

**SPECIAL SESSION  
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2006  
WINDSOR CENTRAL MIDDLE SCHOOL  
WINDSOR, NY**

The 2006 Special Session of the Wyoming Annual Conference was conducted at the Windsor Central Middle School in Windsor, NY on September 16, 2006, beginning at 9:00 AM.

Opening Worship was led by the musical group *Cross-Fire* and the worship team of the First United Methodist Church of Oneonta.

Director of Connectional Ministries Mark Marino made opening remarks and reviewed housekeeping items.

Bishop Susan H. Hassinger was introduced by Mary Wilson, Chair of the Committee on the Episcopacy. Bishop Hassinger then addressed the body, referencing the Book of Isaiah, Chapter 43.

**ORGANIZATION OF THE CONFERENCE:** Bishop Hassinger called the meeting to order and called upon Conference Secretary Virginia Brauer, who presented the organizing motion: **“BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**

- 1. THE BAR OF THE CONFERENCE shall be the auditorium of the Windsor Central Middle School, Windsor, NY.**
- 2. THE CONFERENCE SHALL FUNCTION according to the Conference Rules of Order.**
- 3. AUTHORS OF ALL MOTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS, which are approved by the body, shall submit the same in written format on official forms provided by the Secretary; and shall be submitted immediately following the session.**
- 4. VOTING MEMBERS SHALL INCLUDE CLERGY AND LAY MEMBERS to Annual Conference, including lay equalization members elected to the 2006 Annual Conference.”**

The motion was seconded and passed.

**PENSIONS AND HEALTH INSURANCE**

Doug Sivers, Chair of Pensions and Health Benefits, recognized the members of the committee and presented the following resolution:

**“The Conference Board of Pensions and Health Benefits moves that the current health insurance and dental plans offered active pastors (those under 65 years of age) and their families of the Wyoming Conference be replaced with the Standard Risk Pool EPO A/RX4 Healthflex Plan and the Cigna Traditional Dental plan offered by the General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits. The premiums for these plans shall be paid under the current payment plan as previously established.”**

Doug moved the resolution and spoke briefly to it regarding the cost, which would be similar to increased costs in the current plan.

Bishop Hassinger called for a brief time for questions.

Questions regarding psychiatric care coverage, extended prescriptions, in-patient coverage, durable medial equipment, and the flexible spending account were addressed.

The resolution was voted on and adopted as presented.

Additional questions regarding the plan were answered.

### **2007 MINISTRY PLAN**

Doris Getty, Cheri Albrecht and members of the Common Table were asked to come to the stage, while the body sang “Oh, For a Thousand Tongues to Sing.”

Cheri Albrecht, Administration & Finance Table Host, expressed appreciation to all who came out to the informational sessions. She also recognized members of the Administration & Finance Table. All persons serving on tables were asked to stand and be recognized. Doris Getty called the body’s attention to the 2007 Ministry Plan and reviewed the process of development. She explained that, in the past, a dilemma over funding of the plan arose because of dwindling resources and late ministry share payments, which consequently resulted in decreased funds. A promise of funds not available was unfair and did not make it possible to present a realistic Ministry Plan. As a result, a new plan has been established which makes it possible to remedy this problem. This plan eliminates the prior claim and pro rata concepts. The new plan has three components. Column A represents 100% guaranteed payments; Columns B and C monies will be made available as additional money comes in.

Doris Getty moved the adoption of the 2007 Ministry Plan and accompanying resolutions.

Bishop Hassinger called for a period of questions and discussion before the vote.

Bill Reid, retired clergy, asked when Columns B and C monies would start to be disbursed. Cheri commented that only when Ministry Shares seem to be coming in at a good rate would CF&A consider when money could be released.

Jeffrey Hale asked if not enough Ministry Shares are being received to fund Column A, where will the money come from? The body was informed that a resolution to establish a line of credit would be presented. Cheri cautioned that no group should plan on receiving any money from Columns B or C. She also explained the resolution that would enable us to carry unused monies from year to year.

Doug Akers questioned whether or not it is legal for a conference to go into debt. Mark Marino said he had consulted GFCA and was told that it was.

