



Community of Christ

GREATER PACIFIC NORTHWEST USA MISSION CENTER

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Dear Pastors and Communications Coordinators:

The purpose of this letter is to remind and inform you to:

1. Share Mission Center Conference information and new business
2. Solicit names for nomination, elect, and report Mission Center Conference delegates and identify representative flag bearer
3. Register online for Pastors' Breakfast (Pastors)
4. Record attendance for all worship services in October for Pastor Survey
5. Elect/sustain and report congregational officers and approve congregational budget

→ SHARE MISSION CENTER CONFERENCE INFO AND NEW BUSINESS

Now is the time to promote the dates and location of Mission Center Conference in your bulletins each week. (See enclosed flyer with full schedule.)

2016 GPNW-USA Mission Center Conference

Saturday, November 5, 9:30 am to Sunday, November 6, 12:30 pm

Portland Congregation, 4837 NE Couch St., Portland OR 97213

Conference Highlights

Our Conference theme is *Christ Leads...* In this time of transition within Community of Christ, we are especially reminded to follow the example of Jesus Christ and "The Mission of Jesus Christ is what matters most for the Journey ahead" (Doctrine and Covenants 164: 9f). Throughout the Conference weekend, we will pursue the ways that we can follow the lead of Jesus Christ that is resident in community, mission, unity, diversity, and relationships.

Our guest ministers will be Apostle **Ron Harmon**, and Bishop **Diana Hansen** from Mission Funding. We will participate in the Setting Apart of new Mission Center President **Kim Naten** and new Interim Mission Center Financial Officer **Steve Pomeroy**. On Sunday, there will be both an ordination service and a communion service.

Special Events

- **Presentation of Priesthood Calls**, Saturday, 2-5:30 pm and 7:30-9 pm, at Portland Congregation—It is anticipated that several priesthood calls will be presented at Conference. Time for sharing testimony and sustaining votes will be set aside during the business meeting Saturday afternoon and continued Saturday evening. Calls announced to date for consideration are for **Elva Eliason**, **Dianne Webberley**, and **Sharon West** to Evangelist.
- **Pastors' Breakfast**, Sunday, 7:30-9:15 am, at The Grotto—a sharing time for our guest ministry and congregations in mission (flyer attached for pastors)
- **Ordination Service**, Sunday, 9:45-10:30 am, at Portland Congregation—**Doug Brown** will be ordained to the office of Bishop, and **Elva Eliason** and **Dianne Webberley** will be ordained to the office of Evangelist upon sustaining of their calls.
- **Communion and Setting Apart Service**, Sunday, 11 am-12:30 pm, at Portland Congregation—**Kim Naten** will be set apart as our new GPNW Mission Center President, effective January 1, 2017, and **Steve Pomeroy** will be set apart as our new Interim GPNW Mission Center Financial Officer, effective July 1, 2016.

Pastor's Calendar / Checklist:

- Now**—Share Mission Center Conference information and new business
- Now**—Solicit names for MC Conference delegate nominations
- Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30**—Record attendance each Sunday
- By Oct. 16**—Hold MC Conference delegate elections
- By Oct. 18**—Report MC Conference delegates to Jill Brunette
- By Oct. 18**—Report MC Conference flag bearer to Sean Langdon
- By Oct. 21**—Register online for Pastors' Breakfast at The Grotto
- After Nov. 6**—Schedule time for MC Conference delegate report
- By Nov. 20**—Hold congregational officer elections
- By Dec. 2**—Meet with your CSM for Pastor Survey
- By Dec. 5**—Report 2017 congregational officers on Congregation Officers Submittal Form
- By Dec. 29**—Have your 2017 Congregational Budget approved

New Business: Mission Center Staffing

Once again, World Church budget reductions have had a significant impact on the Mission Center budget. We will now fund the Mission Center President (MCP) and the Mission Center Financial Officer (MCFO) positions in the Mission Center budget beginning July 1, 2016. **Steve Pomeroy** was appointed to fill the .5 MCFO position starting July 1, 2016. **Kim Naten** has been appointed as the new Mission Center President effective January 1, 2017. It has been a joy and a blessing for me to serve in the role of Interim Mission Center President. I am very much looking forward to Kim's ministry in this role. I believe she will bless the Mission Center for many years to come. With downsizing in Mission Center staff, we are also looking at a new model of support for congregation leaders. Look for more information on this model in the near future.

