

Gateway USA Mission Center - 2017 Fall Conference
Kirkwood Community of Christ
November 11, 2017

A worship service was held before the start of the business meeting with Matt Britt presiding. Nita Harder provided the music; and the invocation was given by Amy Hoerchler. The peace candle prayer was given by Mary Hammond. The theme for the worship service was “Boldly Follow” and the message was provided by John Wight. The offering and response were given by Tony Fantini. Jamie Varvaro gave the pastoral prayer; and the benediction was given by Matt Britt.

Apostle Janne’ Grover then addressed the conference attendees on behalf of the World Church. She asked the congregation, “What kind of church do we want to be?” She talked about mission challenges and opportunities in the church. She asked how the church can become relevant in our communities. She talked about challenges that face all religions and the decline in numbers of people who attend. The interfaith churches that offer different services are increasing in numbers. A survey was done which showed that 23% of people are not affiliated with a particular religion. There seems to be a movement away from God, but those surveyed say that they believe in God. Our church realizes that we need to find new ways to reach out.

Apostle Grover then talked to everyone about the financial challenges that are facing the World Church which were addressed by President Steve Veazey. Members were concerned about the sale of the Printers Manuscript. She said that the World Church President and Counselors deliberated about the sale. By selling the Manuscript, the funds from the sale were used for the retirement responsibility of the World Church “Bridge of Hope Project”. She said that the 2008 downturn in the economy led to the financial shortfall on the retirement. She explained that the retirement system was established and needs to be funded because the recipients devoted their lives and work to the World Church. She said that the sale of the Manuscript helped to fund the retirement and that there will be additional sales of historic assets. Due to revenue shortfalls, the World Church is asking for additional funds the remainder of 2017 and for 2018-2020.

Janne’ said that there is a decrease in tithes. In 2006 there were 13,724 members who tithed. In 2016 there are 10,705 people who contribute out of 250,000 members worldwide. Only 1/3 of priesthood members contribute tithes to the World Church.

Apostle Grover addressed e-tithing which the World Church feels will result in consistent giving. She also said that the church would like members to increase their contributions for November and December 2017 so that the church can raise additional funds to help with the budget. Janne’ also addressed members about increasing tithes by 2% for 2018. The World Church would like us to invite others to church to increase our members and to share God’s ministry. She also explained that The Bridge of Hope (Retirement) and Tithes are two separate budget items to keep in mind when contributing. Each of us needs to think about ways that we can help.

Janne’ Grover then introduced Jamie Varvaro. He introduced John Wight as the Parliamentarian for the meeting. Jamie then called the Gateway USA Mission Center Business Meeting to order and turned the meeting over to Mary Hammond.

Mary Hammond told the members that Mary Britt will be the appointed secretary and taking the minutes of the meeting. She then referred to Page 5 of the conference handout for the Minutes from the Spring 2017 Gateway Mission Center Conference held on April 2, 2017. Without objection, the minutes were approved as printed.

Mary Hammond then addressed the 2017 Campership Report which was shared in the recent Mission Center Conference Newsletter. Nine camperships were requested and awarded in the 2017 camping season totaling \$1,162.50. The balance in the Campership Fund as of September 30, 2017 is \$21,098.97.

Mary Hammond also said that the 2017 Mission Center Missionary Grant Fund Report was also shared in the recent Mission Center Conference Newsletter. One grant was requested and awarded to Fulton in 2017 totaling \$600. It was to build a "Tiny Food Pantry". The balance in the Grant Fund as of September 30, 2017 is \$67,821.27. In 2018, \$2,052.64 will be available for missionary grants.

Mary Hammond then told the members that Linda Andrae, the Mission Center Invitation Support Minister, provided a report about outreach and invitation in Gateway. The MC Presidency Team Report, CWH Report and Gateway to Peace Museum's reports were shared in the MC Conference Newsletter. There were no questions about the reports. Mary then turned the chair back to Jamie Varvaro who said a prayer on the meal as the conference broke for lunch which was hosted by the Kirkwood Congregation.

