

Ministers Council Senate Minutes

August 14-17, 2010

Kern Lodge

Green Lake Conference Center

Green Lake, WI

Saturday, August 14, 2010 6:00-6:45 pm

Jeff Savage, President, presided over New Senator Orientation

Saturday, August 14, 2010

Session I

Present: Sandy Aakre, Dakotas; Valerie Andrews, Philadelphia; Holly Bean, WIM Consultant; Steve Bils, VP Communications; Joan Burnett, Senator-at-Large; Gloria Chaney, Cleveland; Willard Cofield, Massachusetts; Fredrick Davis, South; Brian Dixon, Massachusetts; Lisa Drysdale, Upstate NY; Michael Friday, Nebraska; Judy Gay, Evergreen; Thomas Gilmore, VP Denominational Relationships; Alice Greene, Past President; Cheryl Harader, Central Region; Richard Harris, Valley Forge; Michael Harvey, Massachusetts; Mark Hetrick, Indiana; Perry Hopper, MMBB Liaison; Leigh Johnson, Rhode Island; Joe Kutter, Executive Director Ministers Council; Glenn Loafmann, Roc/Gen; Margaret Marcuson, VP Spiritual & Personal Wholeness; Phin Marr, VP Professional Effectiveness; Miriam Mendez, Oregon; Rick Messana, Maine; Shakespeare Osorio, VP Membership & Constituency; Karen Pickler, Chaps/PC; John Polite, Senator-at-Large; David Sagar, Senator-at-Large; Jeff Savage, President; Michael Saylor, Editor **Minister**; Ken Smith, Connecticut; David Spiegel, New Jersey; Wesley Sun, Chicago; Karen Sundland, Wisconsin; Dee Turlington, Senator-at-Large to Executive Committee; David Van Brakle, Michigan; Ken Whitt, Ohio

Guests: Liliana Da Valle, Executive Minister, RI; Larry Greenfield, Executive Minister, Chicago; Dwight Lundgren, ABPS Manager; Roy Medley, General Secretary; Ray Schooler, Director of Church Relations, BIM; Peter and Peggy Wolf, Judson Book Table; Jeff Woods, Associate General Secretary for Regional Ministry; Mary Young, Samuel Dewitt Proctor School of Theology

Absent: Ignacio Cartagena, Katie Choy-Wong, Forrest Cornelius, Carl Davis, Clark Flesher, Paulita Garcia, Charles Kuthe, Paul Marine, Margie McCarty, David Russell, Clint Walker, Jamie Washam

Lighting of the Christ Candle was led by Shakespeare Osorio

1. Jeff Savage welcomed everyone and led singing; Piano - Michael Friday
2. Jeff reminded the Senate that we are engaged in worshipful work, and invited all to briefly introduce themselves;
3. Business Session 1
 - a. Recommended that Thomas Gilmore serve as temporary Treasurer; Michael Saylor serve as temporary Secretary. Motion passed
 - b. Agenda Adoption
 - i. Changes
 1. Item 5, change Monday opportunities to Rick Harris
 2. Item 14, changes to Treasurer's report: reported by Thomas Gilmore, appointed as temporary Treasurer.
 3. Item 15 Additions: Budget, motion referring to Capital Campaign, Search Committee report, Personnel Committee report, Nominating Committee report, followed by Report from Women in Ministry, Dates of the next Senate
 4. Item 27: Will be same as the order under Item 15: Budget, Capital Campaign, Search Committee, Personnel Committee, Nominating Committee
 - ii. M&S to accept changes: Passed

