

Virtual Annual Meeting 2020 – Day 1, **Saturday, October 2, 2020**

Rev. Rock Fremont, SWC Moderator, opened annual meeting with welcome and salutations at 9:00 am Arizona time/ 10:00 am New Mexico and El Paso time.

Introduced Annual Meeting 2020 Host Church, The Good Shepherd UCC in Sahuarita, AZ.

Rev. Dr. Rebecca McElfresh, Associate Minister of Pastoral Care and Spiritual Growth offered welcome on behalf of The Good Shepherd UCC.

Rev. Dr. Bill Lyons, SWC Conference Minister, opened with prayer: A Land Reflection

Acknowledgement of the Land was written by Rev. Dr. Kay Huggins, Executive Director New Mexico Council of Churches. She also shared the pictures used in the slideshow.

Rev. Dr. Barb Doerrer-Peacock, SWC Associate Conference Minister, completed the roll call to ensure a quorum of churches was represented among the delegates.

Quorum confirmed with 33 churches/communities present.

Rev. Rock Fremont called Annual Meeting 2020 to order at 9:21 am Arizona time/ 10:21 New Mexico and El Paso time.

Covered voting options that will be used in a virtual setting: Voting by Consent and Voting with Zoom Polls

Opening Motions:

Approval of 2019 Minutes

Parliamentarian Appointed, Brendan Mahoney

Approval of Executive Board as Business Committee

Approval of Agenda

Approval of Standing Rules

Without Objection voting method – **With no objection, motions are adopted as presented**

Moderator's Report

The report was written by Dr. John Leung, former SWC Moderator. Board Action in April 2020 saw the end of John's term and the beginning of Rev. Rock Fremont's term as SWC Moderator. Expressed gratitude to John Leung and leadership. Shared by Rev. Rock Fremont.

Introduction of Southwest Conference Staff:

Rev. Liana Rowe, Administrative Assistance for Finance

Wende Gonzales, Relational Communications Coordinator

Genevieve Benham, Executive Assistant to the Conference Minister

Michael Curry, Southwest Conference Lay Minister for Disability Education, Advocacy, and Awareness

Gordon Street, Commissioned Minister for Reimagining and Connecting with God of One's Own Understanding

Nancy Ackley, Commissioned Minister for Faith and Money.

Associate Conference Minister's Report,

The report was written by the Rev. Dr. Barb Doerrer-Peacock and it summarizes her work over last year and a half. Barb shared about where she sees God. She shared about faith formation and leadership formation, about the God of process, about the deep contemplation, and study she has been undertaking. Shared awareness of racial injustice and complicity and the present-ness of God in that work. Barb shared a quote from Adrienne Maree Brown, "Things are not getting worse, they are getting uncovered. We must hold each other tight and

continue to pull back the veil.” Looking toward the future and a hope that arises; imagery of potter and clay and being molded and formed.

With no objection, Associate Conference Minister’s Report received

Conference Minister’s Report

Written and presented by Rev. Dr. Bill Lyons. He made an intentional decision on the CM Report as he was aware of how much we are losing during Pandemic; did not want to miss out on transformational and positive stories from 2019. Report ends in December of 2019. Shared about last year being a year of partnerships: thanked UCC Financial ministries group CB&LF, Cornerstone Fund, UCCIB, UCF, Pension Board for financial contribution to the Annual Meeting and for their work in the church. Acknowledged and thanked judicatory partners in Christian Church in Arizona (DOC), Episcopal Diocese of Arizona, Grand Canyon Synod ELCA for their partnership and shared about joint shelter, La Casa, at the border, and Cruzando Fronteras border ministry. Bill was thankful for the opportunity to spend a month in Guatemala learning Spanish. Thanked Conference for the continued financial even during the pandemic. This continues to allow the SWC to remain solvent and generous and support the mission and ministry of the SWC. Grateful for new relationships forged with Conference Moderators, Treasurers, and Chaplains.

With no objection, Conference Minister’s Report received.

Moderator announced time for break at 9:45 am Arizona time/ 10:45 am New Mexico and El Paso time.

After break, continued with Morning Business at 9:50 am Arizona time/ 10:50 am New Mexico and Texas time.

