

Common Table of Church Vitality Minutes

The scheduled meeting of the Common Table of Church Vitality was held on Thursday, July 8, 2021, at 10:01 A.M., at the United Methodist Center, with one person on Zoom Conference.

For the record those present are as follows: Rev. Steven Summers (Director of Connectional Ministries and Chair), Bishop Sharma Lewis (Resident Bishop of the Richmond Episcopal Area), Ms. Martha Stokes (Conference Lay Leader), Bev Myers (Executive Assistant in the office of Connectional Ministries), Rev Douglas Forrester (Cabinet Representative), Mr. David Dommissie (Conference Treasurer), Rev. Nickie Moreno Howard (Representative of the Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries), Rev. Lyle Morton (Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and Advocacy Representative), Rev. Aaron Fitch (2025), Rev. Megan Saucier (2023), Ms. Kimberly Young (2023), Ms. Terry Bain (2024), Rev. Don Jamison (2024), Rev. Joshua King (Annual Conference Secretary, without vote)

Those who were unable to attend: Ryan LaRock (Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries)

Prior to the meeting, Rev. Steven Summers sent out an email regarding a church (Sherbourne UMC, Richmond District) that had requested a grant that had not been properly attended to. Rev. Summers proposed that we honor their request and give \$2,000.00 to their request. Mr. David Dommissie made the motion to give these funds from the Pandemic Relief Fund. There were six emailed responses in the affirmative.

Rev. Summers called the Common Table to order at 10:01 AM and opened us with a word of prayer.

A devotion was offered by Rev. Aaron Fitch. Rev. Fitch reminded us as Christians that we are to hope for the unseen and not that which is seen. And the Lord will bring us securely and safely to the other side.

Bishop Lewis offered us a prayer and anointed the members of Common Table for the work this year.

Rev. Summers asked us to introduce ourselves and each member offered their own introduction and position.

Ms. Martha Stokes welcomed the Common Table and mentioned how excited she is to again be meeting in person after pandemic restrictions.

Words from Our New Cabinet Representative, Rev. Doug Forrester

Rev. Forrester brings greetings from the Cabinet and recognizes that the cabinet is going to be functioning in new ways as they have moved from 15 to 8 District Superintendents this

year. Rev. Forrester also reported the hope to have the line of communication open between Common Table and the Cabinet and continue to seek anyway we can work better together.

Bishop Lewis spoke about the already good fruit that has come from meeting with the new cabinet that is smaller. We will be “doing church differently” and she is excited and hopeful for the what the future holds. Bishop hopes that we will look for new and creative ways to do the work for the Kingdom, larger than our churches, our congregations, our Common Table, and larger than our Annual Conference.

Chair of the Common Table, Rev. Steven Summers presented the minutes from the April 08, 2021 meeting. They were approved as distributed with minor corrections.

Conference Treasurer, Mr. David Domnisse

Mr. Domnisse handed out the documents found in Appendix A for his report. Mr. Domnisse reported that we are half-way through the year and so far, our collection is at 37.84%. This is an overall increase from previous year currently. Mr. Domnisse sees an increase in our second mile giving which he feels is a determination that we are financially coming back from the pandemic. We have received \$32,047.66 fund of \$80,000.00 for emerging funds. Though we are in the deficit for the Special and Sustaining Grants, Mr. Domnisse did not seem concerned at this time. The benevolence grants are in good standing and will be zeroed out tomorrow. Campus Ministry is still below their budget and is in good standing.

Rev. Jamison asked the question about the way we are allocating monies to priority one and then priority two, how much of this 41% collected in priority one is from those churches that are paying the full 100% of their apportionments. Without exact numbers, Mr. Domnisse believes this to be about 30% of churches who are paying their full 100%, but cannot speak authoritatively on exact numbers. We do plan to have a modified priority one and priority two next year as well.

Rev. Summers thanked CFA for their ability and flexibility to see us through a recovery of the pandemic. Mr. Domnisse stated that through CFA efforts, some cuts to the budget, government support through PPP Loans, grants given by communications to local congregations, and also a robust stock market, we have come back to a better place than where we were prior to the pandemic at this time.

