Annual Conference 2014 Briefing Sessions – Highlights

This is a summary of the material covered in the annual conference briefing session videos. Much more detail can be found in the briefing session scripts and in the conference program materials on the Conference website. Send any questions to our help desk at helpdesk@nccumc.org.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE LOGISTICS

- Registration for the 2014 Annual Conference will begin early, 8:00 am, on Wednesday, June 11, in the lobby of the Greenville Convention Center, in Greenville, NC.
- Health Screening will be available during AC, which will be done by the Physician’s Assistant Program from Methodist University, in Fayetteville. The site for this will be the Board Room in the Hilton Hotel.
- “From Strength to Strength” is our theme for the quadrennium, and this year, the emphasis is on “Thrive.”
- Worship will be led by Rev. Jorge Lockward, Director of Global Praise, of the General Board of Global Ministries, and a team of musicians and singers from our own conference.
- The first item on our agenda is worship, as we gather on Wednesday morning around the Lord’s Table. A special offering is received at this service, designated for Imagine No Malaria.
- The Organization of the Conference will follow at 11 a.m., following the Opening Worship Service. We will adopt the Rules of the Conference, and several business matters, during this time.
- Following lunch on Wednesday will be Clergy and Laity Executive Sessions.
- We will have numerous opportunities for learning including Rev. Gary Gunderson and Teresa Cutts about the role of congregations as centers of health and healing; Dr. Matthew Sleeth and his wife, Nancy, on Sabbath practices; and workshops covering a variety of topics to learn ways of engaging in ministries and practices that foster health and growth.
- On Wednesday evening, the evening event will be a Mission Celebration.
- Thursday morning will begin early with a 5K Run/Walk, for those who are participating.
- Early morning communion will be available in Ballroom D at the Hilton Hotel on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.
• Thursday morning will include our Memorial Service and this will be followed by a luncheon in honor of our current retirees and those retiring this year.
• Thursday evening will include **A PICNIC ON THE GROUNDS**, under the large tents that will be in place on the campus of the GCC behind the CC. There will be a **SPECIAL OFFERING** which will be used in providing help in Higher Education scholarships.
• On Friday morning, the Conference members will gather in 8 Breakout Groups, led by our guest leaders and trainers.
• Friday afternoon will include a celebration of laity ministries led by our Lay Leader, Gary Locklear.
• The evening session will be opened by Gary Locklear, and there will be a hymn and the receiving of a **SPECIAL OFFERING** for Laity Ministries.
• Friday evening’s program will be a rock opera based on the gospel accounts of Jesus’ resurrection will be presented for conference members and others from the community who wish to attend.
• Saturday, will include the fixing of appointments and the Commissioning and Ordination Service.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

**Board of Pension Report**

**Pre-82 Past Service Year Rate (PSR) for 2015** be increased from $672 to $683 for a 1.6% increase over the 2014 rate.

**Conference Claimants – Retiree Insurance 2016 budget** - the amounts proposed for the annual conference budget for retiree health care is $2.2 million for current year funding and $500,000 for funding of the unfunded retiree health benefit liability.

**2015 Retiree Health Reimbursement arrangement (HRA) funding** – proposed at a maximum 100% level of $3,200 per eligible participant in 2015.
  • 90% funding level (max. funding) would be $2,880
  • 2014 average cost for a Medicare Plan F with Part D for pharmacy is $222 per month or $2,664 per year.
• Add back in a 3% increase assumption for account funding moving forward.
• Resulting liability is approx. $27.7 million.
• Funding goal of $32 million for expected benefit. Goal to fund in full by 2021 with Past Service Liability apportionment and conference budget funding – fund pre-82 pension and retiree health by 2021.

Equitable Compensation Report

No change in minimum salary proposed for 2015. New clergy compensation arrearage report added.

Insurance Committee Report

No change in health insurance benefits proposed. 3.5% increase proposed to church and pastor premiums.

Clergy Medical Leave Report

No changes to benefits proposed.

Council on Finance and Administration Report

2016 total budget request increased by 2.1% over 2015.

Outreach ministry Team:
• Largest change is in Disaster Readiness and Response to provide more funding for readiness and response efforts such as committee planning and response training.

Christian Formation Team:
• Line 26 for emerging church support - increase of $36,650. This increase is needed to fund commitments for emerging churches and new faith communities already in process as well as for potentially new areas as recommended by the cabinet and office of new faith communities.
• Line 12 for evangelism - a reduction of $40,410. The decrease in the evangelism line was due to programs for evangelism not being held with
the frequency planned for in previous years and to bring the budget more in line with what is being done currently including some room for growth.

**Leadership Team:**
- In line 36, the budget for the Board of Ordained and Diaconal Ministry, an increase is proposed of $186,295. This increase is due to incorporating into the annual conference funding to continue the Residency in Ordained Ministry program that has been in operation for two years but funded by the Duke Endowment.
- The second larger increase in the leadership team is in the district costs in lines 39 and 41. The increase in line 39 provides funding for the conference conflict transformation work that is currently being done. This is planned to be a continuing ministry of the cabinet through conflict transformation coaching as well as transformation with specific conflicts in churches as needed. Line 41 adds funding for the receptionist and administrative assistant position in the centralized district office.
- A third increase in the Leadership Team budget is in line 50 for the Effective Ministry Program. This funding is used to provide assistance to clergy who may be transitioning out of ordained ministry or for specific effective ministry training needs for clergy. The increase of $25,000 was requested to bring this budget line closer to what the actual needs are that have been observed in the last several years.
- The last of the larger increases is in line 51 for the Academy for Leadership Excellence. This budget line is new and is requested to fund the administrative costs of the Leadership Fellows program through the Academy.

**Stewardship Team:**
- Line 64 for treasurer bonding and insurance has a decrease of $31,255 to remove it from the budget. There have been great increases in premiums for this coverage that no longer make insuring this in the market feasible. The trustees are providing this coverage in a different way with the same provisions as have been provided before.
- An increase is noted in the salary and benefits line for the Information Management office with the stated goal of bringing salary in those positions closer to market wages for the same skills levels and work responsibilities.
• Changes in lines 71 and 72 for the episcopal residence fund is a change in the amount of funding as well as the structure of that funding. Line 71 is renamed to reflect the current operating expense of the residence. A new line 72 is recommended in the budget to begin to build funding for capital repairs that will be needed for the residence.
• To help explain retiree health costs more clearly in the budget, the total of $2.7 million for those benefits was broken into two budget lines showing $2.2 million for current year payments and the other $500,000 to be set aside for the retiree health liability funding.

Moving expense policy - CFA is recommending an increase to the moving expense reimbursement limit for this year’s policy to bring the reimbursement limit to $2,250 for active clergy. The reimbursement for retiring clergy is proposed at $3,500 and up to $2,600 for clergy couples.

District Superintendent salary – the current formula yields a salary of $105,153 for district superintendents for 2015. This is no increase in salary from the 2013 or 2014 levels.

Send questions on this material to helpdesk@nccumc.org.