

# 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Conference, United Church of Christ

June 10-11, 2022      College of St. Benedict, St. Joseph, Minnesota  
Hybrid Meeting Format (In-Person and Zoom)

## **PLENARY SESSION #1** **GATHERING WORSHIP**

Robin Raudabaugh led a land acknowledgement.

Katie Johnson and the Falcon Heights UCC Youth led a call to worship via video.

## **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

Annual Meeting Planning Work Group (AMPWG) chair, Danielle Bartz, welcomed delegates and visitors to the 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting. First time attendees were asked to stand and previous annual meeting attendees were asked to welcome them. Announcements were made:

- ~In an effort to conserve paper, all items are available on the website as well as through Sli.do, an app that will be used throughout Annual Meeting.
- ~Speak outs will be in person only. There will be five slots for 1 minute speak outs at the close of each plenary session and require advance sign up.
- ~Restrooms: on the Plenary Room level all bathrooms are gender neutral. Gender specific restrooms are available on the lower level.
- ~Voting instructions for the hybrid format will be explained later.
- ~A golf cart driven by Bob Olson is available for access around the campus.
- ~The MN Conference Policy for COVID protocols will be followed including masking when indoors unless speaking at the podium or eating. Masks are optional when outdoors.

Conference Minister Shari Prestemon gave thanks for this hybrid format and acknowledged how good it felt to be back in person. She then introduced the conference staff and gave thanks for their gifts.

Sandy Kellen, Administrative Assistant to the Conference Minister  
Sheri Nelson, Program Director, Outdoor Ministry  
See Chang, Administrative Assistant  
Cindy Mueller, Steward for Search & Call and Congregational Legacy Planning  
Bob Olson, Development Director  
Kevin Brown, ACM of Faith Formation for Children and Youth  
Kelly Gallagher, ACM

CM Shari Prestemon also acknowledged those staff members who could not attend: Carita Zimmerman, Acting Financial Director and Kathy Graves, Communications.

CM Prestemon explained the absence of Moderator Shawn Nuebel due to illness. Then she introduced Vice Moderator Sara Morse who would be moderating this year's Annual Meeting.

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Vice Moderator Sara Morse called the 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ to order at 11:02pm on Friday, June 11, 2022.

## **CREDENTIALS REPORT**

The Secretary of the Conference, Rebecca LeMenager, gave the credentials report: 91 delegates in person, 17 delegates online for a total of 108 delegates representing 46 churches. Vice Moderator Sara Morse declared a quorum for the 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ.

## **TEST VOTE**

Because of the hybrid format of the meeting, voting was done in a different format. A test vote was taken to ensure all members, both in person and online, understood the voting procedure.

## **APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA**

Danielle Bartz made the following Motion:

Motion (AMPWG): On behalf of the Annual Meeting Planning Work Group, I move for the approval of the consent agenda. Consent Agenda items include the standing rules and procedures for business sessions, the agenda for the 2022 Annual Meeting, the adoption of the written reports for 2022, and the 2021 Annual Meeting minutes. **(MOTION CARRIED)**

## **APPOINTMENT AND INTRODUCTION OF THE PARLIAMENTARIAN**

Danielle Bartz introduced James Snoxell, a member at St. Anthony Park United Church of Christ and moved for his appointment as Parliamentarian for Friday and Saturday.

Motion (AMPWG): On behalf of the Annual Meeting Planning Work Group, I move to Appoint James Snoxell as Parliamentarian for the 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Conference UCC and that he be given Voice Without Vote. **(MOTION CARRIED)**

## **RECOGNITION OF HONORED GUESTS & OTHER GRANTED VOICE WITHOUT VOTE**

Conference Minister Shari Prestemon asked the following guests, if present, to please stand and presented the following motion:

Motion (AMPWG): On behalf of the Annual Meeting Planning work Group, I move that these honored guests be approved Voice Without Vote at the 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ.

Emily Myer, Ministry Lab  
Rev. Dr. Diana Butler Bass, Keynote Speaker  
Rev. Andy DeBraber, Generosity Officer, UCC  
Randy Monson, UCCIB  
Josh Larson, UCCIB

**(MOTION CARRIED)**

Motion (AMPWG): I move also that the following members of the Annual Meeting Planning Work Group, Ministers without current standing but serving in the Conference and other presenters be granted Voice Without Vote for the 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting:

Rev. Kelly Gallagher

**(MOTION CARRIED)**

## **NOMINATING WORK GROUP REPORT**

Chair of the Nominating Work Group, Mary Kaser introduced members of the Nominating Work Group and explained the nature of their work was described. The Skills Bank Form was lifted up and all were encouraged to fill them out. The slate of candidates for Officers, BOD, Board Committees and Subcommittees and Work Groups of the Conference were lifted up. There were no nominations from the floor. The slate of candidates will be voted on at Saturday's Plenary #4.