Mr. Domnisse did mention the place that has the biggest financial concerns is the issue of the Boy Scouts of America. Several questions were raised about this concern. If a local church has charges brought, anything above the \$850 million dollar settlement will be covered by the local churches who have chartered these organizations. Therefore, the conference has encouraged local churches to never throw away their insurance policies as those policies are still active even if the insuring agency has gone under. The treasurers and chancellors will be meeting in October with the General Church to cover this topic more in depth. This is being done on the global level to try and cover the local churches and will be able to offer a fuller report to the Annual Conference afterwards. We cannot offer counsel to local churches personally but can

offer direction overall. This group, Common Table, may want to consider providing education for local church leadership about what the risks are for chartering the Boys Scouts of America in the future and how to properly manage those relationships between the Church and the Boy Scouts of America.

Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries, Rev. Nickie Moreno Howard (Representative)

Mr. John Dunning, previous Chair has provided the written report (Appendix B). Rev. Nickie Moreno Howard provided a verbal report. We are transitioning leadership this year as Rev. Ryan LaRock will be now chairing this committee. We do have a new campus minister at Old Dominion University, Rev. Joshua McCauley, who has hit the ground running. Ryan and Nickie hope to travel to every Wesley Campus to meet and begin the process of evaluating our ministry. This evaluation effort happens about once every 20 years. They also hope to strengthen our connection with our colleges and universities. Beginning this year, we give financially more to campus ministries than any other conference in the entire UMC connection. They also will begin to review their handbook for any changes that need to take place.

Personnel Committee, Ms. Kimberly Young (via Zoom)

The Personnel Committee could use one more person to fill the vacancy they have now. The personnel committee is working with GCFA to bring up to date policies and procedures for conference personnel. The Virginia Conference has also received funding for a new position around diversity and inclusion. The Personnel Committee is in the very beginning of this process for this new hire.

Chair of the Grants Committee, Chair Rev. Don Jamison

Rev. Don Jamison has just been named the new chair of the Grants Committee. Ms. Bev Myers gave the verbal report. The Grants committee oversees Special and Sustaining Grants, Conference Benevolence Grants, and Program Ministry grants. Last year there were some issues with when the grants went live and when the deadline was going to be to request grant money. And so, the Grants Committee plans to create some structure again for giving out grants. Emerging Funds came historically as a fund that gave the Grant Committee some more flexibility in granting funds to a new ministry that comes up mid-year that had not been financially planned for. But there needs to be more conversations around how this is going to work in the future.

Mr. Dommissse offered the idea of working together with other entities who give out grants to make a larger pool from which grants could be offered, such as partnering with the United Methodist Foundation, and then also unifying the process for those seeking grants.

Ms. Myers thanked Mr. Dommissse for this suggestion and hopes to work immediately on these deadlines and process for this year, but is interested in looking into this unification for the future. Further conversation took place around this idea.

At 11:33 am the meeting was recessed for lunch until 12:00 pm.

Director of Connectional Ministries, Steve Summers called us back to order at 12:06 pm.

Charter Revision Based on AC2021, Director of Connectional Ministries Rev. Steve Summers

Rev. Summers reported on the Common Table Charter Revision as approved by the 2021 Annual Conference. Rev. Summers gave thanks to Standing Rules Chair, Mr. Scott Diamond for all his assistance. It was fully approved excluding the vision of the Annual Conference and inserted “foundational documents”. There remains some question about what “foundational documents” means and Rev. Summers is working on exploring that.

AC2021 Review and Discussion, Rev. Steve Summers

Rev. Summers asked for a general review and discussion about Annual Conference 2021. Conversation was had about holy conferencing and trust. In addition, we had much conversation about recognizing that there were multiple other factors in the anger experienced at Annual Conference such as pandemic, General Conference being postponed, LGBTQ+ unresolved issues, the stringent requirements of the Technical Assistance Manual (TAM), and others.

