

EOA/WRA Joint Annual Meeting Agenda

9:30 Call to Order

- Establish a quorum - Quorum approved
- Adopt Agenda – Agenda adopted
- Name parliamentarian
- Accept reports – Motion received to accept reports; passed
- Introduction of special guests and new people to the Associations
- Presentation from Benevolent institutions

- ◆ United Church Homes –Sandy Hutchinson

UCH celebrating 100--Centennial year; in 1916 Reformed churches in Toledo united in caring for seniors; we are invited to register on website to attend facilities and special events

Over 4, 000 seniors in several states that began with four residents. Mission to transform aging by building a culture of caring, understanding and peace.

Now have 48 2 bed room cottages; independent living; skilled nursing care; Alzheimer's unit; mental health care; now have a CPE program.

Advocates for seniors; aging.

- ◆ Doyle Luckenbaugh reported on Back Bay Mission; Began in 1922; evangelical church was in ministry with fishing industry on Back Bay; shoes and nutrition for children; program grew BBM today; started first medical and dental clinics; food and clothing banks; assistance with rehab housing; emergency help with bills, food; LGTB support; battered women's shelter; hurricane relief/rebuilding; BBM is the only faith based agency still working in this area doing recovery work; built a homeless program that is a model for others; providing homes for the homeless; volunteer program is excellent. All weeks filled through 2017

9:45 State of the Associations - Dr. Rita Root

Rita offered her gratitude for the work of the associations to have courage to make changes, for their deep sense of commitment, adaptability, and flexibility. After four years of shared staff and ministry, the joint councils agreed to conduct an association wide evaluation.

Significant items were identified in this process

Although this collaboration was originally focused in terms of money, it began to break down some walls. There was a belief that the culture of EOA and WRA churches were so very different. However we are bound together in mutuality and covenant as each of us bring to the table enhancements to our collaborative ministries.

The introduction of prophetic witness teams to address social justice issues of our day and awareness, resources for local engagement was an important feature of our collaboration.

Rita invited us to promote and attend "Prayers for Peace" on November 20 at Richfield UCC.

The vision is to create peaceful places for people, peaceful dialogues, and to proclaim the gospel of peace and justice in our own local setting.

Rita has announced her retirement for the end of 2017. With a search committee already in the process of forming and plenty of time, Rita assured us of a peaceful transfer of power. She intends to remain engaged in leadership as search committee looks for replacement. Rita

celebrated the gifts of all of the EOA/WRA staff – Rich and Bonnie, and the Support Center staff – Michelle & Cheryl. Thank you for your work.

Search Committee update: Ian Lynch & David Brown; Two persons from each council have been identified as member of the search committee. We are asking for suggestions for additional members. There are some diversity guidelines. If interested; contact Ian Lynch.

10:00 Election and installation of new leaders –

Jerry Kruse: presented slate of officers; EOA nominees to stand; recommend these to serve; requires no motion; moved to accept slate of nominees; passed.

WRA delegates stand; add Doris Powell; ask vote on slate of delegates; slate comes from committee; motion seconded and passed to accept slate of nominees.

All newly elected persons serving in various ministries and leadership roles were installed by Rita Root.

Goodbye to outgoing moderators—Jeanette and Ceola; presenting gifts; Spa Day for Jeanette; Ceola craft store gift certificate;

Saying goodbye to EOA WRA outgoing persons

Rich Plant –milestone ordination anniversaries recognized; (See List in packet)
Church Milestones – recognized – List in packet

Bonnie Bates- Search & Call; new authorized/new calls recognized

10:05 - Worship: experiential worship; Eric Elnes; Gifts of the Darkwood

10:50 – Report on last year’s motion regarding OCWM – Budget & Finance Committee –Mark
Thomas

The sacred conversation continues at every level of church life; several opinions of how it is spent, shared, retained; do our best to keep the conversations sacred and on-going as the church evolves.

10:55 – Report on the working group considering wider church issues - Mark Frye –

Ohio has always been different. When Congregational and E & R churches came together in 1957 to form UCC Ohio came with different configuration than other Conferences. It had a balanced number of churches from Cong/ER. It formed 5 associations with paid staff. It each entity also came with its own camp—Pilgrim & Temple Hills. Over the last 30 years it has become increasingly difficult to maintain this structure financially. We also collect OCWM in a manner not in accordance with our Conference Constitution in that the Associations collect the money first and then send it on to the Conference. As per the constitution, it should be the Conference collecting the money first.