- c. Acceptance of Minutes from 2009 Senate Meeting: M&S to accept as submitted. Passed.
- d. Rick Harris introduced social activities and offered sign-up opportunities;
- e. Joe Kutter led Worship: A Time of Commissioning
The heart of our purpose statement is - we covenant together (community) to deepen our spiritual journey (spirituality) and increase our effectiveness as leaders in Christ's church (leadership). Joe urged us not to place undue emphasis on spirituality in the abstract, at the expense of physicality and the concrete. In this world the Holy Spirit has his home in the church. We must attend to the fellowship and the institution of the church if the work of the Holy Spirit is to survive. There cannot be ministry without that attention. We also have to attend to the institution called the Ministers Council. "We covenant together to deepen our spirituality and to increase our effectiveness as leaders in Christ's Church."
- f. Omissions: Holly Bean was inadvertently left off of the list of members of the Executive Committee - she represents Women in Ministry; Alice Greene's name was misspelled on page 5. Margaret Marcuson, Chairperson of Spiritual and Personal Wholeness, is also on the Executive Committee. Search Committee will meet at 7:30-8:30 am Sunday.
- g. Margaret Marcuson led in prayer, organized and instructed Prayer Teams

4. Sunday, August 15, 9:00 am

Session II

- a. Worship
- b. Thomas Gilmore preaching
- c. Prayer groups

5. Sunday, August 15, 1:30 pm

- a. Singing led by Mark Hetrick, Lighting of the Christ Candle by Joan Burnett
- b. Executive Director's Report

Joe Kutter stated that he is expressing hope in the face of reality. Current membership is not enough to sustain ministry; money is a second hard reality. Need a national membership drive that will effectively recruit colleagues into membership. Must take recruitment seriously. Financially we have been able to acquire a significant reserve fund through the years. Have also enjoyed earnings from an M&M endowment. During this recession we drew down modestly on our endowment, but still have experienced significant losses: we have gone from \$1.9 million to \$1.3 million. Right now our endowment cannot sustain ministry at the current level. Secondly, the Lilly Endowment subsidized our ministry financially over the past few years; 2300 ministerial leaders have participated in Lilly-subsidized programs. This endowment will end in 2012. Can we sustain our level of ministry without Lilly's help?

As clergy we are relationally inclined, but we need to focus on the administrative/organizational details as well. Dues have not increased since the 1980's. We have failed to ask our colleagues and ourselves to pay our fair share of the load. A membership dues increase is needed.

Membership drive needs two parts: first, individuals matter. May also bring in new constituent councils. Karen tribe may be one example. Hmong group is a second for possibility of formation of new constituencies.

Sustaining Ministry in Challenging Times: See attached. The goal is to increase endowment funds by \$2.5 million. (see PowerPoint, attached) [Case - PPT Presentation\[1\].ppt](#)

We need to continue subsidizing collegial covenant groups
Need to provide training for local constituent councils
Need national gatherings to celebrate ministry and hone leadership skills (e.g. Wait on the Lord Conference)

We have made significant contributions in the lives of our leaders, and we need to sustain this without Lilly funding. The Senate is requested to support a capital campaign to increase financial support.

