12/8/16

**RCN DRAFT minutes of fall conference call, 2016**

On the call were: Alvin Luedke, Dave Ruesink, Gil Waldkoenig, John Young, Judy Hill, Lon Oliver and Mark Yackel-Juleen

Call began at 1500 CST with prayer by Mark

Agenda was approved as sent by Mark.

**Check in**

Gil Waldkoenig----reported that Town and Country Church Institute (TCCI) will continue in United Lutheran Seminary which, as of July 1, 2017, consolidates Gettysburg and Philadelphia Lutheran Seminaries. Waldkoenig and TCCI will continue to be located at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

John----Nine months with United Church of Canada. Theological Education is one part of his new responsibilities, and he continue to be involved in the Rural Ministry Symposium.

Judy----Have completed all responsibilities with UMC. Now trying to decide what to do next.

Alvin----Division chair again this year, which means additional meetings and work on behalf of faculty. Luther is engaged in curricular review, which means meetings every Fri for fall plus two Wed per month. Exciting work with Mark and Gil for rural issues across USA. Now 10 enrolled in rural class which is largest yet. Mark has 7 for same class.

Dave----Attended Rural Chaplains in Canada with Judy. Serving on the United Methodist Rural Advocates Board. Every two months on a conference call to plan for activities related to the International Rural Church Association conference to be held in New Zealand in 2018. Serving as an Ambassador for the local Chamber of Commerce.

Lon----In March will complete assignment with Kentucky Appalachian Ministry. Will still work with AMERC as well as doing some consultation. Enjoying parish work at a church close to Lexington.

Mark----After a year and half, the work with Wartburg is feeling more comfortable. Now have more relationships with students and some administrative roles. Assisting with revisions of curriculum and creating room for rural courses. Shalom Hill Farm has staffing changes so transitions are under way for different management. Program and finances at SHF are going well. Technical support at Wartburg is changing and moving to different style of courses offerings.

**Minutes** for the Spring conference call were approved as provided on the website.

**Presidents** report:

Have had conversations with previous RCN members like Dean Freudenburger, Judy Heffernan, and Shannon Jung.

Attended RSS meeting in Toronto and learned about how RSS is using new technological tools for sociological research. Learned about computer based tools to integrate quantitative and qualitative information which has the ability to collate both which will be useful for research. Hosted two guests from Northern England doing research on how churches use laity to assist with supplementing clergy work where churches are not able to sustain full time clergy.

**Executive Secretary** report for activities since last report.

- Take notes at meetings.

* Contact “faithful” supporters for financial support.
* Receive contributions and mail to bank with copies to treasurer.
* Maintain up to date mailing list by contacting those with emails that bounce back when possible and add names as requested.
* Work with webmaster to keep website current. Still need appropriate pictures for each website category.
* Monitor emails for appropriate social and economic information to forward to mailing list.
* Respond to inquiries related to RCN activities.
* Communicate with Executive Committee for matters related to RCN matters.
* Represent RCN at the United Methodist Rural Advocacy Board.

**Treasurer** reported a balance of $1,907.98 with accounts payable of $1,227.88 or a year end balance of $680.10.  During the conference call, some additional changes were suggested for the webmaster to handle so the final year-end amount will be down some.

Bank now offering on-line banking.  Dave will contact bank to see how to set this up.

Our Treasurer suggested we explore finding a not-for-profit organization to serve as a fiscal custodian for RCN’s finances.  Motion by Judy and John to pursue non-profit status and explore placing RCN’s finances under the custodial care are of a none profit organization like AMERC.  Approved.

**Old Business**

**Website**

John will send updates before end of year

Lon wants a current listing to use for sending Christmas cards and should not list on website. Dave will ask someone in each denomination to update their list. Judy will do UMC. Lon will do Disciples. Mark and Alvin will do ELCA. John will do United Church of Canada. Dave will do Presbyterian. Others will be sent out as much as possible.

Mark moved to take membership list off and clean up listing.

New pictures will be sought by Mark and Lon.

Events section needs to be updated.

**RSSE**

Mark talked to Gary Farley and plans to meet with Gary in late Jan or early Feb to sharpen up work around social capitals related to Flora’s book. After some had dropped off the call, Dave volunteered to go with Mark to meet with Gary if a mutually agreeable date can be found.

Mark will attempt to get with Flora’s in the near future.

Wartburg has agreed to host and provide technical support for the resource. How much enhancement do we want to consider. If on MOODLE platform, have typical format. Gary has content. Mark will make it fit on MOODLE with some editing. Could make it fancier later on. Late March is the goal to have access on MOODLE platform ready. This requires an institution to house it and the teacher who has an on-line password to access content. This will allow others like AMERC, ETC to have access for teaching possibilities. Other hosting organizations could charge whatever they think needed to subsidize technical support.

First goal is to have something ready in the spring, 2017 related to the rural community.

The program should be suitable for seminary training as well as continuing education. Mark is now an advisor for certificate training with 45 students who could make use of the program.

Lon said AMERC questioning whether emersion presented through rural on line and chat rooms. Would like to see other partners like Wartburg as association for on-line processes.

**Other resources**. Book on Abundant Harvest by Ministry Partnerships in E-Resource.

**Efficacy**--Need to evaluate what organization does and how to report out what we do.

**When and where for next meeting.**

Now thinking more geographically. Mark and Dave will work on face-to-face sometime next year.

- Rural Chaplains in October, 2017 (note—a few days after the conference call, it was learned that the RCN meeting will be at the Center for Sustainable Agriculture at the University of Vermont in Burlington.)

- Immersion possibility for 2018 in Appalachian area.

- Wartburg Rural Ministry Conference in March, 2018 will highlight multiple point ministries.

**Evaluation of Executive Secretary and Treasurer** will be done in 2017 with Mark heading up the committee to do that.

Adjourned at 1625.

Recorded by Dave Ruesink, Executive Secretary