Retention rates keep changing. We need to remember it’s not “us/them; We are the Ohio Conference; At the next OC gathering, September 2017, the goal is to present a document for approval; This working group is comprised of doers and dreamers and there are several possibilities on the table. Stay tuned.

Rev. John Gant—camp update: three articles on conference website; Temple Hills is still on sabbatical. The original plan was to sell one camp, but neither camp has officially gone

on the market. UCCR has taken over the daily management of Pilgrim Hills, marketing other weeks we do not use; the camps are still operating with losses, but not as great.

As new uses for Temple Hills have unfolded, the Board decided to put it under the same UCCR marketing for two year experiment. The Board is looking at the possibility of selling some unused property. This is property that is not used for any programming. 175 acres have been approved for potential sale. 130 acres are around PH. The price is determined at \$5,000.00 per acre. The sale of either camp is on hold for now.

Each camp needs at least a quarter of million dollars in upgrades. Decreasing OCWM giving is not helping.

2017 camping season planning is underway. Our Outdoor Ministries program is an important ministry and it needs to be supported.

Question - Kelly Brill – expressed concern over selling property in light of conversations of Conference restructuring and that potential buyers may be using the land for hunting. How will this impact the safety of the campers?

Answer: NO HUNTING signs everywhere around the perimeter of PH; Hunting does happen now on surrounding land and there has never been a problem with events at the camp; no programming land is up for sale.

Where will the money go from the land sale? That has not been determined. More conversation is needed at local levels; better communication across the board is needed.

Have the mineral and timber rights been taken into consideration?

Yes- the mineral rights are being reserved by the OC; do not know about timber rights;

Ohio Conference goal is to retire debt and improve camps.

110:00 – Proposal for the future of the associations: David Brown, Cheryl Lindsey
Evaluating the collaboration of two Associations; where are we going? What is our purpose? To promote peace in churches, family, homes
The two councils have affirmed core values of UCC: Continuing Testament, Extravagant Welcome, Changing Lives

Conversations started two years ago. This past Spring/early summer the joint Councils invited working groups, churches, Ministry teams, Prophetic Witness teams to engage in listening sessions.

At our joint retreat in August we worked on distilling the responses into an action statement

What is working well? What are the challenges?

The background, the process, and the recommendations are in your packet.

Cheryl present recommendations –

These are flexible/adaptable to allow us to function moving forward.

Questions/Comments:

Overcoming distance - shared staffing does free up time for other ministries.

“Reducing carbon footprint any way we can”

Person from Woodsfield—3 hours away – “Thanks to the councils for living into doing/being the church in a new way; thank you for intentionality for communication—ongoing and improving and being sensitive to including all”.

Vote to accept the recommendations. Motion made. This comes from committee; no second needed;

Motion passed

110:05 - Mark Thomas & Janeen Kubala presenting budgets;

Janeen – combined budget/joint association

No questions.

Call for vote on joint budget: budget adopted:

EOA budget: 70% retention rate presented; several scenarios were explored, however 70% works the best with the vision of keeping staff and offering appropriate compensation for new association GM

Questions: How much does Conference retain? Conference passes on 35% to National; ripple effect happens, as we see with budget and staff cuts at all judicatory levels.

Budget passed; with a few “no: responses.

WRA presentation (Mark): Drop in OCWM across the conference; decreasing churches; changes in how some churches designate their OCWM money; some do not participate in OCWM; WRA will stay at the 45% retention, largely due to endowments;

Vote on WRA budget: passed

Keynote: Eric Elnes

David Wager poem: Gifts of the Darkwood: Eric Elnes

Religion does us no favors when it promises us certainty; life is uncertain; get used to it; grow up; trust is better than certainty;

Bless you with the gifts of the journey, and uncertainty.

Ceola adjourned the meeting, handing the gavel over to Ian and David, and thanking Rita for her leadership;

Rev. Don Nichols spoke to the needs of the Christmas Fund and offered meal grace.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Freeman
Secretary, EOA Council