Ron Wenzinger raised a question regarding the Mission & Outreach Table budget. He noted that both campus ministries are in B and C columns. He questioned why this decision was made when one of our two critical issues is youth and young adults.

Susan Davis, Mission & Outreach Table Host, deferred to the young adults for a response. Matt Williams explained that they were approached after the budget was set and were not given an opportunity for input beforehand. Although painful, he pointed out that it provides an opportunity for ALL OF US to see that all levels are funded.

Martin Cox commented on his role in working with campus ministry in Scranton. He is in constant dialog with students and faculty, and questioned that we are serious about youth and young adults. Susan Davis reminded the body that this ministry has not been eliminated; it is in Columns B & C.

After further debate regarding Campus Ministries, Gary Doupe made a motion to amend the ministry plan to restore funds to Campus Ministry, with no indication of where funds would come from. The motion was ruled out of order.

Brolin Parker, clergy, made a motion **“to amend the budget so that Column A reflects the addition of Campus Ministries for both campuses. The amount of \$47,000 to be added to Column A with same reduction from Column B.”** The motion was seconded and Brolin spoke to his motion.

After discussion both for and against the amendment, Jim Newberry offered an amendment to the amendment: **“to change Campus Ministries to 80% in Column A and 20% in Column B.”**

Ron Wenzinger then presented a substitution to the amendment to **“direct CFA to make the 2 campus ministries first priority of all Column B items and that Mission & Outreach Table review these current campus ministries and offer an improved campus ministry proposal to the 2007 Annual Conference.”**

Bishop Hassinger called for a moment of reflection followed by the song, “Jesus, Remember Me.”

A vote on the substitution to the amendment failed.

The body was then referred back to the amendment to the amendment and this was read aloud. A vote on the amendment to the amendment failed. The original amendment was then read. Following a vote, the original amendment also failed.

Mark Marino made announcements, the Wesleyan Grace was sung, and the body was dismissed for lunch.

Following lunch, a video on Sky Lake was shown.

Bishop Hassinger then welcomed the body back and reminded us that we are working in the presence of Christ.

Members of the Common Table were invited to return to the stage for further discussion and

explanation of the 2007 Ministry Plan.

Cheri Albrecht continued the discussion regarding funding of Campus Ministries. She also called attention to other changes, including reduction in monies available for Conference Sessions, as well as money for the VOICE.

Dick Thompson, Shared Leadership Table Host, commented that an attempt had been made to bring honesty to the budgeting process, resulting in tough decisions to make changes regarding the process. He added that Column A is a reasonable expectation of what will be coming in.

Lewis Lee made a **“motion to suspend the rules to move the question on the original motion to adopt the 2007 Ministry Plan as presented.”** This required a 2/3 vote; and is not debatable.

Following an initial vote, a vote count was requested.

A count of votes resulted in 90 for; 118 against. The motion failed.

Norman Campbell made a motion to amend the Ministry Plan **“to change both campus ministries from column B to column A and also move 2.45% from all of column A to column B.”**

After discussion for and against, the vote was taken and the motion defeated.

A vote on the 2007 Ministry Plan, as originally presented, was taken and it passed.

CF&A Chair Doris Getty presented the following resolution.

**RESOLUTION:**

**“1. Be it resolved that the Council on Finance & Administration (CFA) be authorized to establish a line of credit to be used, if necessary, to fund the items listed as “A” in the Ministry Plan.**

**2. And be it further resolved that CFA be authorized to carry unspent funds from one year over the next year to fund projects and/or use the balance to establish a reserve fund of up to \$100,000, as it deems prudent.”**

Dan Fuller made a motion to delete **“the first paragraph of the enabling motion that allows CF&A to establish a line of credit.”** A vote was taken and the motion failed.

James Wert presented a motion to add the following to the first paragraph to the 2007 Ministry Plan:

**“That every plan to establish a line of credit, either from internal or external sources, be done in consultation with the bishop and evaluated by the Conference Chancellor as to its legality.”** This was ruled a “friendly amendment” and was accepted.

Virginia O’Malley, clergy, moved to divide the question into 2 motions. This motion passed.

The first paragraph of the original motion was voted on and it passed.

