

November 30, 2018

Budget Team Update

To: All Pastors & Local Church Leadership

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

We bring greetings in the name of Jesus as we enter the Season of Advent and with it a new Christian year.

The Budget Team has been tasked to recommend a 2020 budget that is missionally-directed by the three [Strategic Priorities](#) adopted by the Annual Conference (2013). The Team has also been tasked to propose expense reductions of \$1 million for the 2020 budget. The team seeks collaboration and open communication with all the stakeholders of the Conference Budget. Our team will make its final recommendation to the Bishop's Operational Team who will then communicate their recommendation to CFA for the upcoming budget years. In our second letter we laid out the process of communication with you. That information may still be accessed at: [Budget Team Updates](#).

We now have specific recommendations to share with the Iowa Conference. These recommendations have been shared with affected Conference staff, the chairs of affected Boards and Agencies, and now with you, our leaders, both lay and clergy on the forefront of our mission to make Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World. To that end, we are striving to keep more resources available to the local church.

There are some assumptions that the Team felt have been dominant in our ministry together.

- a) Foremost has been the belief that money equals ministry. While certainly much of ministry does require financial resources, we believe that personal investment along with spiritual commitment are what is required for transformation, trust, and sustainable ministry.
- b) Another of those assumptions is that our connection is best represented in our apportioned giving. This may be an efficient way of supporting ministries, but we don't believe it is the best representation of our connection.

We on the Budget Team believe that we are at our best when we join in ministry together. We believe we can do far more together than we can separately. That means local congregations and their leaders coming together in mission and service. In this way, we demonstrate our love for Jesus by living in love with one another and reaching out to join the Holy Spirit in what God is doing in a hurting and often broken world.

As the Budget Team, we make the following recommendations:

1. Move from eight District Offices with eight District Administrative Assistants to four bi-District Offices with four District Administrative Assistants. The District files and equipment would be housed with the DAA in the District Office. Superintendents would work from virtual offices throughout the District. The intention is to be accessible to local church laity and clergy.
 - a. Estimated expense reduction: \$319,000 for 2020.
2. Reconfigure the deployment of Associates for Congregational Excellence from four full-time positions to two full-time positions to focus on revitalization, with two $\frac{1}{4}$ Associates to resource new and existing immigrant Communities of Faith. This would enable broader cultural competence. We recommend implementation July 1, 2019.
 - a. Estimated expense reduction: \$60,000 for 2019 and \$120,000 in 2020.
3. In place of the support staff position to the Assistant to the Bishop, we recommend moving to a "Secretary" to the Cabinet. That person would take minutes, track the appointive process and the audit of clergy and churches, schedule clergy moves, and release appointments, among other duties. This would relocate some responsibilities from the District Administrative Assistants to increase efficiency. It would also relocate responsibilities from Superintendents to allow them more time to serve as district missional strategists.

- a. Estimated expense reduction: \$45,300 in 2020.
4. Combine the Address Services/Journal Editor position with the Director of Ministerial Services.
 - a. Estimated expense reduction: \$51,240 in 2020.
5. Reduce the apportioned funding to the Board of Higher Education and Campus ministry from \$544,933 to \$44,933. We recognize this is a dramatic reduction. Every person on the Budget Team believes that ministry with students is vitally important. It is our hope that local churches will partner with our Wesley Foundations and United Methodist related colleges and beyond to expand ministry to young adults. Other Conferences that have moved in this direction have seen a growth in ministry to young adults and students.
 - a. Estimated expense reduction: \$500,000 in 2020.
6. Reduce the apportioned funding of Community and Institutional Ministry grants by \$150,000.
 - a. Estimated expense reduction: \$150,000 in 2020.
7. End our apportioned funding of the Iowa Religious Media Service.
 - a. Estimated expense reduction: \$78,000 in 2020.
8. Reduce the apportioned funding to the Board of Camping and Retreat Ministry from \$687,887 to \$617,887.
 - a. Estimated expense reduction: \$70,000 in 2020.

These recommended decreases in the expense of the Iowa Conference are painful, but we believe they are needed if we are to be faithful stewards to maintain the health of the Iowa Conference. This will result in over a million-dollar reduction to the 2020 apportioned budget. These are monies that will be available to local churches to further our shared mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World.

We have set time for feedback and listening sessions to begin with our Boards and Agencies here at the Conference Center on December 8. We have scheduled three one and half hour feedback/listening sessions throughout the Conference in January at the following dates and locations:

- January 13, 2019: North Liberty United Methodist Church from 2:45 – 4:15 PM
- January 20, 2019: Carroll, First United Methodist Church from 2:00 – 3:30 PM
- January 26, 2019: Ames, First United Methodist Church from 10:30 – 12:00 Noon

We continue to receive questions, comments, suggestions as we conduct our work. Thank you to all who took time to email us. Your input is helpful and welcome. A temporary email address has been set up for you to use if you'd like to communicate with the Budget Team. It is budget@iaumc.org.

Please join us as we continue to pray for our Iowa Conference and seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Grace and Peace,

Bill Poland, Chair, Budget Team
Harlan Gillespie, Assistant to the Bishop
Maggie Biggs, Treasurer/Director of Administrative Services
Paul Burrow, Chair, CCMC
Jon Disburg, President, CFA

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