## **BACK BAY MISSION PRESENTATION**

A video highlighting Back Bay Missions' 100 year Anniversary and their 100 Year Capital Campaign was shared. Via video, Executive Director Rev. James Pennington thanked the

Minnesota Conference for their continued support of Back Bay Missions and shared some of the exciting plans Back Bay has for the future.

### **UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**

Rev Dr. Molly Marshall, President of United Theological Seminary in the Twin Cities, gave greetings and an update of the seminary including student enrollment, graduation numbers, the new Leadership Center for Social Justice and other exciting new initiatives at the seminary.

### **SPEAK-OUT! (#1)**

Nora Elliot	UCC New Brighton	Annual Meeting Planning Work Group
Emily Goldthwaite	Edina Morningside	Beacon (Housing Insecurity)
Beth Donaldson	UCC New Brighton	COM
Marce Ediger	Union UCC, Elk River	Stoles
Jim Mitulski	Peace UCC, Duluth	Anti-Gun Violence Rally

### **RECESS**     *(Lunch and Rest and Renew Activities)*

### **PLENARY SESSION #2**

#### **ADDED BUSINESS**

Conference Minister Shari Prestemon, on behalf of the AMPWG, presented the following motion:

*Motion (AMPWG): I move also that the following members of the Annual Meeting Planning Work Group, Ministers without current standing but serving in the Minnesota Conference and other presenters be granted Voice Without Vote for the 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting:*

*Rev. Dr. DeWayne Davis, Plymouth Congregational Church, Minneapolis*

*Rev. Dr. Jill Sanders, First Congregational UCC, Alexandria*

*Rev. Jim Mitulski, Peace UCC, Duluth*

**(MOTION CARRIED)**

### **TREASURER'S REPORT AND PROPOSED BUDGET**

Treasurer Don Fancher presented the Treasurer's report for fiscal year 2022 and the proposed budget for fiscal year 2023 which will be voted on at Saturday's Plenary session #3. Items that were highlighted included savings on Travel, Room Rentals and Food due to the pandemic and the anticipated capital expenditures for the Office Buildout and a new Electronic Content Management System.

The following questions were raised:

Enno Limvere, First Congregational UCC, Grand Marais

Q: Does the monies from the Pilgrim Point Legacy Fund and the Ashley Fund designated part of the principle of either fund?

A: The amount is per the MN Conference's spending policy for these funds. They are a 5% of a 3 year rolling average. Due to the Pilgrim Point Legacy Fund being less than 3 years old, it is 5% of the last 2 years.

Beth Donaldson, United Church of Christ New Brighton, New Brighton

Q: How do the two pie charts align—especially in regards to OCWM?

A: The two pie charts are not meant to directly correlate. The second pie chart shows how resources are being allocated to support the work and mission of the Conference as outlined by the strategic plan.

Don Fancher made the following motion on behalf of the Board of Directors  
[Motion \(Board of Directors\): On behalf of the Board of Directors, I present the recommended Budget of the Minnesota Conference for fiscal year 2023 as printed and distributed to this meeting as an item of Business \(MOTION CARRIED\)](#)

Don Fancher was thanked for his many years of faithful service to the Minnesota Conference.

### **COMPENSATION GUIDELINES**

ACM Kelly Gallagher presented the 2023 Compensation Guidelines. The 2023 guidelines call for a 3.5% increase which is in accordance with the conference staff compensation increase.

### **OCWM PRESENTATION**

Bob Olson, Minnesota Conference Development Officer and Rev. Andy DeBraber, Generosity Office for the national setting of the UCC, talked about OCWM and the Minnesota Conference's support of OCWM. The MN Conference is top 4 in both percentage of giving as well as total dollars raised. The Conference was also thanked for their participation in the over \$2 Million raised by the UCC for Ukraine Relief. The MN Conference was thanked for their generosity and faithfulness. Individual churches were recognized for their giving and attention was drawn to the Generosity Report included in the packet of information for Annual Meeting.

### **LEGACY WORK**

Rev. Cindy Mueller, Steward for Search and Call & Congregational Legacy Planning talked about her work and how she can be a resource for congregations on threshold moments by helping facilitate faithful and honest conversations as churches examine what is next.

### **OUTDOOR MINISTRIES**

Rev. Sheri Nelson, Outdoor Ministry Program Director talked about her work and the difficulties of launching a new outdoor ministry model in the midst of a pandemic. Even with these challenges, this is an exciting time. Nelson highlighted opportunities currently being offered and future offerings in the works such as some around creation care initiatives. She invites everyone to be a part of this life-giving ministry.

