Community Christian Church, Moses Lake, Washington, to withdraw from denominational affiliation with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and releases the congregation from their constitutional prohibition to holding title to the land in Moses Lake that is currently held by the Northwest Regional Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The Regional Board of the NWRCC agrees to Faith Community Christian Church purchasing the property for the price of \$75,000 and will consider our denominational relationship to be concluded when the final purchase is concluded (Closed).

- 7.² The Rock: The Rock was originally organized by Bill Tenny-Brittian as a house church and categorized as a “congregation in formation.” They now have no discernable relationship with NWRCC; and, from all indications, they are no longer in operation. Rebecca suggested formally terminating their status as a congregation in formation and their relationship with the NWRCC. George Roper moved and John Williams seconded that The Rock’s status as a congregation in formation be dissolved and NWRCC’s relationship with them be terminated. Following a thorough discussion, all Board members agreed with the motion. (Closed)
8. Centralia: A question was asked about the status of the Christian church in Centralia. Rebecca said she would look into it and report back to the Board.
9. Church Extension: Church Extension has targeted the Northwest Region, along with a few others, for special attention and assistance with church transformation.

¹ Includes an item of business enacted by the Board.

² Includes an item of business enacted by the Board.

They have appointed a special consultant, Nadine Burton to work with the Region. Rebecca told Board members this was a really good thing.

10. Pro-Reconciliation/Anti-Racism Team: In early 2007, a strategy was developed by the team; but little has happened since then. The minutes from the meeting were misplaced and never published. In addition, scheduled Team teleconferences were not held. Although there is a very positive legacy from the Team's past work that is influencing activities within the Region in a good way, the Team itself basically no longer seems to exist as a viable entity. A contributing factor to the confusion is the lack of direction coming from the General Church. The Regional RISE process will address Pro-Reconciliation/Anti-Racism, so we will wait to see what develops from that direction. In addition, Rebecca will contact Team members in order to gain some clarity of any relationships and roles that might still exist between the Team and the Region. A general opinion was expressed by Board members of the need for an active and involved pro-reconciliation/anti-racism program.
11. RISE: In April, all clergy clusters will spend time discussing the proposed Missional Strategy. In addition, all congregations have been asked to hold a 45 minute class in April engaging with the "Guiding Vision," "Role-and-Mission," and "Key Result Areas and Goals" portions of the Strategy and to report their findings back to the Rebecca, who will share them with the Vision and RISE Teams. A final draft will then be developed for approval at the Regional Assembly. At the Regional Assembly, there will be four hours devoted to discussing the Region, its mission, and the future. By the end of the Assembly, it is planned for four design teams to have been formed to address the areas of: Common Life; Formation: Resources; and Structure. A five to ten year plan for the Region will be the ultimate outgrowth of this transformation process.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Marvin reminded everyone that, during the week of April 14, the third contact should be made by Board members with church pastors to publicize and promote the Regional Assembly on May 16-18.
2. Marvin also discussed having the Regional Board – to include both present and nominated members – host a reception with light refreshments on Friday evening, after the first session of the Regional Assembly. All Board members concurred and agreed to contribute \$10 each to purchase the food. Marvin will collect the money and coordinate local arrangements.
3. Steve commented that, in order to get the special negotiated rates, hotel reservations for the Regional Assembly must be made by April 16.
4. Cherilyn gave members a draft copy of the Regional profile to be used for the Regional Minister and President search process and asked them to review if for discussion on Saturday. She also asked them to consider personal characteristics desired for viable candidates.

The Friday session of the Regional Board meeting was closed with communion led by Marvin Eckfeldt.

The Saturday morning session of the Regional Board meeting was convened by Regional Moderator, Cherilyn Williams.

BUSINESS AND REPORTS

1. Financial Report: Debbie reported on the following items:
 - A. The General Church Stewardship Task Force Debbie has been serving on completed its business and has been disbanded. Their last task was writing the job description for the new stewardship position within the Office of the General Minister and President.
 - B. Financial Reports (handouts 2, 3, and 4) were discussed. The Report to the Regional Assembly is a comprehensive look at how the Region's financial program has changed over the last two years and the role and development of the newly formed Finance Ministry.
 - C. Finance Ministry: The policy on unexpected gifts approved at the last Board meeting has been implemented.
- 2.³ Interns for Yakama Christian Mission (handout 13): Marvin made the following proposal for funding two summer interns for the Yakama Christian Mission:

It is recommended that the Region allocate \$5,000 from Reconciliation Account #2510 (J) to the Yakama Christian Mission to fund two persons for their 2008 Summer Internship Program.

Following a thorough discussion of the proposal and supporting material contained in the handout, the board unanimously agreed this was an appropriate use for Reconciliation funds and approved the proposal. (Closed)
3. 2008 Regional Assembly Resolutions: Cherilyn and Rebecca reported that no resolutions for consideration at the 2008 Regional Assembly have been submitted. (Closed)
- 4.⁴ Reports for the Regional Assembly: The reports listed below were discussed. The board approved all reports without dissent.
 - A. Journey of Discovery (handout 5).
 - B. Commission on Ministry (handout 10).
 - C. Yakama Christian Mission (handout 12).
 - D. Regional Youth Commission (handout 15).
 - E. New Church Companion Team (handout 11).
 - F. Funding Task Force (handout 14).
 - G. Outdoor Ministries (report given orally by John Williams).
 - All directors for summer camps have been selected
 - Most camps also have co-directors identified.

³ Includes an item of business enacted by the Board.