The meeting adjourned at 1:25 pm with Ms. Martha Stokes closing us in prayer.

Joshua King, Secretary

Appendix A
Handouts from Treasurer's Report
July 8, 2021

FINANCIAL COMMITMENT REPORT
June 30, 2021
Virginia Conference

Apportioned Funds	YTD 6/30/2021	YTD 6/30/2020	Increase (Decrease)	Pct. Inc.\Dec.	Total 2021 Apport.	Total 2020 Apport.	Pct. Pd 2021	Pct. Pd 2020
Conference Apportionments								
421 Priority 1	9,657,929	10,080,848	(422,919)	-4.20%	22,871,928	22,885,000	42.23%	44.05%
422 Priority 2	39,993	57,829	(17,836)	-30.84%	4,963,032	8,565,000	0.81%	0.68%
Total Apportioned Funds	9,697,922	10,138,677	(440,755)	-4.35%	27,834,960	31,450,000	34.84%	32.24%
Non-Apportionment Receipts								
Advance Specials								
GBGM	255,217	186,086	69,131	37.15%				
Va. Conference Advance Specials	32,698	34,742	(2,044)	-5.88%				
Special Days								
Human Relations	3,563	5,769	(2,206)	-38.25%				
One Great Hour of Sharing	17,114	25,189	(8,076)	-32.06%				
Native American Ministries	5,721	3,717	2,004	53.92%				
Peace with Justice	2,156	1,605	551	34.30%				
World Communion	1,812	2,441	(629)	-25.78%				
UM Student	1,197	1,550	(353)	-22.75%				
Other Funds								
Youth Service	100	50	50	100.00%				
Samaritan Fund - Pinnacle Living	4,673	2,685	1,988	74.04%				
UMFS	25,332	32,518	(7,187)	-22.10%				
Comm. on Disab.\Camp Rainbow	1,195	1,871	(676)	-36.13%				
Annual Conference Offering	45,938	695	45,243	6509.77%				
Other	21,620	14,452	7,168	49.60%				
Total Non-Apportioned Funds	418,334	313,370	104,964	33.50%				
Total Church Receipts	10,116,256	10,452,047	(335,792)	29.15%				
Comparison to Last Year								
		2021	2020	Diff.				
June		34.84%	32.24%	2.60%				
May		28.23%	26.54%	1.69%				
April		22.09%	20.74%	1.35%				
March		15.80%	15.98%	-0.18%				

Year	YTD	Year End
2021	34.84%	
2020	32.24%	74.22%
2019	32.24%	84.39%
2018	39.70%	88.13%
2017	39.77%	89.91%
2016	38.62%	87.05%
2015	37.34%	85.85%
2014	37.35%	87.70%
2013	39.05%	88.57%
2012	37.63%	87.26%
2011	38.63%	86.83%
2010	37.46%	84.40%
2009	38.17%	85.92%
2008	41.10%	90.08%
2007	41.88%	92.03%
2006	43.51%	93.16%
2005	44.08%	93.87%
2004	44.17%	94.79%
2003	44.08%	95.58%
2002	44.73%	97.08%
2001	44.12%	96.33%
2000	44.59%	96.43%
1999	43.24%	94.92%
1998	42.09%	93.51%
1997	39.71%	90.64%
1996	38.73%	89.20%
1995	38.83%	89.31%
1994	39.42%	89.83%

**Virginia United Methodist
Income Statement
Emerging Funds
As of June 30, 2021**

	Year to Date	Budget	Variance
REVENUES:			
Funding from apportionments	32,047.66	80,000.00	-47,952.34
Total revenues	32,047.66	80,000.00	-47,952.34
EXPENSES:			
Ministry Expenses			
General and Administrative Expenses			
Total General and Administrative	0.00	0.00	
Total expenses	0.00	0.00	
Revenues Over (Under) Expenses	32,047.66	80,000.00	-47,952.34
Beginning Balance	0.00	0.00	
Ending Balance	32,047.66	80,000.00	-47,952.34

