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September 2012

Dear Pastors and Communications Coordinators:

The purpose of this letter is to remind and inform you to:

1. Register, and encourage your congregation to register, for a *Discerning God's Will: Homosexuality in the Church* mission center-led workshop. Held **Saturday, October 6** at Tuality and Crystal Springs; **Saturday, October 13** at Bend; and **Saturday, October 20** at Eugene and University Place.
2. Record attendance for **all worship services in October** for our annual Pastor Survey. Your CSM will call you and complete this survey on your behalf by Friday, November 30.
3. Submit Bold Moves Applications: Due **Monday, October 15**.
4. Elect your congregation's delegates to our annual Mission Center Conference, November 3-4, in Portland: Due **Monday, October 15**.
5. Share Mission Center Conference new business: budget, allocations, sustaining of a priesthood call, election of 2013 World Conference and USA National Conference delegates. Pastors, RSVP to your invitation to attend our Pastors' Breakfast on Sunday, November 4: RSVP due by **Friday, October 26**.
6. Remind your congregation to submit their names for nomination as World Conference delegates and USA National Conference delegates: Due **Monday, October 29**.
7. Hold your fall congregational business meetings to elect/sustain officers by **Sunday, November 25**, and report results: Due **Sunday, December 9**.
8. Read and post enclosed flyers for upcoming fall events, including: *Discerning God's Will: Homosexuality in the Church* workshops, Young Adult Retreat, Mission Center Conference, and Melchisedec and Companions Retreat.
9. Plan your budgeting and fundraising for new Community of Christ hymnal, to be released in one year.

DEADLINES:

Now—Register for a DGW workshop; solicit names for Mission Center Conference delegate nominations

Sept. 30—Announce business mtg. to elect MC Conf. delegates

Oct. 7, 14, 21, 28—Record attendance each Sunday

Oct. 15—Submit Bold Moves applications

Oct. 15—Report Mission Center Conference delegate names

Oct. 26—RSVP for Pastors' Breakfast

Oct. 29—Deadline to submit nominations for World & USA National Conference delegates

Nov. 25—Elect cong. Officers

Nov. 30—Pastor Surveys due

Dec. 9—Report 2013 congregational officers

→ Discerning God's Will: Homosexuality in the Church Workshops—Register Now to Attend

Continue discerning with the church the Will of God! We are making ourselves vulnerable to the Spirit and to each other, learning and sharing together in preparation for the USA National Conference. Two questions are before us: *Should calls to priesthood for homosexuals in committed, monogamous relationships be processed according to established procedures? Should the church authorize ministers to perform same-sex marriages where they are legal, and provide for some commitment ceremony where they are not legal?* The 2013 USA National Conference will seek common consent on these questions and offer advice to church leadership.

Every workshop, facilitated by GPNW Mission Center staff, will include spiritual exercises of discernment, informational sharing from church leaders, and sharing of various perspectives. There will also be time for discussion and consideration of the information and our own feelings and perspectives. The outcome of the workshop or the discernment process is not pre-determined, but the process is made to be faithful to our enduring principles and basic beliefs. Come, listen and be listened to, and help our church be open to the Spirit!

To be held on **Saturday, October 6** at Tuality and Crystal Springs; **Saturday, October 13** at Bend; or **Saturday, October 20** at Eugene and University Place. Workshop hours for all locations are 9 am to 4 pm. Registration is FREE; bring a lunch. Register online at <http://discerning2.eventbrite.com> for the workshop most convenient to you. Alternatively, call Kim Naten at 360-748-3562. For questions, contact Mission Center Learning Officer Christian Skoorsmith at cskoorsmith@cofchrist-gpnw.org.

→ Pastor Surveys—Track Attendance in October

The purpose of this annual survey is to track key measures of congregational life, over time, across the mission center. Please track your congregation's attendance for each regular worship service in October. Your Congregational Support Minister will arrange a telephone call with you in November to discuss, interpret, receive and report this information to the mission center. Your CSM is responsible for the completion and submission of the survey; you only need to speak with them and provide the input. Deadline to have all Pastor Surveys completed and submitted is Friday, November 30.

→ Bold Moves—Submit Applications by Monday, October 15

The Bold Moves Grant Committee awarded new grants to several congregations last spring. Now is the time for others to start working on new or renewing grant applications, due **Monday, October 15**. Previous grant winners may reapply two more times. Find information under "Ministries > Bold Moves" on our Mission Center website (www.cofchrist-gpnw.org) or contact Steve Pomeroy, spomeroy@cofchrist-gpnw.org, for help. Note that links to World Church and Western Field grants for Mission and Tangible Love also can be found on this webpage, so you can supplement Bold Moves funds for bigger projects.