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- Directors' training has been completed.
- Counselors' training will be at Regional Assembly.
- All is going well.

A motion was made and seconded to accept all of these reports for presentation to the Regional Assembly. Everyone present agreed. The written report of the Outdoor Ministries will be included. (Closed)

- ⁵ Nominating Committee Report (handout 16). After discussion, this report was unanimously accepted by the Board as submitted and will be referred to the Regional Assembly. The committee will select one additional nominee for Board Secretary and include in their final report. (Closed)
- Walla Walla Central Christian Church Trust Agreement: Marvin reported on progress being made in establishing a trust agreement with Central Christian Church in Walla Walla. The primary issues involve the quit claim deed, time period for notice of cause for action, and distribution of proceeds if church property is sold. A modified agreement has been proposed, and will be considered at the May meeting of the Church's board. If the board and congregation agree, the trust agreement and quit claim deed will be referred to the Regional Board for approval. (Open)
- New Beginnings: Marvin discussed the New Beginnings program, as reported in handout 17. Eleven churches are engaged in this process under the guidance of Church Extension. There is a great deal of excitement among the participating congregations and quality support from Church Extension. A suggestion was made to include more information about the background of the program. (Closed)
- ⁶ Lane-Salmon Funds Proposal: Marvin introduced a proposal to combine two designated Regional Funds: the Lane Pastor Emergency Fund and the DH Salmon Fund. This proposal and background information was contained in handout 9 for this meeting. Subject to approval of the auditors, the board unanimously approved the following proposal:

It is recommended that the Regional Board combine two designated funds, Account #2507 (I) Lane/Pastor Emergency Fund and Account #2504 (H) DH Salmon, into a single account titled "Lane-Salmon Clergy Assistance Fund.

This new account will be managed by a subgroup of the Commission on Ministry. New sources for obtaining monies for the Lane-Salmon Clergy Assistance Fund will be explored. A brochure similar to the sample included as handout 10 will be printed in order to publicize this fund. (Closed)
- Regional Profile: Cherilyn led a comprehensive discussion about the draft *Profile of the Northwest Regional Christian*, which she handed out at the conclusion of Friday's session. This profile will be an integral part of the information given to potential candidates for the position as our Regional Minister and President. A

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number of substantive suggestions were discussed, along with recommended structural, spelling, and grammatical changes. The group also brainstormed a number of ideas about alternatives for future organization and scheduling of Regional board and commission activities. Cherilyn will use this information to develop the final Regional Profile. (Closed)

The Saturday morning session of the Regional Board meeting was closed for a lunch break with a prayer by Steve.

Following lunch, the Saturday afternoon session of the Regional Board meeting was convened by Cherilyn, who first recognized and thanked the outgoing board members: Veronica, George, John, Doris, Debbie, Steve, and Marvin.

10. Stewardship/Resource/Annual Fund Committee: Bill Jennison reported on the progress of a special task force set up by the Regional Board to explore alternatives for expanding financial support to the Region's ministries. Their report to the Regional Assembly, handout #14, was reviewed and approved earlier as item 4F in the "Business and Reports" section of these minutes. Bill was invited to discuss with the Board in some detail the task force's deliberations and conclusions. As a direct result of the task force efforts, a new, on-going annual fund campaign, "Connecting in Mission," will be launched at this year's Regional Assembly. The goal is to raise \$15,000 this year. In the future, the group will be discussing ways to support faithful stewardship of accumulated assets through estate planning and additional ways in which the financial resources for the Region might be expanded and sustained.

11. Criteria and Qualities for Next Regional Minister and President: Cherilyn and Rebecca led a lengthy discussion and brainstorming session to look at the things to consider in the selection process for the next Regional Minister and President of the Northwest Regional Christian Church.

A. Characteristics to look for in a candidate:

- Flexibility and creativity.
- Sense of commitment.
- Proactive attitude.
- Visibility.
- Sense of joy about ministry.
- Servant minister.
- Administratively competent, financially responsible.
- Compassionate.
- Growing in faith.
- Personable.
- Someone who "walks the walk and talks the talk."
- Sense of humility.
- Loyalty and support of the general church.
- Capable of resolving conflict.
- Healer.
- Team player.
- Deep spirituality.
- Good communicator.
- Prophetic voice.

B. What the Region and the Regional Board bring to the candidate:

- Willingness to work with RMP and staff.
- Open to new ideas.
- Board is willing to take on oversight.

- Desire for partnership with RMP.
- A variety of congregations.
- Commitment to forming a viable Pastoral Relations Committee.
- Desire for mutual trust and support.
- Spiritual commitment.
- Prayer support.
- Servant ministry.

12. Board Operations: In a discussion about what works and what doesn't work regarding Regional Board operations, the following comments were noted:

- Worship during Board meetings is a good thing.
- Recurring reports of Board activities should be made to congregations and clergy.
- A Communications Ministry is needed.
- Moderator's Report to the Regional Assembly should be continued.
- Continue openness of relationships – no secrets.
- Cooperation has been excellent.
- Good participation of Board members in the various Vision gatherings.
- Board must commit to adequate funding for Regional Youth Commission.
- Getting material in advance of Board meetings is essential.

The Saturday afternoon and last session of the Regional Board meeting ended with a time of worship led by Rebecca and words of closure by George.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the Regional Board will be held on Sunday, May 18, 2008, following the Regional Assembly's closing worship service. New and old Regional Board members will be invited to attend, along with members of the Search Committee. A schedule of future meeting dates will be handed out at this meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Coleman, NWRCC Board Secretary
May 14, 2008