**Virginia United Methodist
Income Statement
CT Special and Sustaining Grants
As of June 30, 2021**

	Year to Date	Budget	Variance
REVENUES:			
Funding from apportionments	20,034.23	50,000.00	-29,965.77
Grants and donations - with	7,500.00		7,500.00
Total revenues	27,534.23	50,000.00	-22,465.77
EXPENSES:			
Ministry Expenses			
Grants - general	41,300.00		41,300.00
Total Ministry Expenses	41,300.00		41,300.00
General and Administrative Expenses			
Total General and Administrative	0.00	0.00	
Total expenses	41,300.00	0.00	41,300.00
Revenues Over (Under) Expenses	-13,765.77	50,000.00	-63,765.77
Beginning Balance	0.00	0.00	
Ending Balance	-13,765.77	50,000.00	-63,765.77

**Virginia United Methodist
Income Statement
Conference Benevolence Grants
As of June 30, 2021**

	Year to Date	Budget	Variance
REVENUES:			
Funding from apportionments	64,104.21	160,000.00	-95,895.79
Total revenues	64,104.21	160,000.00	-95,895.79
EXPENSES:			
Ministry Expenses			
Grants - general	51,947.06		51,947.06
Total Ministry Expenses	51,947.06		51,947.06
General and Administrative Expenses			
Total General and Administrative	0.00	0.00	
Total expenses	51,947.06	0.00	51,947.06
Revenues Over (Under) Expenses	12,157.15	160,000.00	-147,842.85
Beginning Balance	0.00	0.00	
Ending Balance	12,157.15	160,000.00	-147,842.85

**Virginia United Methodist
Income Statement
Campus Ministry
As of June 30, 2021**

	Year to Date	Budget	Variance
REVENUES:			
Funding from apportionments	320,503.31	800,000.00	-479,496.69
Total revenues	320,503.31	800,000.00	-479,496.69
EXPENSES:			
Ministry Expenses			
Grants - Longwood	7,989.96		7,989.96
Grants - Mary Washington	18,750.00		18,750.00
Grants - JMU	37,500.00		37,500.00
Grants - ODU	6,996.56		6,996.56
Grants - UVA	1,042.02		1,042.02
Grants - VCU	9,237.80		9,237.80
Grants - Virginia State	7,989.96		7,989.96
Grants - Virginia Tech	-3,940.36		-3,940.36
Grants - William & Mary	697.50		697.50
Grants - George Mason	26,250.00		26,250.00
Grants - Norfolk State	33,750.00		33,750.00
Grants - Southwest Va CC	11,250.00		11,250.00
Total Ministry Expenses	157,513.44		157,513.44
General and Administrative Expenses			
Salaries	148,699.98		148,699.98
Housing allowance	45,288.24		45,288.24
Retirement	34,788.78		34,788.78
Workers' compensation insurance	791.05		791.05
Misc office expenses	29.24		29.24
Coaching	950.00		950.00
Total General and Administrative	230,547.29	0.00	230,547.29
Total expenses	388,060.73	0.00	388,060.73
Revenues Over (Under) Expenses	-67,557.42	800,000.00	-867,557.42
Beginning Balance	0.00	0.00	
Ending Balance	-67,557.42	800,000.00	-867,557.42

Appendix B
BHECM Report to the Common Table for Church Vitality
July 8, 2021

Leadership Changes: The board elected Rev. Ryan LaRock as the incoming chair beginning July 1, 2021. Ryan is the pastor at Deep Creek UMC in the Elizabeth River District. Ryan has served on the BHECM, was on the local board at George Mason University and was a student leader in the WF at UVA. John Dunning will serve as vice-chair. Incoming board members, David Riggan (Local Board Chair at VT), Kate Dotson (Student at UVA) and Chad Hrbeck (Winchester District) were welcomed and received an orientation at the May 11th BHECM meeting.

