

**Committee on Finance and Administration Report and 2018 Budget Presentation—June 9, 2017**

On behalf of CFA, I would like to thank you for this opportunity to present to you where we are and where we hope we are going financially as a conference. I hope this presentation is simple, straightforward and shared with your local congregations. I am choosing to use three rhyming words as a framework for helping us all remember this important information: THRILLS, FRILLS, and HILLS.

**THRILLS:**

First, we want to celebrate the churches who paid 100% mission shares in 2016 and say THANK YOU!

BOZEMAN UMC	HELENA ST PAULS UMC	MISSOULA FIRST UMC	KALISPELL EPWORTH UMC
SHERIDAN UMC	BILLINGS SHILOH UMC	WHITEFISH UMC	CODY UMC
STEVENSVILLE UMC	POWELL UMC	LANDER UMC	BIGFORK UMC
BUTTE ALDERSGATE UMC	CHOTEAU UMC	BUFFALO/ KAYCEE UMC	GLENDIVE UMC
COLUMBIA FALLS UMC	LIVINGSTON GRACE UMC	MISSION VALLEY UMC	THREE FORKS UMC
HELENA COVENANT UMC	SHELBY UMC	HUNTLEY UMC	LAKESIDE UMC
DILLON GRACE UMC	LIBBY UMC	SHERIDAN UMC	CASCADE UMC
CHESTER UMC	CLANCY UMC	ROBERTS UMC	HOBSON UMC
TROY UMC	BASIN UMC	PINE CREEK UMC	SHIELDS VALLEY UMC
TEN SLEEP UMC	TWIN BRIDGES UMC	WHITEHALL UMC	ROUNDUP UMC
HARDIN UMC	HARLOWTON UMC	LOVELL UMC	BELT UMC
HYATTVILLE UMC	BOULDER UMC	FROMBERG UMC	SUNBURST UMC
BROWNING UMC	DUTTON UMC	GRASS RANGE UMC	PLENTYWOOD UMC
NOXON UMC	JUDITH GAP UMC	WIBAUX UMC	RICHEY UMC
PARK CITY FIRST UMC	PARADISE UMC	WILLOW CREEK UMC	WINNETT UMC
WHITEPINE UMC	HERON UMC	DEAVER UMC	HARLEM UMC
HALL UMC	KREMLIN UMC	LAVINA UMC	

Second, we want to celebrate the churches who are current with mission shares as of May 31, 2017

BABB UMC	HELENA COVENANT UMC	POWELL UMC
BILLINGS EVANGELICAL UMC	HELENA ST. PAULS UMC	RICHEY UMC
BOULDER UMC	HUNTLEY UMC	ROBERTS UMC
BOZEMAN UMC	HYATTVILLE UMC	SHELBY UMC
BUFALLO/KAYCEE UMC	KREMLIN UMC	SHERIDAN (MT) UMC
CHESTER UMC	LIBBY UMC	SHERIDAN (WY) UMC
CODY UMC	LOVELL UMC	SHEILDS VALLEY UMC
DEAVER UMC	MISSOULA FIRST UMC	SUNBURST UMC
DILLON GRACE UMC	NOXON UMC	TEN SLEEP UMC
DUTTON UMC	PARADISE UMC	THERMOPOLIS
GLENDIVE UMC	PARK CITY FIRST UMC	THREE FORKS UMC
GRASS RANGE UMC	PAVILLION UMC	TWIN BRIDGES UMC
HARDIN UMC	PINE CREEK UMC	WHITEHALL UMC
HARLEM UMC	PLENTYWOOD UMC	WILLOW CREEK UMC

Although these churches are named here, we want to be careful as to create an unintended competitiveness with churches who are not on either of these lists. We want to accurately report the facts of the matter, including expressing our gratitude. However, which list each church finds itself varies from year-to-year.

Today, one church is on a certain list, but yesterday it may have been on the “other” list, and tomorrow it might be different. All the while, one fact remains true: we are all in this together, and we are in this with God! As we remember this fact, we can rest assured that we will not only survive, but we will thrive together in ministry.

Lastly, it is important for us to recall and remember some of the ministry opportunities that have been possible through our conference budget. These are a few of the ways that our mission shares help local congregations engage further in ministry:

- Congregational development paid to bring in Emily Reece to do an assessment and give guidance on HUMM (St. Paul’s / Covenant).
- Sally McConnell lead WCI for the Park County churches. Through that they found renewed energy for working together and the two Livingston churches are now actively seeking a shared future together.
- New Church Development sent teams from Great Falls Christ and Billings Shiloh to a Messy Church training. Both congregations have Messy Church meetings on a monthly basis.
- Worship conferences led by Jason Moore.
- Webinars offered: Single-board Governance and Safe Sanctuaries.
- Mission Team brought Rev. Andre Cassule from Angola to share his story with many people throughout the conference.
- Chartering of the new local church, Living Waters UMC in Belgrade, MT.

### **FRILLS:**

We do not feel there are any frills in our budget. We operate on a skeletal budget, but in spite, we continue to find creative ways to encourage and equip leaders and congregations to actively share the gospel of Jesus Christ.

“...I came that they might have life and have it abundantly.” John 10:10

### **HILLS:**

We have some hills to climb in order to get to a place where we are able to share life in abundant ways.

- As 2017 unfolds, we are seeing an unprecedented projection of a \$300,000+ deficit. CFA is working diligently with the Board of Stewards and Cabinet at finding ways to address this concern. We are seeking ways to increase the ability of local churches to pay mission shares, other sources of income, and use other fund accounts for specific line items in our budget.
- In March of 2017, CFA met to create our budget for 2018. In creating that budget the team committed to doing everything to keep the budget at or below our \$1.2 M income level (a trend we have seen over the last 12 years). In order to accomplish this goal, we determined we could pay only 70% of General Church Mission Shares. However, we are willing to use reserves to pay up to 90% of General Church Mission Shares as a testament to our commitment to the wider United Methodist Church. Noting our

current financial situation, we recognize the potential challenge in meeting this budget. However, we have hope and trust that we will do this together.

In conclusion, I want us to recall the Greek myth of Sisyphus who was punished for his self-aggrandizement and deceitfulness. His penance was to push a large boulder up a hill, yet every time he came close to the top, the boulder would roll back down the hill, for eternity. The God I hope we believe in is NOT a God of punishment. If we can agree on this point, then no church should be punished either. Yet, some churches are currently feeling like they in the Sisyphus predicament. Rather, than the rest of us just look upon their situation with pity, let us get up and help them push uphill. To do so, is to live in the reality and abundance of Jesus Christ. To practice this way of being with one another we will be the best Yellowstone Conference we can be for two years. At that time, we can move into being the Mountain Sky Conference with hope, confidence, energy and passion for sharing the transforming gospel of Jesus Christ!