- c. Lisa Drysdale led reflection time on the presentation by Joe Kutter.¹
- d. Business Session 2
 - i. Treasurer's Report – Thomas Gilmore
 - a. Balance Sheet: Total Liabilities and Net Assets = \$2,161,909.20 including Lilly funds and endowment.
 - ii. Provisional 2011 Budget Presentation – Thomas Gilmore. Proposed expenses: \$265,386.00. Projected income: \$218,896.32. (Deficit provisional budget of \$46,489.68) Possible action on Tuesday: Raising dues for individual members to \$50.00 beginning 1/11. Will also vote on Tuesday to accept the provisional budget.
 - iii. Capital Campaign Presentation – Executive Committee. Proposed Action: Asking for a three year campaign to raise \$2.5 million. Lilly Foundation will be asked to allow use of residual grant money to offset campaign expenses.
 - iv. Search Committee - Alice Greene. Proposed Action: to approve offering the Acting Executive Director an extension of service through December 2012, asking for a response by September 15, 2010.
 - v. Personnel Committee – Phin Marr. Proposed Action: Approve changing the Acting Executive Director's title to Executive Director
 - vi. Nominating Committee – Phin Marr. Proposed: to approve the following slate of officers:
 - Vice President Membership and Constituency 1/2011-12/2014:** Shakespeare Osorio
 - VP Professional Effectiveness 1/2011-12/2014:** Dee Dee Turlington
 - Senate Rep to Executive Committee** – 1/11 until end of Senate Tenure: Brian Dixon (replacing Carl Davis) and replacement for Dave Russell ?
 - Secretary Treasurer** – replacing Forrest Cornelius
 - Senator at Large** filling unexpired term for Valentine Royal (1/11-12/31/13: Jackson Oliveira
 - Senator at Large to Executive Committee** (serves until end of Senate tenure 12/31/14 – Joan Burnett
 - Senator at Large to Executive Committee** (if Dee Tee Turlington elected as VP Professional Effectiveness)– term 1/11-12/31/12: Holly Bean
 - vii. Discussion time was provided in response to the preceding agenda items
 - viii. Women in Ministry Report – Holly Bean, Convener of Ministers Council Task Force on Women in Ministry and consultant to ABCUSA
 - 1. Reported on ABWIM Steering Committee and on the Ministers Council Task Force on Women in Ministry.
 - 2. Requested that the list of suggested actions for Constituent Councils be brought to those councils
 - 3. Working on series of regional profiles that will provide a picture of where there are successes and difficulties for women in ministry to be presented in 2011
 - 4. Involved in pre-Biennial planning for next year
 - 5. Steering Committee designed new logo, produced a new brochure, and continued the Phoebe's Purse fundraising appeal; materials are can be ordered from Valley Forge; suggestions and prayers are welcome
 - ix. Visiting with Guests:

¹ See attached report from Joe Kutter at end of this document

1. Liliana Da Valle Executive Minister of Rhode Island. Available as Pastor of the Week; brings greetings on behalf of other Executive Ministers.
2. Larry Greenfield, Executive Minister Chicago
3. Dwight Lundgren, ABPS Manager – provided a written Personnel Services Report; this is a reminder and a request for partnership between the Ministers Council and ABPS, and encouragement to keep profiles updated.
4. Perry Hopper, MMBB Representative – MMBB’s role is behind the scenes, serving as advocate for the Ministers Council. Recent staff changes have taken place; services have shifted primarily to NY office. Work of field representatives (senior benefit consultants) focuses on growth. Plan is now open to those outside ABCUSA churches. A Director of Outreach has also been hired. Members with questions about accounts can call NY office directly instead of contacting their representative.
5. Ray Schooler, International Ministries – top three questions
 - a. Who are you: serves as Director of Development working with local churches and individuals in difficult economic times; Seven ministry focuses exist and are available online
 - b. New ways of assisting missions are moving forward, with a closer relationship between missionaries and churches in the form of targeted giving
 - c. World Mission Offering is still needed, and thanks for the continued support
6. Rev. and Mrs. Peter Wolf are representing Judson Press
7. Jeff Woods, ABCUSA – working most recently in regional offices focusing on adaptive change and pastoral imagination. Pastors’ seminars are also being conducted. Fact 2010 surveys are available, and any region can participate.
8. Mary Young, Seminary Representative – Appreciates ability to work with the Ministers Council in the service of both individuals and organizations. Concerns include strengthening linkages between seminaries and local constituent councils, placement of women in ministry, connecting students with ABPS.
9. “A Video Word from ABEC” was not shown due to technical difficulties.
- x. Dates of the next Senate: August 13-17, 2011 (Executive Committee arrives August 12)

6. Monday, August 16, 2010, 8:30 am

Session III

- a. Singing by the Lake led by John Polite
- b. Business Session 3
 - i. President’s Report – Jeff Savage

Jeff states that he represents us on the General Board and the Board of International Ministries. Also a local church pastor with attendant struggles, challenges and duties. Success is dependent on all of us being the hands and feet of Christ. Decisions at the national level must be seen through the eyes of the local church; as the Ministers Council Senate we stand in a unique spot in our ability to speak to both our colleagues and our denominational leaders.

This is important when we think about raising \$2.5 million – how important is the

Ministers Council? Restructuring is another conversation that is continuing. With approach of Biennial this proposal will be presented again (Jeff Woods has details on the proposal).

