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September 2013

Dear Pastors and Communications Coordinators:

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

1. Announce all fall business meetings with two weeks' notice: Due **Sunday, September 29**.
2. Record attendance for **all worship services in October (October 6, 13, 20 & 27)** for our annual Pastor Survey. Your CSM will call you and complete this survey on your behalf. Due: **Friday, November 30**.
3. Elect your congregation's delegates to our annual Mission Center Conference, November 2-3, in Portland: Due **Monday, October 14**.
4. Submit Bold Moves Applications: Due **Tuesday, October 15**.
5. Share Mission Center Conference new business: budget, allocations, sustaining of priesthood calls. Pastors, RSVP to your invitation to attend our Pastors' Breakfast on Sunday, November 3: RSVP due by **Friday, October 25**.
6. Hold your fall congregational business meetings to elect/sustain officers by **Sunday, November 24**, and report results: Due **Monday, December 8**.
7. Plan and seek congregational approval for your 2014 budgets.
8. Celebrate the arrival of your new **Community of Christ Sings!** Hymnal in November.
9. Prepare for Advent!

→ 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**.

→ Mission Center Conference Delegates—Elect/Report by Monday, October 14

Announce by **Sunday, September 29**, 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 13. 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 enclosure 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

Pastor's Calendar / Checklist:

Now—Solicit names for MC Conference delegate nominations

Sept. 29—Announce business mtg. to elect MC Conf. delegates

Oct. 1—Promote Church Council of Greater Seattle Open House and Blessing at Rainier Valley Congregation (4- 8 pm)

Oct. 4-6—Promote Young Adult Retreat (Samish)

Oct. 6, 13, 20, 27—Record attendance each Sunday

Oct. 14—Report list of MC Conference delegates to Kim Naten

Oct. 15—Submit Bold Moves applications

Oct. 25—RSVP for Pastors' Breakfast

Nov. 24—Elect congregational officers

Nov. 30—Complete Pastor Survey interviews with your CSM

Dec. 8—Report 2014 congregational officers to Kim Naten and Kathy Sharp

(prioritized by highest to lowest votes received) to **Kim Naten**, Mission Center Recorder, by **Monday, October 14**. (Please use enclosed delegate submittal form; information can also be emailed.) 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. Contact Kim at knaten@cofchrist-gpnw.org or 360-748-3562. **Also, please schedule congregational time AFTER Mission Center Conference for your delegates to report action by the Conference to your congregation.** (Delegate submittal form enclosed.)

→ Mission Center Conference Information and New Business—Share with Elected Delegates and Congregation, RSVP to Pastors' Breakfast by Friday, October 25

Mission Center Conference convenes at 10 am, Saturday, November 2 and ends at 12:30 pm, Sunday, November 3, at Community of Christ - Portland Congregation, 4837 NE Couch St., Portland, OR 97213.

Conference Details

Our Conference theme is *For Everyone Born*, based on the title of one of our new (and already favorite) hymns in *Community of Christ Sings! For Everyone Born* celebrates giving everyone a voice at the table and disciples called to be *creators of justice and joy*. Mission Center Conference will include other new hymns, business, testimonies for new priesthood calls, table fellowship, ordination of **Laurie Sharpe** (Garden Grove), to Evangelist, and worship by and for all ages. **Apostle Ron Harmon** will bring "The Good News" throughout the weekend. 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 enclosed flyer with schedule.)

Pastors' Breakfast

Pastors, save the date for our **annual Pastors' Breakfast** at 7:30 am, **Sunday, November 3**, 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. **Michael Ramos**, Executive Director of the Church Council of Greater Seattle (now headquartered at Rainier Valley Community of Christ), will also bring a message for pastors on the breakfast theme, *Creators of Justice and Joy*. You will receive a practical and inspiring thank-you gift. Watch for your invitation in this packet, and again by email, and remember to RSVP as indicated by **Friday, October 25**.

Priesthood Calls and Ordination

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 **Laurie Sharpe** (Garden Grove) to Evangelist and **Cecil McGuire** (Mossyrock Expansion Group) to Priest. (Since Mossyrock is not a congregation, its priesthood calls come before the entire Mission Center.) I expect additional calls to be announced soon. Laurie's call is already approved by the World Church Leadership Council. If sustained, Laurie will be ordained on Sunday morning.