### **DAMASCUS PROJECT**

ACM Rev Kelly Gallagher gave an update on the Damascus Project. The world is changing and we need resources to meet this changing world. The Damascus Project seeks to support and equip courageous leaders to respond to the ever-changing Church. A video sharing the work and impact of the Damascus Project was shared.

### **RESOLUTIONS: PROCESS AND INTRODUCTION**

Rev. Tony Romaine of the Annual Meeting Planning Work Group described the resolution process which included a hearing over zoom during the workshop part of Annual meeting where amendments could be offered, next is a time of sharing the background and rationale which will take place shortly and later, there will be a time of debate and vote which will take place tomorrow.

T. Romaine called for any Timely Resolutions—resolutions dealing with issues or concerns about which there was no possible knowledge or information before the resolution deadline, and where a delay would render the resolution moot—to be presented. There were none.

T. Romaine invited Rev. David McMahill, spokesperson for the Resolution #1: Supporting Public School Educators, Academic Freedom and Equality Efforts in Schools, to speak to the

resolution and to answer questions of clarification only. D. McMahon addressed the body via zoom. The following clarifying questions were asked:

Maria McNamara, Cherokee Park UCC, St. Paul

Q: Why was the term “Heterosexism” used instead of “Homophobia”?

A: The term Heterosexism points to the oppressive ways Heterosexuality is placed above all other forms of sexuality and lifted up as normative.

Sarah Campbell, Mayflower UCC, Minneapolis

Q: What do you think could really happen if this resolution is passed?

A: People would be inspired to attend School Board meetings, write letters to the editor and make this side more visible.

T. Romaine invited Dwight Wagenius, spokesperson for Resolution #2: Protecting God’s Earth & Its People with Electrification was asked to speak to the resolution and to answer questions of clarification. Dwight Wagenius addressed the body via zoom. The following clarifying question was raised:

Rebecca LeMenager, Mizpah UCC, Hopkins

Q: In line 67, there is reference to “The Conference.” What specific body or part of the conference is being referenced here for this responsibility?

A: The Creation Justice Team and local congregations’ Creation Justice Teams.

## **SPEAK OUT! (#2)**

Diane Anders

Mayflower UCC

Annual Information Review Forms

Cecelia Alexander

UCC New Brighton

March for Our Lives

**RECESS** (*Rest & Renewal Activities, Dinner with the State of the Conference Address, sleep*)

Saturday Morning Bible Study: Molly Marshall, President at United Theological Seminary  
Gathering Music

## **PLENARY SESSION #3**

### **FINAL DISCUSSION AND VOTE ON THE 2023 BUDGET**

Treasurer Don Fancher made the following motion:

**Motion (BOD):** On behalf of the Board of Directors, I move the adoption of this budget for the fiscal year 2023 for the Minnesota Conference, United Church of Christ be approved.

**(MOTION CARRIED)**

### **FINAL DISCUSSION AND VOTE ON THE 2023 COMPENSATION GUIDELINES**

ACM Kelly Gallagher made the following motion:

**Motion (BOD):** I move that the 2023 Compensation Guidelines be approved. **(MOTION**

**CARRIED)**

### **FINAL DISCUSSION & ACTION ON RESOLUTION #1: SUPPORTING PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATIONS, ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND EQUALITY EFFORTS IN SCHOOLS**

Hearing Moderator, Rev. Tony Romaine gave a brief summary of the discussion of the resolution during the resolution hearing and then called Rev. David McMahon, resolution spokesperson, to speak to the resolution. The following people spoke in favor of the resolution: Rick King, Falcon Heights UCC; Kathy Itzin, Robbinsdale Parkway UCC; Tom Major,

Mayflower Congregational Church, UCC and Chris Wing, St. John's UCC, Norwood Young America (via the chat function on Zoom).

Bill Lindberg, First Congregational Church of Minnesota, Minneapolis raised the following Question:

Q: Where would resources come from when a fast response and/or action is needed?

A (D. McMahill): Hopefully everyone and anyone would feel equipped and moved, but specific help, guidance and resources are already available through UCCNB who have already done considerable work on this issue.