Moderator invited the Annual Meeting Coordinator, Karen Richter, to explain Voting in Zoom

Launched a poll to practice responding as Zoom Polls will be used for voting in the Business Session tomorrow, Sunday, October 4th, 2020

Cynthia VerDuin, SWC Treasurer, Presented Financial Report

Cynthia reported on two years’ worth of financial statements. Overall report is one of gratitude: for the support the SWC has had from member churches, gratitude for giving, and for the way the Conference has remained in the positive regarding finances. The report was broken down line by line to tell the financial story of the SWC. Financial reports are very positive, and the position of the Conference is very strong.

Rock shared a note of thanks to Cynthia for her work and ministry as she is transferring off the Executive Board.

Opened for questions. **With no objections, the financial report is received.**

Conference Minister presented 2020/2021 Budget in preparation for tomorrow’s voting sessions

Bill shared the SWC Budget Brochure, Proposed Budget, and the Budget explanation. If one would like a Budget Brochure, please email the office or Genevieve directly. He continued sharing thanks for the continued financial support which allows SWC to continue living out mission and ministry. Continued explanation about how the Budget is being prepared and presented.

Nominating Committee Report and Slate present by Rev. Julie Parmenter, Nominating Committee member

Julie read report as presented by Committee. Nominating Slate was presented and the Nominating Committee position that is open will be nominated from the floor during tomorrow’s Business Session. An outpouring of gratitude for all persons who are willing to serve in the Conference positions. Nominating Slate and positions being filled covered.

Rev Rock covered that voting would take place tomorrow and nominations will be taken from the floor. As we are using Zoom, please let leadership know ahead of time, as much as possible, if one would like to make a nomination to be sure it can be added to voting options appropriately.

Resolutions for Annual Meeting 2020 were presented to the delegates

Resolution, *Awakening to Racial Justice*, presented by Rev. Carol Reynolds, Pastor at Scottsdale UCC and Executive Board member.

Carol covered the path the document took to its creation, its review by committees and clergy member prior to being presented, and other documents which influenced it. She also covered what the document does and what impact this resolution would have if adopted.

Resolution, *UN Resolution on the Decade for People of African Descent*, presented by Rev. Rock Fremont, Pastor at Shepherd of the Hills UCC, and Executive Board Moderator

Rock covered the path this document took as it has arrived in the Southwest Conference. If adopted, it will be sent to other Conferences who are partnering with the SWC for committee work prior to being presented at General Synod 2021. Draft will go through several re-writes and committee processes: Specific wording is not the primary focus. Foremost consideration is whether Southwest Conference is willing to sponsor Resolution and move it along in the General Synod process.

SWC Moderator covered how the breakout sessions will work: three breakout sessions; one for the Budget and one for each of the Resolutions.

Time to Honor the work and Ministry of Rev. Robert Koth. Rev. Bill Lyons summarized Rev. Koth's works, efforts, and leadership in the Southwest Conference and in ministry prior to arriving in Arizona. Rev. Koth was a pivotal member of the Widen the Welcome team in the SWC. Debe Knaack, Michael Curry, and Rev. Rich Doerrer-Peacock provided personal stories of their work and relationships with Rev. Robert Koth.

Rev. Liana Rowe, Administrative Assistant for Finance, shared the 5-for-5 and 7-for-7 recognitions

5 for 5 Churches Giving with: OCWM, One Great Hour of Sharing, Strengthen the Church, Neighbors in Need, and the Christmas Fund

- First Congregational Church UCC, Flagstaff
- The Good Shepherd UCC, Sahuarita
- First Church UCC, Phoenix
- Church of the Beatitudes UCC, Phoenix
- Church of the Red Rocks UCC, Sedona
- Sierra Vista Community Church UCC, Sierra Vista
- Church of the Palms UCC, Sun City
- First Congregational Church UCC, Albuquerque
- Church of the Good Shepherd UCC, Albuquerque
- Taos UCC, Taos

7-for-7 Churches (all 5 above plus SWC offerings: Spread the Word and Sow the Seed)

- United Churches Fellowship UCC, Nogales
- Encanto Community Church UCC, Phoenix
- Shepherd of the Hills Congregational UCC, Phoenix
- West Congregational UCC, Phoenix
- Scottsdale Congregational UCC, Phoenix
- Desert Palm UCC, Tempe

- Community Congregational UCC, Tombstone
- Casas Adobes Congregational UCC, Tucson
- Church of the Painted Hills UCC, Tucson
- Rincon Congregational UCC, Tucson
- Yuma UCC, Yuma

Moderator announced will stand in Recess for Lunch Break at 11:00 am Arizona time/ 12:00 pm New Mexico and El Paso time.