II Corinthians 1 states that our adversities equip us for the ministry of consolation:

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows. If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we suffer. And our hope for you is firm, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our comfort. (II Corinthians 1:3-7)

All we've been through equips us to move forward together in ministry. This organization is key to our ability to do so.

Our purpose statement says that "We are women and men who advocate for and covenant with each other to deepen our spiritual journey and to increase our effectiveness, as persons who are accepting the call of God and church for the advancement of the Gospel mission of the church of Jesus Christ and to proclaim His truth in a prophetic voice as led by the Holy Spirit."

The theme for this Senate is "Becoming a Community of Spiritual Leaders" (not just effective leaders). We covenant together in groups that are accountable and encouraging and life giving.

We know we often (foolishly) try to do things on our own. We need a membership drive to bring others into community, and we need a financial campaign so we can fulfill our mission. We too often operate from a standing of scarcity rather than plenty.

The pre-Biennial event is sponsored by Ministers Council, WIM and regional ministries – "The New Normal" meeting on June 23 and 24, before the June 24-26, 2011 Biennial. Gary Nelson and Peggy Kendall will be speakers. Jeff encourages all to attend – local churches are excited about our being there.

Two scriptures are applicable:

I Chronicles 9:22-27

Altogether, those chosen to be gatekeepers at the thresholds numbered 212. They were registered by genealogy in their villages. The gatekeepers had been assigned to their positions of trust by David and Samuel the seer. They and their descendants were in charge of guarding the gates of the house of the Lord -the house called the Tent. The gatekeepers were on the four sides: east, west, north and south. Their brothers in their villages had to come from time to time and share their duties for seven-day periods. But the four principal gatekeepers, who were Levites, were entrusted with the responsibility for the rooms and treasuries in the house of God. They would spend the night stationed around the house of God, because they had to guard it; and they had charge of the key for opening it each morning. Whole groups are set aside as gatekeepers of the temple.

John 1:37-51

When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus. Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, "What do you want?"

They said, "Rabbi" (which means Teacher), "where are you staying?"

"Come," he replied, "and you will see."

So they went and saw where he was staying, and spent that day with him. It was about the tenth hour.

Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus.

Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas" (which, when translated, is Peter).

The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, "Follow me."

Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida. Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote — Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

"Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" Nathanael asked.

"Come and see," said Philip.

When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, "Here is a true Israelite, in whom there is nothing false."

"How do you know me?" Nathanael asked.

Jesus answered, "I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you."

Then Nathanael declared, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel."

Jesus said, "You believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You shall see greater things than that." He then added, "I tell you the truth, you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

Andrew ran to get Peter; Can anything good come out of (Nazareth, Green Lake, Valley Forge)? Am I going to be a gatekeeper or a greeter? We have enough gatekeepers. We are given the choice of accomplishing God's purpose in the world, or not. Kierkegaard's ducks hear an inspiring sermon, you can fly, and sing "We'll Fly Away," but after the benediction they all waddle home. Will we waddle or fly?

Thanks to Joe Kutter, who invites people to the table rather than keeping them away, and to the Executive Committee, and to all of the Senators. Also a special thanks to Sue Sechrist, Office Administrator.

Prayer Teams met
Committees met
ABWIM met at lunch
Sabbath Time

7. **Tuesday, August 17, 8:30 am.** **Session IV**
- a. Prayer Requests: Hmong travelers in traffic accident; Brian Fischer for health concerns
 - b. Lighting of the Christ Candle by Phin Marr
 - c. Singing led by Rick Massana [reverse order of b and c]
 - d. Business Items

- i. Dues Proposal: **To approve an increase in the national dues to \$50.00 per year.** Discussion: Ken Smith, Membership Committee, wants to offer the current rate to new members. Rick Harris inquires about different rates for seminarians, etc. Joe Kutter suggests this could be left to the Executive Committee. Miriam Mendez feels that \$50.00 is excessive for seminarians. Holly Bean states that seminarians are entitled to pay dues that are 50%. Further discussion: \$50.00 is not a lot, but there should be a great deal of education and sharing about Ministers Council before telling people that dues are going to double. Joe Kutter reminds us that details have not been worked out and the fundraising campaign will not begin immediately. Gilmore: remember the proposed budget is a provisional budget that is a deficit budget. Further discussion: wonders whether regional dues will be raised as well. Important to convince the churches to pay the dues on behalf of the members. Michael Friday suggests treating this as a constitutional change with advance notice, and invite an offering along with the dues increase.
Jeff Savage (chair) invited table conversation and encouragement to look for consensus.

