**DRAFT minutes for RCN Conference Call on April 16, 2015 as corrected in May**

Attending were Elin Colglazier, Jonathan Davis, Gary Farley, Judy Hill, Christine Iverson, Alvin Luedke, Judy Matheny, Lon Oliver, Dave Ruesink, Gil Waldkoenig, Mark Yackel-Juleen, and John Young

**Opening Prayer**—John Young

**Brief Check In**

Mark June 7 last Sunday as Parish Pastor. Sept 1 will be at Wartburg. Margaret will be pastor of 4-point parish about 50 miles from Dubuque. Will have a B&B in that vicinity. Will continue as Director of Shalom Hill Farm for 3-years.

Gil—Prof of Church and Society in Gettysburg. Three seminaries coming together. Three graduates with concentration of rural studies. Emersion course on Environment and religion in northern Appalachia.

Elin—District Conf of Great Plains. Encouraging young farmers for older farmers wanting to retire, but have someone interested to take over. Ogallala Aquifer education about future usage. District rep for UMRA.

Judy Hill—New house walk through today.

Christine—NW Min leave from call. Husband can not leave so trying to bloom where planted. Mark said carry torch for God’s work in rural

Alvin—Rural ministry is less than ½ portfolio. Emersion with Mark. Spring ½ course on leading change in rural context with 10 students. Taking energy for first year of new curriculum. Gettysburg Dean now President of Luther. Research methods and statistics for 7 Doctoral of minister and 1 PhD and another PhD hopefully. Five other PhD’s in research.

“John Young—As he noted at the meeting in SHF, theology program has closed at Queens.  School of Religion is continuing.  Low enrollments is problem.  Now teaching last Theology courses this spring.  Two parts like rural ministry symposium will continue.  Nominee for moderator of denomination at General Council meeting this summer.  The denomination is undergoing major restructuring.”

Lon—End of fall was last official day with regional staff of Christian Church. Continuing with some general issues in Appalachia for the Christian Church. Now pastoring church about 20 miles outside of Lexington. AMERC came through last grant cycle. Primary courses focuses. Family will soon move. Commute is 45 minutes if the ferry is working, but 90 minute if a ferry is not working.

Gary Farley—1984-1987 was at Atlanta where wanted to concentrate on urban. RSSE is designed to understand rural communities. Now updating for on-line work with seminaries. Began last summer with revisions. Working with Cornelia Butler Flora and Jan L. Flora as authors of “Legacy and Change” focusing on capital or resources found in community. Have had the privilege of establishing new church development in “gated” community that is a new federal women’s prison. On Dec 12 handed off to another group.

Jonathan Davis, pastor of small town in Urbana, VA. D-Min candidate at Logsdon Seminary In Texas with a focus on how to help small town churches with post-modernity. Moved to Virginia about1 ½ years ago. Focus on how to equip churches with Post-Modernity and doing research. Has a Blog on [www.smalltownchurches.org](http://www.smalltownchurches.org).

Dave— Reviewed a book of about 75 churches in Texas from various denominations with picture drawings and descriptions of the churches that have been in existence for over 100 years. Active with local Chamber of Commerce as an ambassador. Working with Bryan College Station Sister Cities program. On the Board for Texas Rural Leadership Program that is developing material on Asset Management along with appreciative inquiry which is listening and deliberative dialogue skills. For more information see www.trlp.tamu.edu. Some of this material may be usable for the RSSE on-line program.

**Minutes of the Portland Meeting** were approved as found on[www.ruralchurchnetwork.org](http://www.ruralchurchnetwork.org).

-**Treasurer's Report** Lon ---Bank balance today is $2,639.45. Will send list of deposits to Dave

To move account to Texas, we need a sponsoring organization in ND in order to renew our status with the ND Secretary of State. Lon hopes to hear from them in next two weeks. Looking for funding from organizations and individuals for 501 (C) (3). Sponsorships have been held by other organizations, but now want to have our own.

-**Chair's Report**—Networking with other groups like working with Alvin and Gil. ELCA. Shannon Jung has retired but was at the Rural Conference in Wartburg. Still working on RCN interests. Hope to loop with AMERC and Gettysburg emersion in June. Want to go to Sewanee.

-**Executive Secretary's Report** –Since last fall’s meeting, efforts have concentrated on:

- Making phone contacts with primary funders with email follow up as recommended afterwards.

- When contributions are received, they are recorded with a copy sent to Lon and checks are mailed to the bank.

- Minimal supervision has been provided for the webmaster.

- Emails and other sites are monitored daily for information that might be useful to forward to the RCN listserv.

- RSSE material is being reviewed and ready to rework for the revised version.

-**Election Matters for Fall Meeting** –

          Chairperson and Treasurer positions are up for election (odd numbered years)  Executive Committee will come up with the slate.

-**Website** Needs to be refreshed. John suggests some type of blog with new information on weekly or monthly basis. Christine suggested volunteers for a short reflection of rural ministry to have a new partner. Another sharing is through face book posting. Gary will provide an article that he wrote on “First Aid” to post on the website. Have three volunteer for the next three months then ask others to sign up. Do from their perspective. Have about 500-1000 words for each time. A photo would be good to include when possible. Christine, Mark and Jonathan will be starters. Content could also be “re-blogging” using articles from another blog with proper citation. Will post Gary Farley’s information about “first Aid” as first attempt. Christine would do first of May. Mark will do June. Jonathan will do in July.

-**RSSE Update** --Using material from Cornelia and Jan Flores. Gary is doing something on natural resources where located. Will use Alabama as model and hope that can localizing. Social Capital and other types of capitals. Next meeting of the RSSE writing group will be July 6-8 at Carrolton, Alabama. Will work on how to use technology and use for on-line programming. Expect to work off a text and use reflections for localization. Gary will send material drafts as it is developed now. Question is whether one seminary or multiple seminaries to offer program.

-**Luther-Wartburg-Gettysburg Developments** –all three have rural faculty positions where each know each other. They know each system and can work on each others ministry and share teaching resources. They will gather in Gettysburg in a few weeks to see what we have now and where to go. Administers are all behind this. Very excited and think it could move quickly. Current Luther President is Chair of committee looking at theological work and would like to have the commission continue work.

-**Northland Ministry Partnership Update** – I need this to be completed by Alvin. I was distracted at the time of this report.

-**IRCA Update** –Dave is on conference Skyping about every two or three weeks with the planning committee to find ways to continue relationships between the every quadrennial conference. Right now the questions being discussed are related to how to finance IRCA on a sustaining basis.

**-Rural Sociological Society**--Madison, Wisconsin, August 6-9

           Mark is going, anyone else?

-**Next Face-to-Face Meeting**

          \*Meeting with the Rural Chaplains Association October 28 to 31 in New Orleans –hotel room rate same for two days before or after the planned program. Have a 50 passenger bus. On Thursday, a possible stop is an African American Council person who is trying to stop another coal terminal in their community. Possible meeting times for RCN would be Friday lunch from 12:00 ti 3:30 rather than going to the French Quarter, Friday evening after 7:00 or anytime on Saturday. Judy Matheny and Dave are to work out arrangements. **Registration needs to be made before August 1 in order to know about space needs.** Those desiring to be a Rural Chaplain could request an application from Judy.

\*Might consider Appalachia for a future meeting like--Gettysburg, PA or Berea, KY?

-**Closing Prayer**—John Young