→ Mission Center Conference Delegates—Elect/Report by Monday, October 15

Announce by **Sunday, September 30**, your congregational business meeting to elect conference delegates and alternates, and solicit candidates' names beforehand. This business meeting should occur no later than Sunday, October 14. Any member "in good standing" with membership within the GPNW Mission Center is eligible to run for delegate. List all nominations on a prepared ballot, which also notes the number of delegates to elect from your congregation. Members may nominate others as "write-ins" during the business meeting and may vote for as many nominees *as can be elected*. Those receiving the most votes—up to the number of delegates allotted to your congregation—are elected. *(See attachment with your updated delegate allotment.)* Remaining nominees will serve as alternates, in descending order of votes received. Note: We often are able to change alternates into voting delegates from other congregations before conference. Immediately notify your delegates and alternates of their election. Report the names of your elected delegates and your alternates (prioritized by highest to lowest votes received) to Kim Naten, Mission Center Recorder, by Monday, October 15. (Please use attached delegate submittal form.) If you are unable to elect your full delegate allotment, inform Kim whether your delegate openings can be filled by elected alternates from a specific congregation or by any alternates. Call Kim M-F at 360-748-3562 or email her at knaten@cofchrist-gpnw.org. **Also, please schedule congregational time AFTER Mission Center Conference for your delegates to report action by the conference to your congregation.** *(Delegate submittal form attached.)*

→ Mission Center Conference Information and New Business—Share with Elected Delegates and Congregation, RSVP to Pastors' Breakfast by Friday, October 26

Mission Center Conference convenes at 10 am, Saturday, November 3 and ends at 12:30 pm, Sunday, November 4, at Community of Christ - Portland Congregation, 4837 NE Couch St., Portland, OR 97213.

Conference Details

Our conference theme is *Journey Together in Faith*. Mission Center Conference will include new hymns, business, election of World Conference and USA National Conference delegates, singing and fundraising for Orphans Africa, table fellowship, ordinations, and worship by and for all ages. **Assistant to the Apostle David Nii will bring "The Good News."** Now is the time to promote the dates and location of Mission Center conference in your bulletins each week. You will receive additional, more detailed promotional materials later this month to share with your members closer to the dates of conference. *(See attached flyer with schedule.)*

Pastors Breakfast

Pastors, save the date for our **annual Pastor's Breakfast** at 7:30 am, Sunday morning, November 4, at The Grotto, a Catholic spiritual and event center. The Grotto Conference Center is located near Portland Congregation at North East Sandy Boulevard and North East 85th Avenue (www.thegrotto.org). You'll hear inspiring stories and practical how-tos from fellow pastors about their mission activities, led by the Holy Spirit. You will receive a useful thank-you gift: the newly published *Pastors and Leaders Field Guide* from the World Church. Watch for your invitation in the mail soon, and remember to RSVP as indicated by **Friday, October 26**.

Priesthood Call and Ordinations

In advance of Mission Center Conference, please share with your congregation new business being considered. At our Saturday business meeting, delegates will be asked to bring affirming testimonies and sustain the priesthood call of **Craig Perryman**, Bend Congregation, to Seventy. This call is already approved by the World Church Leadership Council. If sustained, Craig will be ordained with previously sustained evangelist candidates Susan Gregory (Bend Congregation) and Blake Puckett (Crystal Springs Congregation) on Sunday morning.

Proposed 2013 Mission Center Budget

Included with this letter is the **proposed 2013 Mission Center budget** to share and review with your delegates and congregation prior to Mission Center Conference. (*See attachment.*) This proposed 2013 budget is three percent (3%) more than 2012; however, the total congregational allocations are slightly less than this current year's. With the loss of the Lacamas Heights and Bridgeport Congregations, the remaining congregations will feel a slight increase in allocations; however, we are grateful for the generosity of these two congregations. The assets of both congregations have merged with the mission center for the benefit of all congregations and for the missional ministries of the GPNW. Additionally, Lacamas Heights Congregation shared the proceeds of the sale of an easement for the cell tower on their property with neighboring Community of Christ congregations, with each of the campgrounds of the GPNW, and with the mission center's 2013 budget.

You may have noticed two new income lines in the budget. The first is Expansion Groups. This is a way for emerging groups, who do not currently have an allocation, to express their generosity and support the mission center budget. The second is Congregational Generosity. This is a way for those congregations who have additional resources available (rental income, investment income, etc.) to express their generosity and help support the mission center and the other congregations.

The 3% budget increase helps to provide a one percent (1%) pay increase for all staff, provide sufficient ministerial resources for our staff and adjust other budget lines to reflect their actual costs. Additionally, our financial office is understaffed when compared with other mission centers—all smaller than ours. The proposed budget for 2013 will allow us to add 8 hours/week (+0.2FTE) to the Financial Assistant position held by Dianne Webberley. Adding to this position will allow the MCFO to focus on less task-intensive work and direct more time and energy toward issues of: communicating principles of Disciples' Generous Response, managing property, supporting Congregation Financial Officers, bolstering funding for mission, and supporting non-traditional congregations and congregations without buildings.