Suggestions: Q: Can membership be extended to non-ABC clergy? A: At the moment we don't have that option due to ByLaws. Option should come before this body in the near future. Regions could experiment with this possibility. Agreement that \$50.00 is necessary, but we have annual meetings in October with no forewarning. Case needs to be made for the increase. Questioned whether discounts are really fair. Need to soften the blow – language is important. Could be a graduated increase. Must work to raise membership along with dues. May be a way to take it out electronically on a monthly basis. Concern for repairing bridges with those who used to be active but aren't active now.

Motion to call the question (halt discussion) – **Motion:** defeated

Interlude: spiritual intervention by Discernmentarian Lisa Drysdale – identify what you are feeling and share it in a word without discussion

Chair: entertaining motions:

Amendment: Phin Marr “to be implemented in the following way: \$10 increase in 2011, \$15 in 2012.” Friendly amendment to the amendment: “And to include a special appeal for additional offering”. M&S: Motion for amendment defeated.

Motion and Second for original proposal: **Motion:** passes.

- ii. Budget Proposal. **To receive the budget proposal submitted by Thomas Gilmore, Treasurer.** Discussion: Gilmore stresses that we can withdraw only 8% from our endowment, and reserves will not cover the deficit. Note that this is a provisional budget based on projected expenses. **Motion:** Brian Dixon; **Second:** Holly Bean to pass the provisional budget.

Motion to adopt the provisional budget passed.

- iii. **Motion to approve the three-year capital campaign to raise \$2.5 million.** Kutter notes that if this passes we begin now. Official roll-out date has to be soon, but preparation is required. Three year clock begins with the official roll-out. Three-year means a three year payout period. Q: Do we need to worry about being in conflict with other fund-raising efforts. A: Necessary bases have been touched. We will work with other ministry partners to coordinate.

Motion: passed.

Comments: Joe Kutter. Distribution of pledge cards, with no amount filled in at this time.

- iv. Search Committee - Jeff Savage for Alice Greene, who had to leave early. **Proposed Action: to approve offering the Acting Executive Director an extension of service through December 31, 2012, asking for a response by September 15, 2010.** This allows Joe Kutter to extend his term of office that was agreed to in 2007 following the tenure of Kate Harvey.
- v. Personnel Committee – Phin Marr. **Proposed Action: Approve changing the Acting Executive Director’s title to Executive Director, effective immediately.** Discussion: this vote raises the question of whether an ending date for the previous (iv) motion is necessary. Q: What is the purpose of removing the provision “acting” A: Intent was to empower the current Executive Director by affirming his position. .
- vi. **Substitute Motion: Rick Harris. The Ministers Council Senate calls Joe Kutter as our Executive Director. Second: John Polite.** Discussion: He can resign whenever he wishes. Some uneasiness with bypassing procedures, especially the search process.

Parliamentarian: Must decide on whether the substitute motion is in order.
Motion to recess for 15 minutes. Passed.

Following the recess, the chair has ruled the substitute motion out of order. The chair has also ruled that the change in order of the agenda will not be permitted. Therefore item (iv) above is the next agenda item under consideration.

