

## District Board Meeting

01-09-2021

Present: Todd Reish, Dave Shetler, Kirstin Harvey, Sie Brock Jr., Ann Stackhouse, Carrie Drees, Gary Crim, Becky Maurer, Andrew Wright, Jim Baker, Vicki Ullery, Karen Dillon, Mike Yingst, Dottie Woodard, Sandy Jenkins, Tom Bowser, Fred Bernhard, Glenn Timmons, Jill Schweitzer, Scott Fitzgerald, Ron Mack, Laura Brown, Dennis Delk

Absent: Mary Boone, PJ Arndt, John Warner

### **Old Business:**

*Update on Stony Creek withdrawal:* Mike Yingst and Todd Reish have met with the Stony Creek Congregation via Zoom. They had a unanimous decision to withdraw from the Church of the Brethren. At this point we are waiting on a signed document from them. Once we have this document we will receive their withdrawal payment and approve a quit claim deed for their property. They have the check ready. The Stony Creek congregation plans to be independent rather than join another group. The SOKD Leadership team is authorized to go ahead with this transaction once the form is received.

**Minutes from September 9, 2020 meeting were accepted as submitted.**

**Covid Response Update:** The Board discussed need to issue a new statement about our response to Covid-19 and in person worship for the new year. Gary Crim has written a statement giving biblical guidance for quarantining which was presented to the Board. A recommendation was made by Dave Shetler (District Executive) that we form a small group of people which would include Gary Crim and Kirstin Harvey. This group will write an updated recommendation using guidance from the health department as well as this statement of biblical reference as a framework for the recommendation. The statement will be approved by the SOKD Board via email before distributing it to the district. The group includes Gary Crim, Kirstin Harvey, Dave Shetler, Todd Reish, and Sarah Friedrich. Group plans to meet Sunday, January 10 to write the recommendation.

### **New Business:**

*Formation of Personnel Committee:* District Polity states that the responsibility for hiring and/or dismissing employees rests with the District Executive. However, Dave has requested the formation of a group of folks who would serve as an advisory group in the event such a situation would arise. This group will be made up of the Board Chair, the Board Vice-Chair and one additional board member. For 2021, this group will be Todd Reish, Mike Yingst, and Dottie Woodard.

*The Board entered into Executive Session for the next item of business.*

*At 11:00 AM Executive Session was paused for an order of the day item of business.*

*Racial Justice Team Presentation:*

Several months ago, because of the death of George Floyd and the subsequent national unrest, the Missional/Renewal Commission of the SOK District Board sensed a need for discussion and education around the topic of racial justice. Jon Keller (pastor of Troy CoB) shared briefly about his own struggle with the topic. He was

forced to deal with his own life views when his daughter began dating, entered into a serious relationship, and married a person of color. He became involved in public events in Troy, OH shortly after the George Floyd death. Thus a sub-group of the Missional/Renewal Commission was born. This excited and passionate team began to look at ways to look at racial tension and our response as Christians within the SOKD.

The Racial Justice Team shared their plans for an upcoming online event. This event will begin on February 1 at 7 PM. It will be held on each successive Tuesday for seven weeks. Each session will feature a different guest speaker talking about a different facet of racial justice. Topics include why we should care, white privilege, what can I do, where do we go from here, etc. Registration will be necessary and available on the district website. Event is open to anyone. Watch for more information.

This event is only a beginning. We may be offering monthly opportunities to go deeper.

The group is investigating the possibility of offering CEUs for the event.

The Racial Justice Team has also developed a survey which is designed to give a sense of where any group stands on the racial justice spectrum. The survey is still being developed and the board actually did the survey as a pilot group. Results of the survey were shared and feedback received by the task group. Once the group feels the survey is ready they will make it available for congregations or anyone who wishes to use it.

*After the lunch break the Board resumed Executive Session. (Minutes of Executive Session will be shared confidentially)*

*SOKD Response to Ohio Council of Churches Response to Violence at Capital (see attached)*

Report was read by Dave Shetler.

