INUMC 2020 Delegation
Meeting Minutes
September 7, 2019
Hope UMC

Present: Chiyona Bourne, Chris Hancock, Chris Nunley, Mary Fridlund, Adriane Curtis, John Shive, Kim Arnott, Adriane Curtis, Chris Tiedeman, Mike Womack, RC Muhlbaier, Amy Land, Russ Abel, Kenneth Einselen, Shirley Dominick, Brett Lloyd, Lisa Schubert-Nowling, Jill Howard, Duane Carlisle, Ronnie Bell, Derek Weber, Marti Lundy, Rob Fuquay, Nancy Stauffer. Via ZOOM: John Lomperis, Leah Padgett, Albert Hidalgo, Nathan Lundy

The General Conference and Jurisdictional delegates held their second meeting at Hope UMC in Hope, Indiana on September 7, 2019. Derek Weber and Chris Tiedeman led the worship service. After worship, Chris Hancock led the group in the team connection activity highlighting each person latest book read and favorite bible verse.

Meeting Opening Discussions:
Amy Land presented the meeting schedule for our delegation (as posted on the INUMC website page dedicated to General Conference).

To remind the group of our agreement, the Christian Conferencing Guidelines were read together. Russ reflected on the guidelines as the way in which we should operate and live out “love God, love one another.” As a delegation, we need to be transparent with one another, and honor the Christian Conferencing Guidelines.

The group discussed how we promote transparency to the Conference. One idea presented was providing a time after each of the delegation meetings with people in the surrounding church communities. Another idea was to use a social media platform for a Q&A with the delegation or via a Facebook Live review. Regardless of the method we choose, caution was provided to be clear on communication as to whether it is coming from the delegation or an individual. Also, more should be known regarding Bishop Trimble’s plans to connect with the Conference so that our delegation works in tandem. It was noted that there will be a pre-conference briefing later this Fall where more information will be known regarding legislation and petitions being submitted.

Communication Discussion:
John Shive presented and led a discussion regarding communication. For internal communication, the group has been created in What’s App. This is a private group for inter-delegation communication and is to be used for immediate contact/communication. Also, Ian Hall assisted with creating the Drop Box file sharing to be used by the delegation.

For external communication, a single contact email address for the delegation has been established – Email address: 2020inumcdelegation@inumc.org. This will be communicated to the Conference via the INUMC website page dedicated to General
Conference. It was discussed and agreed for all to be clear regarding wording when responding to an email. Individual responses should state “I support…” or “My viewpoint…” for example. Delegation responses will be from Russ or Chris only. Since not all emails may receive a response, an automatic response will be sent to let the email sender know they may or may not receive a reply, or a reply may come from and individual delegate and not necessarily the delegation.

Also, for external communication, the website page on the INUMC site is being developed and will be published to include the meeting schedule and meeting minutes. Meeting minutes will be summarized for the general audience. Additionally, the Strategy Committee suggested each delegate member write a personal reflection on “what it means to be a delegate” to be posted on the web page as well. The Communication Committee and Strategy Committee will work out a schedule to feature each delegate on a weekly basis. Russ Abel, Chris Hancock, Jill Howard, and Ronnie Bell volunteered to be the first four persons.

Further discussion regarding communication with other delegations and local churches/districts will be deferred to the Strategy Committee for our next meeting.

Budget Discussion:
Ian Hall presented information regarding the budget for General Conference. The Conference has set the budget at $20,000 which is down $10,000 from the previous conference budget. The budget assumptions used: Per diem @ $29/delegate/day; GC will pay travel and lodging expenses for 16 delegates (May 4 to May 16); Accommodations 12 nights @ double occupancy. Ian also presented what US General Service rates for Minneapolis would reimburse for comparison. Those assumptions used: Per diem @ $76/delegate/day; max lodging @ $157/day. Based on the assumptions and the assumption of taking 2 lay and 2 clergy alternates, the total GC expenses would be $21,264 and Jurisdictional Conference (July 14 to July 18) would be $11,208 for a combined expense total of $34,472.

The group discussed the budget and how to deal with the shortfall. It was stated that it is generally understood that as a delegate there usually is a little out of pocket expense; however, no one wants to create a hardship on delegate participation. There is also the idea of self-selection process where an individual could opt to take less than the 100%.

The group discussed how many delegate alternates would be taken to each conference. Ronnie Bell moved to approve the budget of 80% per diem and 2 delegate alternates (for both clergy and laity); Lisa Schubert-Nowling seconded. After further discussion, a friendly amendment was made by Chris Hancock for an 80% per diem and 3 delegate alternates (3 clergy and 3 laity to GC); Lisa Schubert-Nowling seconded. Based on this, the budget amount will be $32,838 total expenses. This vote passed. To fill the gap, the group will need to come up with fundraising and seek a GFA.

Episcopal Process Review:
Brett Lloyd presented the Episcopal process that the delegation would use to approve a plan to allow an endorsement of an Elder from the IN Conference for the Jurisdictional Conference. In short, the delegation would seek nominations, discern materials presented by the candidates, and determine endorsement. Brett reviewed the questions that will be asked of the nominees. Responses to the questions and other materials submitted will seek to cover three areas: Spiritual, Administrative, Visionary. The timeline for process will be as follows:

- TBD: Nomination Period
- Sept 30: Deadline for candidates to return nomination package
- Oct. 1: Nomination packets sent to delegates for review
- Oct. 5: Select interviewees
- December 7: Interviews and endorsement.

Chris Hancock motioned to close the nomination window 2 weeks from today, September 21. This motion passed. Brett will work with the Communication Committee to arrange for an email to be sent to all Elders and Lay Leaders to seek nominations.

The discussion on how many candidates to interview was postponed until we see how many people are nominated by an approved motion from Derek Weber.

A discussion was held on what does the “endorsement” mean – does it mean we commit until the endorse candidate receives x percent of the vote; or does it mean we commit to vote for candidate on first round of voting in election. RC Muhlbaier made a motion that endorsement means for us that we would commit to voting for our candidate through first election; Chris Nunley seconded. The motion did not pass.

Adriane Curtis made a motion that 51% is a minimum to get endorsement from group and Nathan Lundy made a friendly amendment to state it as a simple majority. After discussions, the vote was taken, and did not pass. Mary Fridlund motioned for 60% vote for an endorsement with Chris Tiedeman seconding. Duane Carlisle made a friendly amendment to include all alternates in the voting. This revised motion passed.

Upon conclusion of the presentation and discussions, Chiyona Bourne moved to approve the overall process with Ken Einselen seconding. The process was approved by vote.

Brett opened the floor for nominations. Three names were nominated at the meeting:
- Pastor Russ Abel
- Pastor Aleze Fulbright
- Pastor Tony Alstott.

Concluding Items:
In preparation for the North Conference Jurisdiction Gathering in November, Russ provided a list of questions to be thinking about for discussion and input at our October meeting. Basically, the questions are determining – What do we agree on?
The Strategy Committee will also work to determine who and when we want to invite to the meeting for presentations to the delegates.