- vii. **(Reverting to (iv) above: Search Committee. Proposed Action: to approve offering the Acting Executive Director an extension of service through December 31, 2012, asking for a response by September 15, 2012.**
Amendment: to remove the date “through December 31, 2012.” Amendment fails.
Motion: **Approved.**
- viii. **(Reverting to (v) above): Personnel Committee – Phin Marr. Proposed Action: Approve changing the Acting Executive Director’s title to Executive Director, effective immediately:**

Motion: **Approved**

- ix. Nominating Committee – Phin Marr. **Proposed: to approve the following slate of officers:[copy from above to capture changes but add Lisa Drysdale replacing Dave Russell]**

Vice President Membership and Constituency Jan 2011-12/2014:

Shakespeare Osorio

Vice President Professional Effectiveness: Dee Dee Turlington

Senate Representative to Executive Committee – 1/11 until end of Senate

Tenure: Brian Dixon (replacing Carl Davis) and replacement Lisa Drysdale

(replacing Dave Russell)

Secretary Treasurer – replacing Forrest Cornelius – no candidate

Senator-at-Large filling unexpired term for Valentine Royal (1/11-12/31/11:
Jackson Oliveira

Senator-at-Large to Executive Committee (serves until end of Senate tenure
12/31/13 – Joan Burnett

Senator-at-Large to Executive Committee (if Dee Tee Turlington elected as
VP Professional Effectiveness – term 1/11-12/31/12: Holly Bean

Chair requests electing the slate by single vote, by voice vote. **The slate is elected by acclamation.**

- e. Comments by Executive Director regarding Communities of Practice.

The current discussions have been a Communities of Practice process. Nurturing community and spiritual discernment has been included in the process. This is an exercise of being a practitioner of ministry. How do we structure this kind of practice? We were not allowed to live in the world of abstraction. Community also includes a focus on behavior. We are creating community, increasing spirituality, and acting effectively around issues to solve. Theory isn't excluded, but it has to be down to earth.

Process wasn't a series of monologues, and engaged everyone in the conversation through table discussions. May be important to find a different process for decision-making as a consideration by the by-laws committee.

- f. Chair: Schedule allows time for prayer teams now, with Committee Meetings after lunch. Committees will meet at 1:00 pm. Session adjourned.

8. Tuesday, August 17, 1:00 pm

Business Session 5

- a. 1:00 pm Committee Meetings
- b. 2:40 pm Constituent Councils Reports
 - i. Ken Whitt, Springfield, OH reports that Ministers Council in Ohio has been rejuvenated, with growth of a TIM group on spirituality. Communities of Practice have gained traction in the region.
 - ii. Sandy Aakre, Dakotas, celebrating camping ministries
 - iii. Judy Gay, Evergreen. TIM groups are continuing, along with pastors' retreat; Seattle Baptist Union hosts a cruise of local ministers and seminarians.
 - iv. Lisa Drysdale, NY State. Personal challenge is one of energy and Ministers Council is dependent on her energy, and a lot of things are in flux. Difficult to find balance in these areas. 2010 retreat: David Bartlett will speak.
 - v. Karen Pickler, Chaplains: 2 TIM groups through Wayne Oates Institute.
 - vi. Wesley Sun, Chicago: Ministers Council retreat September 13 on Spiritual Discipline; Possibility of TIM group for non-parish clergy
 - vii. Mark Hetrick, Indianapolis: Benefits are showing up from bridge-building and workshops on conflict resolution. Joan Friesen is encouraging wellness as part of TIM groups.
 - viii. Mike Harvey, Massachusetts: Upcoming COP focus with Joe Kutter. Boundaries workshop every two years; responsible for training and certifying interim ministers for TABCOM. Working with social ministries to assist clergy in multicultural groups and immigration issues.
 - ix. Glenn Loafmann, from Oberlin, OH representing Rochester: One area of concern is communication and connection with ministers who are at a distance.
 - x. Gloria Chaney, Cleveland: Currently planning clergy training session for fall. Goals: Communicating need for ministers in Cleveland to get involved and talk to them personally.