**Motion (D. McMahill): I move the Adoption of the Resolution Supporting Public School Educators, Academic Freedom and Equality Efforts in Schools. (MOTION CARRIED)**

### **SPEAK OUT! (#3)**

Rebecca LeMenager	Mizpah UCC, Hopkins	Pulpit Supply in N. MN
Karl James	Plymouth Cong, Mpls	Chaplain Lunch
John Ficus	Peace UCC, St. Cloud	Open & Affirming
Sheri Nelson	MN Conference Staff	Keynoter Books for sale
Elijah Carroll	St. Paul's UCC, St. Paul	ConNext Summit
Victoria Wilgocki	St. Anthony Park UCC	Church Collaboration— especially around youth

### **RECESS (Break)**

### **KEYNOTE ADDRESS AND TABLETOP CONVERSATIONS**

Author and Theologian Diana Butler Bass talked about grief and gratitude. Her talk, small group discussion and Q&A were done via Zoom.

### **RECESS (Lunch and Rest & Renewal Activities)**

Gathering Music

### **PLENARY SESSION #4**

### **FINAL DISCUSSION & ACTION ON RESOLUTION #2: PROTECTING GOD'S EARTH AND ITS PEOPLE THROUGH ELECTRIFICATION**

Hearing Moderator, Rev. Jane McBride gave a brief summary of the discussion of the resolution during the resolution hearing and then called Rev. Dwight Wagenius, resolution spokesperson, to speak to the resolution. One person spoke against the resolution:

Alan O'Malley Larsen, The Associated Church of Owatonna.

Rational: Shared concerns about how electrification may lead to a bigger need for precious mineral mining and the environmental impact such mining would have—especially on areas like the Boundary Waters.

Rebuttal: Electric car batteries are recyclable and new technologies are being created every day to lessen the environmental impact.

**Motion (D. Wagenius): I move the adoption of the Resolution for Protecting God's Earth and its People Through Electrification. (MOTION CARRIED)**

### **ELECTION OF OFFICERS, COMMITTEE AND WORK GROUP MEMBERS**

Mary Kaser, on behalf of the Nominating Work Group, made the following motion:

Motion (Nominating Work Group): On behalf of the Nominating Work Group, I move for the election of the slate of nominees for Officers, Board of Directors, Board Committees and Subcommittees, and Work Groups as presented. **(MOTION CARRIED)**

### **CALL FOR ACTION IN REGARDS TO GUN VIOLENCE**

Nathan Holst, Peace UCC, Duluth led the assembly in song. ACM Kevin Brown and 3 youth talked about their experience of attending the “March For Our Lives” rally in Washington DC and read from the Resolution on Preventing Violence and Recognizing It As a Public Health Emergency which was passed at Annual Meeting 56 (2018). A video was shown, and Cecelia Alexander (UCC New Brighton) reminded the Minnesota Conference that there is still much work to be done and asked for continued action.

### **FINAL CREDENTIALS REPORT**

Secretary Rebecca LeMenager read the final credentials report. In person: 123 delegated representing 51 churches, online: 60 Delegated representing 15 churches and 16 guests.

### **AMENITY REOLUTION**

Danielle Bartz, on behalf of the AMPWG called for the following Resolution:

We gathered for this 60th Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ from June 10-11, 2022.

We worshiped, sang, and learned together. We found rest and renewal in our gathering and in quiet times alone. We rejoiced in seeing each other’s faces, either in-person or online. And, most importantly, we experienced God’s presence in this sacred time together.

Therefore, be it resolved

That we express our gratitude for all who gathered here;

For our inspiring...

\*Keynoter Diana Butler Bass;

\*Musicians, worship planners and participants, Rev. Robin Raudabaugh, Rev. Enno Limvere, Katie Johnson, and Kathy Peterson

\*Visuals and space set-up, Ruth Johnson, Sandy Stroebe, and Paula Benfer

\*Bible Study leader Rev. Dr. Molly Marshall;

\*Falcon Heights Emerge youth and leader Margot Olsen

\*Preacher Rev. Dr. Justin Sabia-Tanis

\*For our Vice-Moderator and Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors, Rev. Sara Morse, who has led us, effectively and efficiently, through the business sessions of this meeting; and for our Moderator, Shawn Nuebel, who was unable to be with us in-person but diligently leads the Board of Directors; for Treasurer Don Fancher.

### **SPEAK OUT! (#4)**

Leslie Moughty	1 <sup>st</sup> Cong UCC, Brainerd	Invite to 150 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary
Nancy Hassett	Union Cong., Elk River	Sanctuary State
Rick King	Falcon Heights UCC	Isaiah Organization
Anna Larson	Circles of Faith UCC, Wauburn	Pulpit Fill & Music Jam
Andrew Flemming	1 <sup>st</sup> Cong UCC, Alexandria	Need more Youth Delegates

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting (2022) of the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ closed at 4:02pm. Closing Worship followed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rebecca LeMenager  
Secretary