After lunch Jamie Varvaro called the business meeting back to order. He directed everyone to Page 8 of the bulletin about the Distribution of the Belle Congregation Building Sale Proceeds. He read the resolutions listed on Page 8. After review a motion was made by John Williams to approve the Proposed Distribution of the Belle Property Proceeds which was seconded. A vote was taken and carried. Amy Hoerchler then addressed the attendees about the funds. Questions were raised about the whole church pause in major projects. Barbara Borkowski addressed this concern and explained that only essential maintenance items can be done. At this point, Janne' Grover said that this is not a short-term pause. There were no other questions or discussions. The motion did carry with a majority in the affirmation and was approved as printed in the bulletin.

Jamie Varvaro then directed our attention to Page 9 and read each resolution to the conferees. After review a motion was made by Tony Fantini to approve as printed on Page 9 the Proposed Resolution Authorizing the Use of and Management of Funds to Provide World Church Support in 2018, 2019 and 2020. A 2/3 majority vote was needed to pass. The majority was made and the motion was seconded and carried. Amy Hoerchler then spoke to the members and there were no further discussions.

Jamie Varvaro then called our attention to Pages 10-14 from Gary Dodson of World Church. Jim Craven made a motion to adopt the Audit Report for the 2016 Mission Center Budget, Camp Woodland Hills Budget, Imani Budget and Gateway to Peace Museum Budget. The motion was seconded and a vote was taken and carried. Amy Hoerchler reviewed some items on Pages 11 and 12. There were no questions; and the auditor's report was adopted.

Jamie Varvaro directed members to the proposed 2018 Mission Center budget shown on Pages 15-16. A motion was made by Matthew Britt to approve the 2018 Mission Center Budget as printed and

was seconded. Mr. Varvaro then recognized Amy Hoerchler to present the budget on Pages 15-16. There were no questions and the motion carried.

Mr. Varvaro then called attention to Page 17 about the Camp Woodland Hills budget. A handout was given to conferees that showed changes to the 2018 budget since part of the proceeds from the sale of the Belle property will be distributed to CWH. Brad Dunagan then made a motion to approve the Proposed 2018 Camp Woodland Hills Budget as printed on the handout for Page 17. A second was made. John Williams then discussed some line items on the budget and said that funds would be used for CWH maintenance being aware of the World Church pause for expenses. There were no questions, so a vote was taken on the motion and carried.

Jamie Varvaro then asked members to see Page 20. It lists current CWH board members and nominations for the four open board positions. The CWH Board consists of 11 elected and 2 ex-officio members who serve staggered three-year terms with 1/3 being elected each year. The CWH Board recommended Brad Dunagan, Jim Owens, John Williams and Allen Williston for these positions. The floor was open for other nominations but there were none. Hearing none, the chair declared that the four people listed above and as printed on Page 20 were elected by acclamation.

The 2018 Proposed ESLCC Budget shown on Page 18 of the bulletin was reviewed. A motion was made by Jeanne Murphey to accept the 2018 Proposed ESLCC Budget and a second was made. John Williams then addressed members about the importance of the camp and the opportunities that are given to campers. There were no discussions or questions and members raised their hands in support of the ESLCC budget as printed and it was approved.

Members were then directed to Page 20 of the bulletin for a list of East St. Louis Community Camp board members. They are nominated by the Financial Officer of the Mission Center, elected by a majority vote of the Board and approved by majority vote of those in attendance at the annual fall meeting of the Mission Center. All those in favor of supporting Jessica Fort, Ramon Fultz Sr. and Lana Gilbert as East St. Louis Community Center board members raised their hands.

Jamie Varvaro then referred to Page 19 of the bulletin. A motion was made by Matt Britt to approve the Proposed 2018 Gateway to Peace Museum Budget as printed and a second was made. Jim Owens then spoke to the members. There were no questions so a vote was taken; and the motion carried.

