

The Common Table for Church Vitality

The Virginia Annual Conference

*The mission of the Virginia Conference is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world by equipping its local churches for ministry and by providing a connection for ministry beyond the local church; all to the glory of God.*

April 30, 2020

The Common Table met on April 30, 2020 by Zoom teleconference to comply with Virginia's Executive Order Number Fifty-Three (2020). Members taking part in the meeting were:

Rev. Ted Smith (Director of Connectional Ministries and Chair)

Mr. Warren Harper (Conference Lay Leader)

Rev. Kathleen Overby Webster (Cabinet Representative)

Mr. John Dunning (Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministries)

Mr. David Domnisse (Conference Treasurer)

Rev. Lyle Morton (Commission on Ethnic Minority Concerns and  
Advocacy Representative)

Ms. Unsil Choi (2020)

Rev. Jonathan Page (2020)

Dr. Carlos Liceaga (2021)

Ms. Susie Wolf (2022)

Rev. Megan Saucier (2023)

Ms. Kimberly Young (2023)

Rev. Susan Reaves (Annual Conference Secretary, without vote)

Also present were Ms. Shirley Cauffman, Chair of the Common Table Personnel Committee and Rev. Tom Joyce, Assistant to the Bishop. Unable to attend were Rev. Harold White, Rev. Ashley Isernhagen and Bishop Sharma D. Lewis

Chairperson Ted Smith opened the meeting at 10:02 with a word of welcome. Ms. Susie Wolf shared a devotion from Adam Hamilton's book, *Enough*. She focused on the parable of the sower. The parable reminds us that God is able to bless us with all we need. When we make and save all we can, so we can give all we can, we become like seeds planted on good soil. Ms. Wolf then led the group in prayer.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the March 12, 2020 meeting of the Common Table for Church Vitality. They were approved with one correction.

Rev. Smith addressed the shift in Annual Conference dates to September 18 and 19, 2020. He noted that there are still variables that are up in the air regarding location and the necessity of deciding between holding a one- or two-day conference. Convening virtually, in part or in whole is also a possibility.

Rev. Smith brought an update on the Alignment process. The changes have been published and the job descriptions posted and cover letters and resumes are being received.

A financial update was brought by Mr. David Dommissie, Conference Treasurer. He noted that apportionments have been slow to come in. Receipts currently sit at 50% of needed funds. The collection per centage year-to-date stands just below 20%. April has been a bad month for receipts. There has been positive feedback from churches on the prioritizing of apportionments. The corona virus response fund has collected about \$6,000 to \$7,000.

Ms. Shirley Cauffman, Chair of the Personnel Committee, brought four proposals before the Common Table related to the current funding short fall. The recommendations were addressed by Carol Draper who had drawn up spread sheets that outlined the four scenarios to the group. The first two options assume the conference receives a loan from the Payroll Protection Program (PPP). The Proposals were numbered 1A, 1B, 2 and

3. Options numbered 2 and 3 would only be considered if the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan was not received.

**Proposal 1 A** would employ Common Table staff as follows: five employees would remain full time, one would go to three quarter time, six would go to half time employment and two would be furloughed. It has been confirmed that church employees would be eligible for unemployment. In this scenario in July everyone comes back full time except the three directors eliminated by the Vision Alignment process.

**Proposal 1 B** would employ Common Table Staff at these levels: eight full time positions would be retained; two positions would go to half time employment and four positions would be furloughed. The salaried staff would be paid through May 1<sup>st</sup> in both of these proposals. All but one person would come back full time in July if the PPP is received. As in Proposal 1 A there would be a change in directors in July. Half-time employees would still receive health insurance.

The choice before the Common Table was between these two scenarios. If there were no other changes than the ones outlined in the Alignment Process there would be a significant short financial short fall.

Rev. Overby Webster moved that scenario 1 B be adopted. It was seconded.

Rev. Megan Saucier moved the motion be amended so that the salaried staff receive payment through May 8<sup>th</sup> rather than May 1. The vote for the amendment was as follows: six for and two against with two abstentions. The amendment was approved.

The motion that Proposal 1 B with the amendment provides the following staffing: “eight full time positions would be retained, two positions would go to half time employment and four positions would be furloughed. The salaried staff would be paid through May 8<sup>th</sup>. All but one person would come back full time in July if the Paycheck Protection Program is received. The salaried staff will be paid through May 8<sup>th</sup>. There would be a change in directors at that time. Half time employees would still receive

health insurance. The motion was voted on. The vote was as follows: six for, one against and three abstentions. Motion 1 B was approved as amended.

Proposals 2 and 3 may need to be considered if the PPP loan is not granted.

There was a question raised about members of the Common Table relating to class year rotations. The new quadrennium starts July 1, 2020 but the election of new members may be delayed by the postponement of Annual Conference. Rev. Smith pointed out that some rotations are mandatory by the discipline. Other positions are not mandated by the discipline. Letters will go out to those whose board and agency positions are affected.

A report will go out May 13, 3:00 p.m. regarding the PPP loan. The next meeting of the Common Table for Church Vitality will be May 19<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 pm, June 25<sup>th</sup> there will be a meeting at 10 am, and July 16<sup>th</sup> another at 10 am. Mr. Harper asked an email be sent out with the upcoming dates.

Rev. Smith led the group in prayer and adjourned the meeting at 12:17.