New Business: Proposed 2017 Mission Center Budget

Included with this letter is the **proposed 2017 Mission Center Budget** to share and review with your delegates and congregation prior to Mission Center Conference. (*See attachments.*) The proposed 2017 budget shows an overall increase of 6.3% above the 2016 budget. This increase is tied directly to increased ministerial support costs resulting from the loss of World Church funding for the Mission Center President and Mission Center Financial Officer positions. By special conference action in 2016, the Mission Center President position remains a full-time position. Due to further loss of World Church funding for the Financial Officer position in 2016, it was determined that GPNW would only be able to sustain that position on a half-time basis. The effort to achieve that transition began on July 1, of this year. Both positions, as now configured, are fully funded by this 2017 budget.

The loss of World Church funding for those positions resulted in a funding decrease of approximately \$150,000 to the Mission Center. Careful planning, and the 2015 Mission Center Conference action allowing the operating surplus from 2015 to be carried forward into 2016 and 2017 budgeting, have greatly helped to minimize the impact of the funding changes and enabled the Mission Center to maintain current staffing levels and programming. This allows for the continued provision of ministry and support across the entire Mission Center for 2017. The carry-over provision approved by the Conference provided \$46,670 for 2017 use.

Given the additional ministerial support costs, we have attempted to maintain a large element of stability and consistency in the remainder of the proposed budget. The budget for most administrative and ministry expense areas has been reduced by 5% for 2017; this spreads the effect of the funding changes uniformly without causing undue harm to any one aspect of programs or services. Our Bold Moves Grants initiative, which was suspended in 2016 to alleviate the financial uncertainties of transitions, will be reinstated in 2017, at a lower funding level, pending conference action.

New Business: Your Congregation's Proposed Allocation

The total of congregational allocations has been maintained at the 2016 level of \$127,509. (*See attachment.*) It should be remembered that although the total remains the same, application of the allocation formula does create individual congregational differences from last year. No congregation's allocation increases or decreases more than 10%, as in prior years. We understand the financial challenges our congregations face and will continue to do all we can to provide excellent service to each congregation, while not adding to those challenges for 2017.

The allocations are a starting point for expressing generosity toward the collective mission of the Mission Center. The formula used for the allocation does not include factors such as investment earnings or income from other sources such as facility rentals or fundraisers. To help keep allocations as low as possible, we are continuing to request additional contributions to the Mission Center from congregations that have additional capacity (Congregational Generosity), from emerging groups (Expansion Groups), and from members and friends of the Mission Center (Operating & Youth Contributions). We are grateful for the response so many have made, and continue to make, in support of our shared mission and rely upon expanding these avenues of generosity in the year to come.

Revised guidelines from the Presiding Bishopric recommend an investment draw of 4%. In offering those guidelines, they recognize that as a very significant decrease from the 6% guideline previously held and suggest that it may take some jurisdictions some years to reach that target. Making an immediate change to that level in our budgeting would create an additional decrease of nearly \$66,000 in available funding. Meeting that level would mean having a significant reduction in both staffing and programs. The 2017 budget proposes an additional draw of 1.73% to bridge that gap. That will place our total draw at 5.73%, still below the previous guideline and a step towards the ultimate 4% goal.

Based on the proposed 2017 budget, the 2017 allocations are included with this letter and will be posted on our GPNW website. Find it online at www.cofchrist-gpnw.org/conference. This information will help you plan your 2017 congregational budget. If you have questions about the proposed budget or your congregation's allocation, contact Mission Center Financial Officer **Steve Pomeroy** (425-457-0739, spomeroy@cofchrist-gpnw.org). *To keep allocations low for congregations with financial challenges, the budget assumes that generous congregations, expansion groups, and individual members and friends will close the GPNW Mission Center budget gap with additional contributions to the Mission Center above their allocated giving.*

New Business: Resolutions

We will consider four resolutions at this Mission Center Conference (*see attachments*):

Carry Budget Surplus Funds Forward Resolution—As noted above, 2016 Conference action provided an exception to the 2005 Resolution that governs the disposition of yearly net operating losses and gains in the Mission Center. The 2005 Resolution requires any net loss for a given year to be carried forward as a liability and incorporated in the Operating/Missional Budget, beginning the second year following the year the loss occurs. It also requires that any gain remains in the Operating Investment Fund. If the gain is larger than the budgeted draw, those excess funds can be applied as operating income beginning the second year following the year the gain has occurred.