Members were asked to see Page 20 of the handout for the list of Gateway to Peace Board Members. There are currently five open board positions. They are nominated by a committee selected by the Board of Directors, approved by the ex-officio Directors and approved at the annual Mission Center Conference. All those in favor of supporting Lana Gilbert and Julia Paul as Gateway to Peace Museum Board Members raised their hands. There was a majority in the affirmative and both were approved. Jamie explained that the board is seeking individuals to fill the additional vacancies. Without objection the Peace Museum Board will fill these vacant positions as per their bylaws. They will submit those names for approval by the Mission Center Council acting on behalf of the Mission Center Conference as allowed in the Administrator's Handbook. There were no objections, so the vacant positions will be filled using the above procedure.

Jamie Varvaro then asked if there was any new business. Hearing none, Janne' Grover addressed the members. She called attention to Page 21 of the bulletin and read it to members. The First Presidency is recommending a motion to sustain Jamie Varvaro, Mary Hammond, Matt Britt and Barb Borkowski as the Mission Center President Team with Jamie Varvaro serving as team chair. The motion was made by Ken Swails and was seconded. Members raised their hands in support of the motion.

Janne' then read a letter from the First Presidency regarding the MC Financial Officer Team. After reading she called for a motion to sustain Amy Hoerchler, Rob Ryder, Tony Fantini and Deb Young as the Mission Center Financial Officer Team with Amy Hoerchler serving as team chair. John Williams made the motion and it was seconded. Members raised their hands in support of the motion which was sustained.

Janne' Grover then referred to Page 23 of the bulletin and read a letter from the Central USA Mission Field Leadership regarding the Mission Center invitation support minister. She then asked for a motion to sustain Linda Andrae as the Mission Center Invitation Support Minister. A motion was made by Alex Lakebrink and was seconded. A vote was taken and carried.

Janne' thanked the Mission Center Teams and all who work in behalf of the World Church. Each person is appreciated for their dedication.

Jamie Varvaro asked the members to turn to Page 24 of the bulletin for the list of Mission Center Leadership. He explained that the MC Historian is appointed by the World Church Historian on the recommendation of the Mission Center President. The MC Recorder is appointed by the MC Financial Officer in consultation with the World Church Recorder. The MC Council is appointed by the Mission Center President. All of these appointments require sustaining by the MC Conference. The MCP Team is actively working with the World Church Historian Team on appointing a MC Historian. If a new Historian is identified by Spring Conference, this position will be sustained at that time; otherwise the Mission Center Council acting on behalf of the MC Conference as allowed in the Administrator's Handbook will sustain this appointment.

The conference continued with Page 24 of the bulletin regarding the Finance Committee. It consists of the Mission Center Financial Officer Team, a representative from the Mission Center Council and four elected members serving staggered two-year terms. Gene Austin and Bill Overhauser have one year left on their terms. There are two vacancies for a two-year term. The MC Leadership recommends Rick McKane and Jim Craven. There were no other nominations. Members raised their hands in their support.

Jamie Varvaro said that the remaining Mission Center Minister positions listed on Page 24 are filled by Mission Center Leadership. Members raised their hands in support. Jamie thanked everyone for the gifts that they share. He then turned the chair back to Apostle Grover.

Apostle Janne' Grover then presented the priesthood call of Matt Britt to the office of High Priest. Testimonies in support of the call were given by Janne' Grover, Jamie Varvaro and Jim Craven. Matt Britt then gave his acceptance of the call and of his commitment to ministry. Apostle Janne' said that Matt's ordination is planned for the Spring Mission Center Conference. The conference members raised their hands in support of Matt's call to High Priest.

The meeting was then turned back to Jamie Varvaro. An announcement was made about the gathering on December 2 at Columbia, Missouri. There were no further announcements. A video was then shown about the ESLCC Camps and the opportunities given to the youth at Camp Woodland Hills.

A motion to adjourn the conference was made by Rodger Howell and carried. The November 2017 Gateway Mission Center Conference Adjourned. A sending forth prayer was given by Matt Britt.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Britt
Secretary