- xi. Dave Spiegel, Dee Dee Turlington, NJ: Goal is to reconnect with those who have left, and connect with those who are not involved. Spring Retreat was held with Margaret Marcuson. Recognize pressures pastors face and need to encourage them to make time available for important events.
 - xii. Ken Smith, Connecticut: Excited about Connecticut – back to regular programming schedule including retreats. Have training coming up with Jeff Woods in September.
 - xiii. Valerie Andrews, Philadelphia: Training in sexual indiscretion, clergy burnout. Thankful to be here.
 - xiv. Miriam Mendez, Portland OR: Several TIM groups in place, new one starting on self-care. Ministers Council retreat in March will focus on self-care. Remains hopeful about Communities of Practice approach.
 - xv. Michael Friday, Nebraska: Executive Minister organizes two seminars yearly for pastors. Even with endowment there is a lack of participation in learning opportunities.
 - xvi. Rick Messana, Maine: Growing strength in Maine; successful retreat in May with another scheduled for fall; area resource ministers have been replaced.
 - xvii. David Van Brakle, Michigan: Trying to become more visible in region; began working last year at pastor's retreat with organization and financing. Peer leader retreat this year; clusters of ministers have struggled to meet so Ministers Council supported this.
 - xviii. David Sagar, Chicago: Thanks to Joe Kutter for COP training;
 - xix. Leigh Johnson, RI: Active meetings monthly; renewal of clusters around the state; cooperating with MA and CT. Kirk Jones was speaker last year.
- c. Committee Reports
- i. Communication: Tasked with *Minister* magazine, published electronically 3 times per year. Next issue in November on Preaching. May include a sequel. Also issue on Chaplaincy next Spring. Appreciation to Sue Sechrist. Committee meets monthly in conference call.
 - ii. Membership/Constituency: Crucial to reach out to all who are eligible for membership. Goal is to increase overall dues-paying membership by 500 next year. Requires participation of all on Ministers Council. Strategy includes: Reaching out to special interest groups, those who have participated in TIM groups, successful regions, seek to form new councils out of TIM groups in areas with no councils. Ask regional executives to facilitate recruitment. Promotional materials are needed. Recruit new members at special events. Ask missionary partnership teams to recruit missionaries to be members. Encourage seminarians to form TIM groups and receive mentoring. Appeal to congregations to pay pastors' dues, and to see advantages of membership.
 - iii. Spiritual and Personal Wholeness: Considered Clergy Fitness Document – led to initiative to form groups around fitness, including congregational groups. Will provide guide for 40 Days of Community Prayer with distribution of scriptures during Advent. Suggest prayer team for Ministers Council, with request to pray for Ministers Council at noon every Wednesday.
 - iv. Professional Effectiveness: Addressing clergy wellness from a professional effectiveness perspective, including development of TIM groups; desire to investigate seminary curriculum wellness inclusion; concept of online covenant group based on clergy wellness and fitness – covenant would include checking the site and posting a blog monthly; opportunity for participant responses; broad understanding of well-being. Evaluation at end of 5 and 10 months; hope to evaluate the process and institute something for the benefit of the whole Senate. Mike Harvey will facilitate. "Ministers' Grail: We have found the grail, and it is us."

Charged with organizing Preaching Pavilion at the Biennial – 6 sessions, with invited preachers representing different cultures (Asian, seminarian, etc.). Beginning to reflect on next year's agenda: best practices regarding retirement,

interim ministry, and churches in conflict with their pastors.

- v. Denominational Relations. 1) Ministers Council will continue to advocate for Women in Ministry. 2) There is a task force already formed by the Professional Ministries team that is working on updating and improving procedures for ordination. When the team completes their work, they will submit it to the Denominational Relations Committee for our review, and we will in turn submit those findings to the Senate. 3) Process for unifying denominational parts. A letter will be sent to Dr. Medley regarding denominational unity.
- d. Various announcements; need for expense reports, evaluation forms
- e. Closing remarks: Joe Kutter - ministerial strategy: find people who have skills you don't have and trust them to do it better than you would do it. You may guess wrong; if I don't limit the work of the church to my capacity and my calendar the good things happen. That philosophy has borne fruit in this room. You have acted as the Body of Christ in this place. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Saylor
Acting Secretary

Attachments: Sustaining Ministry
Powerpoint