Some discussion followed on whether we should accept the document.

Todd Reish made the motion that the board accept the letter.

Seconded by Dottie Woodard.

Motion passed with one dissenting vote.

Dave will sign the document on behalf of the district. This information will be shared in the weekly note that Dave sends out and the document will be posted on the district website.

*Staff Reports:*

*Director of Communications:* Mary was not present at this meeting. She was with her family building relationships with a soon-to-be-daughter-in-law. Written report was posted. One noteworthy part of the report is that Mary has been tasked with convening the group that will look at sale of the Bear Creek property and the Mack Memorial property. They will meet on Wednesday, January 13th.

*Director of Camping and Retreat Ministry:* Karen Dillon shared updates on upcoming events being planned by CRM.

\*A Virtual Winter Blast is scheduled for January 16. The format will be one hour each for four different age categories.

\*A Virtual Winter Women's Retreat will be held on Friday, February 19 at 7 PM . Plans are underway.

\*Summer Camp will be virtual again in 2021. However, Karen has reserved the entire camp facility for June, 2022.

*Treasurer's Report:* Scott shared that both congregational and individual giving is down a bit from where we were last year at this time. Our PPP loan that we had received from the government has been forgiven. SOKD will qualify for the new round of PPP which will be available soon. The amount of the second round is unknown. Scott is prepared to move forward as soon as it is available. The complete 2020 Financial Report will be ready for the March meeting of the board.

*District Executive Report:* Dave expressed his deep appreciation for the SOK District Board. Covid continues to present its unique challenges:

--Due to the fact that congregations are not meeting, Dave has not been able to visit congregations when he fills pulpit for pastors who need vacation time. However, he has filled the pulpit virtually for a couple of pastors. He enjoyed the challenge of doing this via video.

--Thursday weekly virtual meetings continue. Many have expressed their usefulness, both in the information that is shared, and the feeling connectedness it brings for those who reside in more remote areas.

--Both District Conference and Annual Conference may be held remotely again this year.

--BDM is not currently accepting teams from SOKD because of the rate of infection of the virus within Ohio.

### **Commission Reports**

*Shared Ministry:* A part of Shared Ministry includes hearing reports from Camping and Retreat Ministry and Brethren Disaster Ministry (see above). Pat Krabacher continues to report on the Facebook Marketplace Fundstream Initiative. She shares that she has lots of lookers, not many buyers.

*Connections Commission* has not met. John Kinsel, the commission convener, is healing from an unexpected heart surgery.

*Resource Development Commission:* This commission has been working hard on ways to increase donations in order to reduce the amount needed from district reserves. The Commission is doing this in several different ways.

1. They have created the "Ambassadors for Christ Club". This "club" is made up of individuals who have pledged or given to the goal of raising \$50,000.
2. They are taking steps toward producing video testimonies featuring individuals or congregations who have benefited from district ministries. These videos will be shared via email.
3. The commission is looking at how to approach the congregations who are in the district but who do not currently support the district financially.

SOKD investments will continue at a 40/60 ratio. (40% stock, 60% bonds)

*Ministry Commission:* Two licensed individuals were presented and approved for ordination: Susan Liller and David Balmer.

*Missional/Renewal Commission:* Primarily working with the Racial Justice Team. Congregational Vitality Min-

istry is on pause because of the pandemic.

District Ambassador ministry is paused because Andrew has answered a call to Interim Pastor at Oakland. Andrew reported that our two TRIM students (Heather Manalo and Arnold Collett) are doing quite well.

Dottie Woodard moved and Tom Bowser seconded a motion to accept all reports. Motion passed unanimously.

Suggestion made by Jill Schweitzer that a page which would explain Ambassadors for Christ Club be added to the website. Suggestion was noted by Glenn Timmons.

Suggestion also by Jill Schweitzer that dates for upcoming board meetings be sent out to board members so they can be added to calendars.

Next Meeting will be March 13, 2021 at 9 AM.