Your Congregation's Proposed Allocation

Due to several congregational transitions over the past year, allocations continue to shift. Attached to this letter is the proposed 2013 allocation spreadsheet for the congregations of the GPNW Mission Center. Based on feedback received from mission center members, the formula has been further refined this year to provide more predictability for congregations. *To keep allocations low for congregations with financial challenges, the budget assumes that generous congregations, expansion groups and individual members will close the GPNW Mission Center budget gap with additional contributions to the mission center above their allocated giving.* Bill McFarlin includes the criteria and rationale for the revision on the back, which you can share with your members.

Based on the proposed 2013 budget, Bill has included your 2013 allocation, and will post on our GPNW website your anticipated allocation, by congregation, if this budget passes at Mission Center Conference. Find it at www.cofchrist-gpnw.org/officers. This information will help you plan your 2013 congregational budget. If you have questions about the proposed budget or your congregation's allocation, contact Bill McFarlin, Mission Center Financial Officer, at 360-574-2758 or wmcfarlin@cofchrist-gpnw.org. (*See attachment.*)

→ Nominations for World Conference & USA National Conference Delegates— Submit by Monday, October 29

Please make the following announcement (both verbally and printed in your bulletins) to your congregation and post the attachment regarding **Delegate Expectations**: Those interested in serving as a delegate to either World Conference (April 13-18, 2013) OR the USA National Conference (April 19-21, 2013), Independence, MO, or both, should submit their name and congregation to Kim Naten (knaten@cofchrist-gpnw.org or 360-748-3562) by **Monday, October 29**. Please indicate which conference you are interested in, or both if applicable. Ballots containing the names of all delegate nominees will be prepared in advance of Mission Center Conference; however, nominations will also be taken from the floor at the Saturday business session. Election of delegates for both conferences will occur at the afternoon business session on Saturday, November 3, at Portland Congregation. GPNW Mission Center has been allocated 84 delegates for World Conference and 71 delegates for the USA National Conference. Elections for delegates to the two conferences will be held separately. Information and preparatory materials regarding the USA National Conference can be found at: www.cofchrist.org/usaConf, while information and preparatory materials regarding World Conference can be found at www.cofchrist.org/wc2013.

→ Congregational Business Meetings to Elect/Sustain Officers—Report Results by Sunday, December 9

If you have not already done so, coordinate now with your Congregational Support Minister to schedule pastor elections and sustain your recorder, congregational financial officer and assistant pastors. By now you should have received appointment letters for your recorder and CFO from Bill McFarlin, (360) 574-2758, wmcfarlin@cofchrist-gpnw.org. If you are stepping down as pastor for 2013, please notify your Congregational Support Minister and me as soon as possible to identify your likely successor(s). Officer elections should occur by Sunday, November 25 (before the Advent season) to allow for sufficient 2013 planning, recruiting and budgeting. **Please notify Kim Naten (knaten@cofchrist-gpnw.org) and copy me (ksharp@cofchrist-gpnw.org) with your election results by Sunday, December 9.**

→ New Community of Christ Hymnals in 2013—Fundraise Now

Last spring and with GPNW Mission Center support for travel expenses, seven music leaders from Washington and Oregon attended weekend workshops to learn how to teach new hymns in local congregations and at our Mission Center Conferences. They are poised to deliver at our 2012 Fall Conference on Saturday evening! Now is the time for congregations to plan and fundraise for the purchase of the new *Community of Christ Sings!* hymnals, to be released for the first time at the October Peace Colloquy in 2013. Orders placed in the fall of 2012 will receive a 15% discount.

Build your congregation's anticipation for the new hymnal by learning more and tracking news at www.cofchrist.org/hymnal. Specifics about "Congregational Budgeting" are linked on the left-hand menu. (See attached flyer for more information.)

This fall letter gives you lots to pray, think, plan, decide, attend and do with your congregation and Mission Center members over the next few weeks. And, as always, call or email me with your concerns, questions and excitement. Thank you for your continued, faithful ministry in the name of Jesus Christ! I look forward to seeing you all in Portland at our Mission Center Conference and Pastors' Breakfast. Now and forever, may Christ's peace resonate within you and shine from you.


Kathy Sharp

Enclosures:

- Mission Center Conference Delegate Allotment and Formula Fall 2012
- Mission Center Conference Delegate-Alternate Submittal Form
- Mission Center Conference Flyer with Schedule
- Proposed GPNW Mission Center Budget 2012
- Proposed 2013 Mission Center Congregational Allocations and Explanation of Formula
- World Conference and USA National Conference Delegate Expectations
- Hymnal Project Information Sheet
- Visiting Ministry Schedule 4th Quarter 2012
- *Discerning God's Will: Homosexuality in the Church* Workshops Flyer
- Young Adult Retreat Fall 2012 Flyer
- Melchisedec and Companions Retreat Fall 2012 Flyer