



WISCONSIN CONFERENCE

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

2019 Annual Meeting Highlights

by Franz Rigert

Representatives from UCC congregations all across the Conference gathered at the Wilderness Resort in the Wisconsin Dells on April 5-6 for an inspirational and energy-filled 24-hour Annual Meeting entitled **“Living the Light!”**

On Friday evening during the opening plenary we honored the **Rev. Joanne Thomson**, who has served as an Associate Conference Minister for 18 years and will retire this summer. We also offered gratitude to **Janet Pugh**, who—after 12 years— is stepping down from her role as Annual Meeting Coordinator. Following the plenary the crowd enjoyed social time and stirring music from the band Copper Box!

On Saturday morning Conference Minister Franz Rigert gave presentations about **our Current Connections and Future Horizons** (look for video links on our website soon). One of the highlights was the announcement that the **Rev. Andrew Warner** will join our Conference Staff in May as a half-time Director of Development. Andrew has also been called to half-time Fund Development work by the national setting of the UCC. Expect an email with full details on our stewarding plans following Easter.

We also enjoyed a series of **[“Living the Light” video vignettes](#)** highlighting several exciting local church ministries and ministry partners. Acknowledging the challenges of ministry in these changing times, we then engaged in brief table conversation about how to stay connected and support one another. An inspiring devotional moment followed with the video song **[“Your Labor is not in Vain.”](#)**

The second portion of Saturday morning was dedicated to our **Association Annual Meetings**, held in four separate spaces. Many thanks to the Association

Administrative Teams, who diligently prepared Annual Reports and nimbly carried out scaled-back agendas.

After lunch, delegates addressed the Annual Meeting Business agenda, unanimously approving a **2020 Budget** and **Nomination slate**, and overwhelmingly voting in favor of a [Resolution for the Repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery](#) (a statement that has been used historically to support decisions invalidating or ignoring aboriginal possession of land in favor of colonial acquisition).

Prior to the closing worship, our **General Synod** Local Arrangement Leadership Team gave an update on hospitality plans, and an impassioned plea for volunteers. Over 100 slots were filled during the Annual Meeting! The gathering ended with a **Spirit-filled worship service** featuring an inspiring message by the Rev. Joanne Thomson and the sharing of communion around the tables.

Thus far we have received well over a hundred evaluations, and the reaction to this modified Annual Meeting has been very positive. Thanks to all who participated!

Now on to hosting General Synod in Milwaukee June 21-25!

Faithfully yours,

Franz