The second paragraph was then voted on and it was defeated.

The following resolution was presented by the Conference Cabinet:

**RESOLUTION: 2008 Ministry Plan & District Conferences**

**“Be it resolved that the Wyoming Annual Conference discuss and act upon the 2008 Ministry Plan at the 2007 regular session of the Annual Conference.**

**Unless and until changed by action of future Annual Conferences, subsequent years’ Ministry Plans will be discussed and acted upon at the regular sessions of the Annual Conference.**

**Be it further resolved that on Saturday, May 19, 2007 the District Conferences will meet in non-legislative sessions at times and locations determined by their respective District Superintendents to consider the 2008 Ministry Plan and other business to come before the Annual Conference.**

**The Annual Conference Agenda/Sessions Committee will determine the process by which feedback, comments and suggestions on resolutions and Annual Conference matters will be communicated from the District Conferences to the appropriate boards, committees, task forces or resolution-sponsors in time for changes to be considered and presented at the regular session of the Annual Conference.**

**While the District Conferences will be non-legislative regarding Annual Conference matters, each may in accordance with the *Discipline* elect district officers and/or care for other district business as it chooses.**

**Unless and until changed by actions of future Annual Conferences, the subsequent years’ District Conferences will be conducted in this same manner on the third Saturday of each May.”**

Following a question and answer period, the vote was called and it passed.

Bette Poe and Alison Hanson presented a resolution on flood recovery:

**Flood of 2006 Conference-Wide Response Proposal**

“Whereas, the flooding of the summer of 2006 has had detrimental effects on many of our Conference Churches; and,

Whereas, the majority of these affected churches were facing challenges that stretched their financial resources before the flood; and,

Whereas, all monies received by UMCOR aimed at helping in recovery efforts are limited in their scope to helping individual families in their efforts at getting back into their homes; and,

Whereas, the 1972 Flood Fund monies were given to us in trust, for the specific purpose of helping flooded out churches; and,

Whereas, the Abandoned Properties Fund of our Annual Conference is under the care of our Conference Board of Trustees, and this Board has recently indicated support of the use of some of

this money for the purpose of helping our Conference Churches; and,

Whereas, we see ourselves as a connectional church, viewing our neighboring churches as part of our family of faith;

Be it therefore resolved that we the people of the Wyoming Annual Conference commit to assisting the churches adversely effected by the 2006 Flood in covering the costs of cleanup and reconstruction.

#### **The Plan**

1. Each affected church shall secure low-interest funding (i.e. SBA loans) to cover the expense of reconstruction.
2. The Conference pledges to guarantee the loans incurred by churches for reconstruction by making periodic payments to the churches over a twenty year period (or, the length of the loan, whichever is shorter)
3. Principal and interest of these loans will be paid on a periodic basis for flood damage incurred in 2006. It is to be anticipated that the Flood Recovery Fund (made up of monies from our current emergency offering, the 1972 flood money, and a portion of the abandoned properties fund) will generate income sufficient to meet the periodic repayment schedule of restoration loans secured by the flood damaged churches.
4. Payment by the conference shall be limited to flood damage expense only.

#### **Implementation**

5. An assessment of the need at each church shall be made by each Superintendent and the Conference Disaster Response Team, drawing on the expertise of individuals within the district and beyond as is deemed necessary;
6. The Bishop shall name a Flood Recovery Task Force, which will receive the assessment reports from each Superintendent;
7. The Flood Recovery Task Force shall be empowered to:
  - a. Determine the amount of available funds consisting of but not limited to the Disaster Relief Fund of 72, the current emergency fund offering, and the Abandoned Properties fund held by the Trustees;
  - b. Compile and total the needs across the Conference, based on District reports;
  - c. Develop a repayment schedule of loans for each flood related church providing for the periodic repayment of loans secured by the local church for flood damage restoration;
  - d. Develop and implement a Capital Funds Campaign during the fall/winter of 2006 to increase the Flood Recovery Fund to such a level that the yearly earnings from it shall cover the repayment of church loans.

Discussion followed.