Proposed 2014 Mission Center Budget

Included with this letter is **the proposed 2014 Mission Center budget to share and review with your delegates and congregation prior to Mission Center Conference.** (See enclosure.) This proposed 2014 budget is five percent (5%) more than 2013; however, the total congregational allocations have increased by only about two percent (2%). The 5% increase in the budget was necessary to offset the loss of one-half full-time funding from World Church for one of our staff positions. The reduction in funding is not a reflection on the value of that staff member, but rather a reprioritization of staff funding by World Church leaders in the midst of long-term decreases in available funds.

The 5% budget increase also helps to provide an allowance for up to a one and a half percent (1.5%) pay increase for all staff (subject to approval by World Church HR Committee), provide sufficient ministerial resources for our staff and adjust other budget lines to reflect their actual costs. Other changes to the budget include funding support for our delegation to attend the International Youth Forum (IYF) in 2014, additional ministerial expense funding to

support the efforts of self-sustaining Mission Center staff members, and funding for one-quarter time (0.25FTE) to be added to ministerial staff members' time to help compensate for lost funding and other staff reductions.

One item that is affecting the income side of our budget this year is related to work that has been done in preparation for the sale of Mission Center held properties. The estimated values of those properties has had to be adjusted downward \$350,000 due to unique circumstances related to each of the properties— such as complications with sewer access, wetlands buffers and other environmental and water issues. The value of these properties has been included as part of our investment fund, from which operating income is derived. The decrease in value has resulted in a decrease in the amount available for the routine six percent (6%) investment draw.

Your Congregation's Proposed Allocation

The allocations are simply a starting point for expressing generosity to the Mission Center. The formula used for the allocation does not include investment earnings or income from other sources such as facilities rentals. So to help keep allocations as low as possible, we are continuing to request additional contributions to the Mission Center from congregations that may have additional capacity (Congregational Generosity), from emerging groups (Expansion Groups), and from members of the Mission Center (Oper & Youth Contributions). We are grateful for the response so many have made, and continue to make, in support of our shared mission. Additionally, this year we are anticipating requiring an investment draw of \$32,000 above our usual six percent (6%) draw.

Increases and decreases to congregational allocations are limited to ten percent (10%) to provide stability in budgeting for congregations. Your congregation's allocation will not increase or decrease by more than ten percent (10%) when compared with this current year. A few of our congregations who may have added capacity, but whose allocations were anticipated to be reduced for 2014, have been asked to keep their 2014 allocation at the 2013 level, and we are grateful for their willingness to do so. By doing so, they have reduced the allocations of all other congregations.

Enclosed with this letter is the **proposed 2014 allocation spreadsheet** for the congregations of the GPNW Mission Center. *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.* Mission Center Financial Officer **Bill McFarlin** includes the criteria and rationale for the revision on the back, which you can share with your members.

Based on the proposed 2014 budget, Bill has included your 2014 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 2014 congregational budget. If you have questions about the proposed budget or your congregation's allocation, contact Bill at 360-574-2758 or wmcfarlin@cofchrist-gpnw.org. (See enclosure.)

→ Bold Moves—Submit Applications by Tuesday, 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 **Tuesday, 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.

→ Congregational Business Meetings to Elect/Sustain Officers—Report Results by Sunday, December 8

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. If you are stepping down as pastor for 2014, 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 24** (before the Advent season) to allow for sufficient 2014 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 8**.

→ New Community of Christ Hymnals—Prepare for its Release this Fall!

Six music leaders from Washington and Oregon attended weekend workshops in 2012 to learn how to teach new hymns in local congregations and at Mission Center events. They are poised to offer singing workshops to familiarize your members with songs in your new hymnals. Watch for cluster and congregational opportunities.

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 and shine from you.



Kathy Sharp

Enclosures:

- Mission Center Conference Delegate Allotment and Formula Fall 2013
- Mission Center Conference Delegate-Alternate Submittal Form
- Mission Center Conference Flyer with Schedule
- Proposed GPNW Mission Center Budget 2014
- Proposed 2014 Mission Center Congregational Allocations and Explanation of Formula
- Visiting Ministry Schedule 4th Quarter 2013
- Young Adult Retreat Fall 2013 Flyer