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Moderator Called the meeting back to order after lunch at 1:00 pm Arizona time/ 2:00 pm New Mexico and El Paso time.

Rev. Dr. Barb Doerrer- Peacock presented the Anniversaries for Clergy and Churches

Clergy Ordination Anniversaries

20-years of ministry

- Rev. Tina Squire
- Rev. Michael-Ann Veziroglu
- Rev. Deborah Worley

25-years of ministry

- Susan Valiquette

30-years of ministry

- Rev. Lynn Hinton
- Rev. Elizabeth Youngberg

50-years of ministry

- Rev. Ric Brightman
- Rev. Dale Frank
- Rev. Judith Hambleton
- Rev. Dr. Dick Wing

60-years of ministry

- Rev. Fritz Hardt
 - Rev. Judson Souers
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Church Anniversaries

10-years

- Black Mountain UCC, Scottsdale
- First Christian Church UCC/DOC, Las Cruces

60-years

- Church of the Red Rocks UCC, Sedona
- Scottsdale Congregational UCC, Scottsdale

140-years

- First Congregational Church UCC, Albuquerque
- First Congregational Church UCC, Prescott

Moderator invited Annual Meeting Coordinator, Karen Richter, to explain how the Hearing Process will work in Zoom with breakout rooms

We will follow the practice of General Synod and assign delegates to rooms at random. Breakout Rooms for the Budget, Resolution 1, and Resolution 2. Breakout Rooms are set to close after 90-minutes, following the agenda. If more time is needed, Karen will add more time for discussion.

Hearings commenced at 1:30 pm Arizona time/ 2:30 pm New Mexico and El Paso time. When each group was finished, delegates went into recess for the day

Rev. Rock Fremont called for recess on the meeting after the last Hearing Group was finished at around 5:30 pm Arizona time/ 6:30 pm New Mexico time. We will start tomorrow with worship at 9:00 am Arizona time /10:00 am New Mexico and El Paso time. Reconvene second Business session 1:00 pm Arizona time/2:00 pm New Mexico and El Paso time.

Virtual Annual Meeting 2020 – Day 2, **Sunday, October 4, 2020**

Rev. Rock Fremont, SWC Moderator, opened Annual Meeting Day 2, Business Session 2, with welcome and salutations at 1:00 pm Arizona time/ 2:00 pm New Mexico and El Paso time

Rev. Barb Doerrler-Peacock, Associate Conference Minister, lead the Southwest Conference in prayer

Standing Rules and the Delegates page on the website were shared in chat for reference

Voting on Budget, Nominating Slate, and Resolutions

Fiscal Year 2020/2021 Budget. As the Budget is moved by the Executive Board, no second is needed. **THE MOTION: The 2020-2021 Southwest Conference Budget shall be adopted as proposed.** Voting with Consent – **With no objections, Motion Approved.**

2020 Nominating Slate – Christopher Shouten from Black Mountain UCC was nominated from the floor for the open position on the Nominating Committee. **THE MOTION: The Nominating Committee moves that the Nominating Slate, including nominations from the floor, be approved.** Voting with Consent – **With no objections, Motion Approved.**

Review of how to vote using Zoom Polls for voting for the Resolutions. Practice Poll run.

Resolution 1 – UN Resolution for Decade of People of African Descent. The resolution is moved by the hearing committee. No second is needed.

Discussion with input from delegates regarding wording, what this resolution will do, the process it goes through after Annual Meeting to make it to General Synod. Call from the floor to call the vote and seconded.

THE MOTION on the floor is: The Resolution: *UN Decade for People of African Descent* be approved with edits. Poll Launched – Motion Approved.

Resolution 2 –Awakening to Racial Justice, renamed *De-centering Whiteness in Our Churches and Society*
Brendan Mahoney, as leader of breakout room for Hearing, offered insight prior as discussion opened. Discussion opened and sharing centered around language, action versus words, how to put plan into place, the urgency with which a resolution of this nature needs to be passed. Call from the floor to call the vote and seconded.

THE MOTION is to approve The Resolution now titled: *A Southwest Conference Resolution on Restorative Racial Justice: De-centering Whiteness in Our Churches and Society* be approved as amended by committee. Poll Launched – Motion Approved

Expression of gratitude from Conference Minister, Rev. Dr. Bill Lyons, Conference Moderator, Rev. Rock Fremont, and all Southwest Conference staff and delegates.

Meeting Adjourned at 2:40 pm Arizona time/ 3:40 pm New Mexico and El Paso time.