David Masland and Doug Akers, clergy, then moved to add: **“Be it therefore resolved”** that we the people of the Wyoming Annual Conference commit to assisting the churches adversely affected by the **“flooding of Spring 2005 and”** the 2006 Flood in covering the costs of cleanup and reconstruction.’

Dave Gouldin, Chancellor, made a motion to add: **“By this resolution, the Conference authorizes the appropriate officials of the conference to execute such documents as may be required to effect such guarantees.”**

Following further discussion, Fred Albrecht made a motion that under Implementation, a paragraph #4 be added that states, **“No church shall receive Flood Recovery Funds until it has undergone a Viable Congregations study, and is deemed to be a viable church.”**

A vote was taken and this amendment failed.

A vote on the original amended proposal was taken and it passed.

The following resolution was presented by the Social Justice Network of the Wyoming Annual Conference:

**RECOMMENDATION: SUPPORT A LIVING WAGE**

**WHEREAS a “Living Wage” provides the minimum salary necessary in a particular geographic area to cover a family’s food, clothing, day care, transportation and health care, so that workers do not have to rely on food stamps, housing vouchers and other publicly funded subsidies when they work full time jobs; and**

**WHEREAS the United Methodist Church supports a living wage, as outlined in Para.163.C. of the 2004 Book of Discipline; and**

**WHEREAS “all church agencies, related institutions and organizations, annual conferences and local congregations should respect their employees’ rights to good working conditions, fair compensation and collective action” (2004 Book of Resolutions of the United Methodist Church, p. 594) and**

**WHEREAS church office workers, over 95% of whom are female, work in low-paying jobs, which “keep people and families in poverty and women and children are increasingly employed in (low paying) jobs, thus perpetuating a poverty class with sex (and race) characteristics (“The Economic Community: Economic Justice,” 1996 Book of Resolutions, p. 440),**

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Wyoming Annual Conference adopt the living wage as a model for justice in the world and in the household of faith. We challenge all levels of the church to move toward a living wage that:**

**reflects the local cost of living;**

**provides for adequate health coverage for employees and their dependants;**

**provides mechanisms for training, promotion. And advancement for all United Methodist employees; and**

**establishes checks and balances to ensure that fair and consistently applied personnel policies pertain to all employees of the United Methodist Church and its agencies.**

**\*In Broome County the living wage will pay \$10 per hour with health benefits or \$11.65 without health benefits, but with the option of purchasing minimal health insurance for themselves (family of four 2004 poverty threshold).\***

Ron Wenzinger offered a motion to add **“For example,”** before ‘in Broome County’ and substitute **“would be”** for ‘will pay.’ This was ruled a “friendly motion” and accepted.

Carlton Brown, clergy, offered an amendment to add **“affordable and appropriate”** after ‘adequate’ in the resolution. This was seconded and discussion ensued. A vote was taken and the amended resolution failed.

The vote on the original resolution was called; it passed.

Bill Reid moved to refer this to The Commission on Equitable Compensation. This was voted on and it passed.

Mark Marino presented the updated Conference Rules of Order. After several minor changes/additions, the vote was called. The Rules of Order, as amended, were adopted.

Ron Shoemaker was recognized for his contributions to the Annual Conference as the audio system technician. Ron will be leaving his position.

Hudda Aswad was recognized for her work on the photo directory.

Dave Masland announced that at Annual Conference 2007, there will be a motion that Wyoming Conference become a Safe Sanctuaries Conference, with a celebration to be held at the 2008 Annual Conference. As of Monday morning there will be a Safe Sanctuaries link on the council website.

It was also announced that the Victims' Advocacy Network has scheduled a Safe Sanctuaries training make-up day for January 2007.

Mark Marino announced the District meeting locations.

Virginia Brauer presented the adjourning motion:

**“I MOVE THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE FULL BODY OF REPORTS ACTED UPON BY THIS SPECIAL SESSION, THROUGH DEBATE OR CONSENT, AS THE OFFICIAL RECORD OF TODAY’S MEETING; AND ASK THAT THIS SESSION STAND ADJOURNED, FOLLOWING THE DISTRICT CONFERENCES.”**

The motion carried.

**ROLL CALL:** 140: Clergy  
102: Laity  
4: Visitors  
6: Undesignated  
252: Total