Because of the significant changes in Mission Center funding and financial responsibilities that are now a permanent part of our budgeting process, this resolution seeks to make the exception that was approved for 2016 a permanent change that allows any net operating gains to be applied as operating income beginning the second year following the year the gain occurs. For example, a net operating gain for 2016 would be available as an income source for the 2018 budget. The effects of a net operating loss would not change.

Funding Bold Moves Grants Resolution—Since approved by the Conference in 2007, Bold Moves has spread missional efforts throughout the GPNW landscape. By providing \$25,000 per year to be awarded in grants to congregations, groups, worthy events, and congregational new plants, these grants sparked wonderful endeavors in mission that continue in almost every instance years later. The initial thrust of applications and funding came in the first five years of the initiative, and, as many congregations have continued to grow and claim their efforts, both the numbers of applications and the dollars requested and awarded followed a natural decline to less than \$10,000 awarded in 2015.

Uncertain of the impacts of World Church financial decisions on GPNW throughout 2016, the decision was made to suspend Bold Moves for the year and re-evaluate its sustainability going forward. Funding for Bold Moves is outside of the normal budgeting process and has always necessitated an additional draw on investments. This resolution seeks to reinstate the Bold Moves Grants initiative at a reduced funding level of \$10,000 annually. Restoring funding at the original \$25,000 level would necessitate an additional draw on investments that would push the total draw to 5.99%. The remaining balance from 2016 will allow funding at the \$10,000 level, with no additional draw on investments for Bold Moves for 2017.

Disposition of Real Estate Sale Net Proceeds Resolutions—Woodburn (OR) Congregation and Olympia (WA) Congregation have each completed an evaluation of their viability of continuing as an effective congregation in Community of Christ. Due to a decline in attendance as a result of deaths and relocation of members, the congregations have each decided to close no later than December 31, 2016. The church properties are currently in the initial stages of being prepared for sale. A plan for distribution of sale proceeds, following existing GPNW guidelines, has been agreed to by a vote of each congregation. These resolutions detail those agreements and present them to the conference for their approval.

→ SOLICIT NAMES FOR NOMINATION, ELECT, AND REPORT MISSION CENTER CONFERENCE DELEGATES AND IDENTIFY REPRESENTATIVE FLAG BEARER

Solicit names now for your congregation's Mission Center Conference delegate nominations. Announce your congregational business meeting to elect Conference delegates and alternates **at least two weeks in advance** of the meeting. This business meeting should occur *no later than Sunday, October 16*. Any member "in good standing" with membership within the GPNW Mission Center is eligible to run for delegate.

List all nominations on a prepared ballot, which also notes the number of delegates to elect from your congregation. Members may nominate others as "write-ins" during the business meeting and may vote for as many nominees *as can be elected*. Those receiving the most votes—up to the number of delegates allotted to your congregation—are elected. (*See attachment with your updated delegate allotment.*) Remaining nominees will serve as alternates, in descending order of votes received. We often are able to change alternates into voting delegates from other congregations before Conference.

Immediately notify your delegates and alternates of their election, and report the names of your elected delegates and alternates (prioritized by highest to lowest votes received) to Membership Services Administrator Jill Brunette (425-207-8712, jbrunette@cofchrist-gpnw.org) by Tuesday, October 18. (*Please use attached Delegate-Alternate Submittal Form; complete delegate information can also be emailed.*) If you are unable to elect your full delegate allotment, inform Jill whether your delegate openings can be filled by elected alternates from a specific congregation or by any alternates.

