

Minutes

Johnson City District Conference ~ Sunday, September 27, 2015

Hymn – “O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing”

Election of Secretary – Betty Yeomans-Barton was nominated and elected by voice vote.

Conference Strategy Team Report – Rev. Jeff Wright, Tazewell District Superintendent brought greetings from the Conference Strategy Team. Ministry happens best in the local church. Thank you for all you’re doing. There are two members on the strategy team from the Johnson City District, Leanna Robertson and Mike Eastridge (Chair). The team wants to know, “What suggestions do you have to address the challenges to effective and relevant ministry in your local church?” Help us with some ideas. We want to hear your story. Help us understand the story of your ministry in our conference.

District Superintendent Report – Rev. Walter Weikel began his report by saying, “Whenever I go to a worship I want it to feel real to me.” He then read John 1:45-51. Are we paying the same attention to detail Starbucks does? Are we creating authentic worship? Are we who we say we are? Market your strengths. Don’t say you have a great youth program when you don’t, so that when people show up they get what they are expecting. We have some rough edges but a wonderful theological heritage and people are starving for what we can offer. When John Wesley was struggling with his faith his Moravian friend Peter Bohler encouraged him to, “Preach faith until you have it, and then because you have it, you will preach it.” Practice grace even when it is not convenient. Be an authentic church even if you have to fake it.

District Lay Leader Report – Mrs. Nan Carver shared that all United Methodist churches share the same mission, to make disciples. You need strong lay leaders to do that. She recently led a training for local church lay leaders. Some of the things they discussed: It’s not about just standing up to do announcements. Be effective lay leaders working with the pastors. Pastors have to be on board with that. It is a partnership. Ministry of a local church is more than what an ordained minister does. If you were not able to attend the recent training, she would love to set up another class in your area. She is already planning another class on the history of United Methodism. Pray for your lay leader. Lay leaders pray for your pastors. Pastors encourage your lay leaders to attend these classes.

Camp Bays Mountain Report – Rev. Jeff Wadley reported that at 2:00 pm on June 4, 2017 we are going to open the doors a little bit. This will be when parents and grandparents can begin checking their children in for summer camp at Camp Bays Mountain. We have a lot to do between now and then to be ready. Jeff introduced some board members that were present: John Anderson, and Mary Boehms who is on Board and is the Development Officer helping us in our capital campaign. We have sold the Buffalo Mountain Camp property for \$1,153,616. On April 1 we closed on the Bays Mountain property at a cost of \$500,000. We have hired an architect that is nearly finished drawing up plans, and have hired a builder for the renovation of the retreat center and dining lodge. In order to offer a camping experience this past summer we offered two Camp in the Community opportunities in Elizabethton and at Laurel Run Park. We also offered Day Camp in Kingsport and a Leadership camp. In all we served 112 campers. Things you can do: Go to www.campbaysmountain.com. There you will find a link to a survey and help us with our business plan, marketing and personnel. Groups are needed to come help build the new camp. Next summer we are hiring 10 summer camp

counselors. We need you to help us find people 19 years or older to work at the camp. We need scholarships to help kids come to camp. Invite Jeff to speak at your church. Our Capital Campaign will launch in November. This is another opportunity for you to be part of what we are going to do. Jeff closed with a story about Christopher King who was a 10 year old who was killed in an accident at home several years ago. His family met with camp leadership to decide how they could memorialize him at Buffalo Mountain Camp. They came up with the idea for a climbing tower at the camp in his memory. The King family spent seven years raising money for the tower. When the flood happened, the King family was devastated and when it was announced the camp would move they asked that the tower be moved to the new site. We called the builder of the tower to see if that was possible and they said yes. The Christopher King Climbing tower is now sitting on the ground at the new camp, ready to be erected.

Wesley Foundation at ETSU Report – Walter Weikel shared that Saturday, October 29 is the date for the Annual BBQ and Auction. We are encouraged to donate items for the auction. This is their biggest fundraiser every year. We are also encouraged to purchase tickets in advance so they know how many people to expect for the meal. Mark your calendars. There is a Silent Auction for lesser priced items. Items with a value over \$100 go in the live auction.

