

Minutes of the Board of Lay Ministry (BOLM) Zoom Meeting
March 11, 2021
6:30 p.m.

Present: Co-Lay Leaders Nancy Flint, Gayla Jo Slauson, and Barry Welliver, members Sandy Brown, Linda Cockett, Mark Cumming, Curtis Gay, George Goree, Ken Hazlitt, Joan Richard, Cindy Snodgrass, Susan Wheeler, and Sue Yeager, Bishop Karen Oliveto, clergy Annie Arnoldy, Tezenlo Thong, and guest and Intern Geoff Gross.

Nancy Flint opened the meeting at 6:35 p.m. with prayer, emphasizing this time of grieving, time of hope, and increased wisdom.

All participants named their current spiritual practices for this Lenten season. Many people mentioned reading and several specific books; others are engaged in group or individual studies, while some are reclaiming joy. Although many of these topics help us look inward, some of them have us performing outreach.

The November 12, 2020 minutes were presented for approval. There were no additions or corrections, thus approved by unanimous vote. (Wheeler/Cumming)

Gayla Jo Slauson announced that the new Communications person at the Conference Office is Evelyn Warren. The co-lay leaders have been attending meetings for the Circuit Summit, COVID team, Planting team, AACLL (Association of Annual Conference Lay Leaders), the Rules Committee, and the Annual Conference Planning Committee.

Very little is being shared about meetings for the rest of 2021. There is to be the Special General Conference meeting in May, to handle necessary matters before the still-postponed 2020 General Conference (now scheduled for 2022.) Jurisdictional Conference will/may occur in July, and Annual Conference may be online in early June OR perhaps in person in the fall.

Barry Welliver reviewed the relevant portion(s) of the booklet *Conference and District Lay Leaders Manual*. Paragraph 1116 of the *Book of Discipline* (BOD) is the most important portion for the board, as we seek to determine “who we are as the BOLM of the Mountain Sky Conference.”

AREA REPORTS

Linda Cockett reported on United Methodist Women (UMW) activities. A Mission study of the book *Pushout* was just completed as a 4-week zoom study. About 270 people registered for the course. The annual Spiritual Life Retreat will be held April 9-10, also using the zoom format. And June 26 is the date for an event for young women 12–18 years old.

Curtis Gay told of Lay Servant/Lay Speaker classes; 8 courses have been taught in the last 9 months. The Mountain Sky Conference (MSC) and the Pacific Northwest Conference – Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Alaska – are sharing lay servant courses. It seems to be a positive experience for everyone so far, because there are more course offerings from which to choose, and participants meet more people that way.

He also spoke of developing two collaborative data bases: one for student verification and another for a national list of teachers. He is also finishing developing spreadsheets for each district, listing churches and their lay servants, along with the designations – of LS, CLS, or CLM – for each person. The goal

has been to have at least one lay servant in each church. There currently is a need for lay speakers to preach. The CLM power point presentation will be updated and made available to dCOMs for training, as will web pages, where much of the material is incorrect and hard to locate.

The final item of Curtis' report is that the Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM) has ceased to use the psychological evaluation that has been in place for years for clergy candidates. Alternatives are being studied. This impacts Certified Lay Minister (CLM) candidates, who took the same test. Everyone is waiting for further word from the BOM; there is to be no more interaction between UMCARES and CLMs.

Tezenlo Thong said that the Cabinet is now in appointment season. They are creating support teams.

Susan Wheeler reported on the Quiet Disciple (QD) project. There was discussion regarding the process of sending out information, because some nominations have come in on the UMW QD form, which is different. UMW recognizes just one QD per year, whereas the BOLM recognizes an undesignated number of award winners through their church districts. No conclusions were drawn, but it was recommended that the district lay leaders communicate very well through their letters to local churches and with the district administrators who send out the information provided by the lay leaders.

Annie Arnoldy said that help is coming for communications. Amy Gearhart will be providing new assistance for licensed local pastors (LLP), both full-time and part-time.

Geoff Gross, an Iliff intern for the conference, has worked with Jeff Rainwater and Annie Arnoldy this year on Leadership and Vitality. He studied attendance demographics of the MSC churches. The board was shown part of Geoff's Power Point presentation. He will be addressing his findings at 3 zoom meetings in April – the 13th, 20th, and 27th.

BREAKOUT SESSION

With the few remaining minutes, the board broke into small groups to discuss what kinds of things we want on our website. Suggestions are as follows:

- easy to find forms – a great table of contents
- to know the laity, supply contact names (security issues?)
- a GOOD calendar;
- a communications tab, to go to an article or an event.

Gayla Jo completed the meeting by offering a closing prayer. The meeting concluded at 8:41 p.m.