Leadership Connection: The Associate Director of Learning, Nickie Moreno Howard, and the new BHECM Chair, Ryan LaRock are in the process of scheduling in-person visits to every campus ministry and chaplain's office for an orientation and to determine how each ministry can be supported. Considering the challenges each ministry has faced over the past year, this is a critical step in fulfilling our mission and vision.

New Campus Minister (WF at ODU). Rev. Joshua McCauley was selected as the new full-time campus minister starting July 1, 2021. Joshua was the associate pastor at Duncan Memorial UMC and served on the BHECM. An orientation and transition meeting were conducted on May 19th.

BHECM Connection to UM Colleges and Schools (Policy Clarification). Some questions were raised prior to and during the annual conference on BHECM responsibilities relating to the colleges and schools. Paragraph 634 of the Book of Discipline provides separate instructions for the responsibilities relating to campus ministries and the responsibilities relating to schools, colleges, and universities. The VAUMC BHECM Handbook provides detailed guidance on the structure and responsibilities for the BHECM. The focus is only on campus ministries. The Book of Discipline states that the BHECM or an alternative structure will perform the duties related to the schools. (634 (4) c). The Virginia Conference uses an alternative structure, primarily the Association of Educational Institutions (AEI). The director's position was funded by the AEI, the director's office was in the conference center, and the director was an active member of the BHECM. In 2018 the AEI funding ended, and the director, Dr. John Peters, retired. The director position was assumed by Dr. David Johns, President of Ferrum College. Not having a dedicated position located in the conference office left some "communication" gaps. From a campus ministry perspective, both Dr. Johns and Dr. Peters recommended changing the BHECM board UMC College President position to a UMC College Representative which could be filled by a chaplain. The BHECM and the Common Table (March 12, 2020) approved this change. Due to an administrative oversight, the change was not reflected in the BOR rule's for approval.

Recommendations: The Director of Connectional Ministries and the Associate Director of Learning Ministries:

- Confer with the current director of AEI for the appointment of an AEI representative (chaplain) to the BHECM.

- Review the current conference arrangements (attached) relating to UM universities, colleges, and schools to confirm adequacy of coverage. If necessary, make recommendations for change to the Common Table.

Book of Discipline Responsibilities Pertaining to Schools, Colleges and Universities
(Extracts from 634)

Evaluation Responsibilities: To evaluate schools, colleges, universities related to the annual conference, with concern for the quality of their performance, the integrity of their mission, and their response to the missional goals of the general Church and the annual conference.

Comment: Regional college accreditation organizations evaluate the quality of performance, etc. Conference evaluation is currently based on the annual reports contained in the BOR.

Fiscal Responsibilities:

- To present to the council on ministries and then to the council on finance and administration of the annual conference the financial needs for adequate support of the schools, colleges, universities, theological schools for apportionment to the churches within the conference. Comment: Currently the financial support is provided through the Virginia Educational Fund. While not specifically presented by the AEI it has appropriate coordination.

- To assist institutions related specifically to the annual conference in their efforts to raise funds, scholarships, recruit students, and extend services to the annual conference. Comment: This support is provided through the office of the Associate Director of Learning.

Board of Trustees: To assume responsibility, after consultation with the annual conference committee on nominations and the nominating committee of the institution's board of trustees, for the nomination of those trustees who are to be nominated and elected by the annual conference to the boards of trustees of United Methodist schools, colleges, and universities. Comment: These nominations are included in the BOR for conference approval.

Interpretation of Programs: To provide for interpretation of the programs of United Methodist schools, colleges, and universities throughout the educational program of the annual conference, especially in cooperation with those committees and persons responsible for youth and young-adult ministries. Comment: This support is provided through the office of the Associate Director of Learning

Conferring with the GBHEM: To confer at once with representatives of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry to determine what resources and aid the board may be able to provide and to enable the Division of Higher Education to carry out its responsibilities in the event that any educational institution moves to sever or modify its connection with the Church or violates the rules adopted by the division in accordance with 1413.3. Comment: The conference staff notified the GBHEM of Randolph College's separation. GBHEM resources were not required.

Submitted by John E. Dunning, Chair, BHECM (June 29, 2021)