Announcement – Mrs. Lois Cox shared there will be an event on October 1 at First UMC, Johnson City sponsored by the Muslim Outreach Team of Holston Conference. Muslims & Christians in Appalachia: Mapping a Future Together will be a seminar with emphasis on building relationships. Speakers include Rev. Steve Martin, Communications Director at the National Council of Churches, Bruce and Emy P. who spent years living in Muslim countries and Rebekah S. who has lived in Sudan for six years. If there was ever a time in our country and our church that we need to be working on building relationships it is now. There is a \$15 registration fee which includes lunch.

Nominations Report –Kathie Wilson-Parker is listed on Location and Building but declined since she is serving on Finance. Write in the name of Estel Williams (Carter County Parish) in her place. Nominations received from the floor: Beth Hall (Gray) for Committee on Nominations by Elizabeth Ramsey; Katie Huffine (Eden) for Trustees by Jake Herron; Anita Cox (Gray) by Lynice Broyles for nominations; Joanne Peters (Fairhaven) by Lynice Broyles for nominations. The slate of officers, with these changes, was elected by voice vote.

Election of Lay Members to 2017 Annual Conference – Nominations from the floor. Anna Kapoor nominated Steve Reis from FUMC Johnson City. Michael Vaughn nominated Mark Cutshall and Phillip McLain from Telford. Amanda Onks nominated Palmer Cantler from Munsey. Ballots were distributed, and Walter reminded the conference that only laity may vote, and to vote for no more than 17 names. The following people were elected (in alphabetical order): John Anderson, Amy Blumberg, Ronnie Bowers, Lynice Broyles, Palmer Cantler, Cindy Cutshall, Mark Cutshall, David Frost, Andrea Gates, Dell Gates, Mary Hooper, Katie Huffine, Andy Nelson, Hugh Wallace, Peggy Wansley, Betty Yeomans-Barton, Craig Zirkle. Elected as alternates (in order of election): Jerry Hooper, Steve Reis, Phillip McLain.

Finance Report – Walter shared that Boones Creek UMC voted on September 11 to discontinue services and will have their last service as of October 16. We want to be able to hold on to the building because it is a wonderful facility. The District Office has given our landlord notice that we will be moving our office there at the end of October. We feel that

our expenses are going to be about the same as now. If we find that we get a little strapped, we have an option. Four years ago we sold the district parsonage and proceeds from that sale are in a Holston Foundation account. We have not touched any of the principal or interest. We have worked out a plan with the Foundation where we could draw out 4-5% of the principal per year. We would pay the housing allowance from this and take the housing allowance out of the budget in order to use those funds for any shortfalls in the budget. Walter asked if anyone had any questions about this and none were offered. He also noted that Boones Creek is still listed in the Fair Share Apportionment. We will not have that money for the budget.

Finance Chair Art Eckerson provided the following information about the proposed budget for 2017. The Finance Committee considered both scenarios (present location and new location of the district office) but believe we can cover the expenses in the new office without adversely affecting the budget. We are projecting a slight decrease in the budget. We moved money from line items that are not being used to cover requested increases. The increase in salary came as a recommendation from Committee on District Superintendency. The amount for insurance has dropped considerably because of a change in need with employees now covered under other family member's policies. Utilities was increased to more closely reflect actual cost if we stay in our current location. This increase will help cover part of the cost in the new location. Office telephone was decreased due to a change in carriers and internet access increased when our service was unbundled from the church after they moved. Cellular telephone decreased and payroll subscription increased to reflect actual costs. In the Missions section, we maintained the same level for agencies that did not ask for increases, and granted increases at what we felt was a reasonable level for those that asked for one. Art opened the floor for questions and there were none. The 2017 budget was adopted by voice vote.

District Conference Resolution – Walter reminded the body that by adopting a District Conference Resolution we make it possible for district leadership to make decisions in the next year if some of the nominees are unwilling to serve or there needs to be an adjustment to the budget. The resolution reads: *Since there may be business matters that are not completed or are omitted during this session of the District Conference, or business needing action between sessions of the District Conference, it is recommended that the District Discipleship Team be empowered to care for such matters.* This resolution was adopted by voice vote.

Lord's Supper – Lon Tobin, served as officiant for the Lord's Supper.

Closing Hymn – "Be Thou My Vision"

Benediction – Walter led the congregation in a benediction.

Respectfully submitted by Betty Yeomans-Barton