We will kick off Mission Center Conference with our traditional opening Flag Processional. Your delegate election is the perfect opportunity to identify a representative flag bearer from your congregation. **Sean Langdon** (425-293-6366, slangdon@cofchrist-gpnw.org) will contact you for your representative's name. Please plan to have this information ready for him by **Tuesday, October 18**.

Please schedule congregational time AFTER Mission Center Conference for your delegates to report action by the Conference to your congregation.

→ **REGISTER ONLINE FOR PASTORS' BREAKFAST**

Pastors, register now for our annual **Pastors' Breakfast** from 7:30-9:15 am on **Sunday, November 6**, at **The Grotto**, a Catholic spiritual and event center. **Space is limited, so be sure to register early.** The Grotto Conference Center is located near Portland Congregation at North East Sandy Boulevard and North East 85th Avenue (www.thegrotto.org). Look for your invitation in this packet and again by email, and remember to register online as indicated by **Friday, October 21**.

→ **RECORD ATTENDANCE FOR ALL WORSHIP SERVICES IN OCTOBER FOR PASTOR SURVEY**

The purpose of this annual survey is to track key measures of congregational life, over time, across the Mission Center. **Please track your congregation's attendance for each regular worship service in October.** Your Congregational Support Minister (CSM) will arrange a telephone call with you in November to discuss, interpret, receive, and report this information to the Mission Center. Your CSM is responsible for the completion and submission of the survey; you only need to speak with them and provide the input. Deadline to have all Pastor Surveys completed and submitted is **Friday, December 2**.

→ **ELECT/SUSTAIN AND REPORT CONGREGATIONAL OFFICERS AND APPROVE CONGREGATIONAL BUDGET**

Coordinate now with your Congregational Support Minister to schedule Pastor elections and sustain your congregational Recorder, Congregational Financial Officer (CFO), and Assistant Pastors. Announce this business meeting at least two weeks in advance. Now is the time to discuss with Congregational Financial Officers and Recorders their desire to continue to serve in those roles for 2017. Any possible changes should be communicated to MCFO Steve Pomeroy no later than October 1 or two weeks prior to your congregation's annual business meeting.

Officer elections should occur by **Sunday, November 20** (before the Advent season) to allow for sufficient planning, recruiting, and budgeting. **Please report your 2017 congregational officers and their contact information using the new Congregational Officers Submittal Form by Monday, December 5.** (See attached form.) **Please be sure to report election results even if there are no changes.** Also, be sure to have your congregation's 2017 budget approved by **Thursday, December 29**.

In the midst of an ever-changing and challenging world, we are reminded that God's mission continues all around—both inviting and challenging our discipleship. Thank you for your ongoing support of the mission of the church and for your willingness to express your true capacity in support of our shared mission here in the GPNW and around the world. Your financial giving to your congregation, your Mission Center, and your World Church allows others to experience the peace of Jesus Christ as never before.

As your outgoing Mission Center President, I want to express how much I have been blessed by the love and dedication of faithful disciples throughout the Mission Center. My testimony is that God is alive and working in the lives of disciples and congregations in our Mission Center, church, and world. May you sense God's blessings in your ministry efforts.



Mike Bessonette, GPNW Mission Center President

Enclosures:

- MC Conference: Conference Flyer with Schedule
- MC Conference: Pastors' Breakfast Invitation
- MC Conference: Proposed 2017 Operating-Missional Budget and Explanation
- MC Conference: GPNW MC 2015 Audit Cover Letter
- MC Conference: 2016 Statement of Financial Position
- MC Conference: 2016 Statement of Activity
- MC Conference: Proposed 2017 Congregational Allocations and Explanation
- MC Conference: Carry Budget Surplus Funds Forward Resolution
- MC Conference: Funding Bold Moves Grants in 2017 and Beyond Resolution
- MC Conference: Disposition of Woodburn, OR Real Estate Sale Net Proceeds Resolution
- MC Conference: Disposition of Olympia, WA Real Estate Sale Net Proceeds Resolution
- MC Conference: Delegate Allotment and Formula
- MC Conference: Delegate-Alternate Submittal Form
- Congregational Officers Submittal Form