

SoMAC Minutes, 16 September 2006

The Southern Mission Action Counsel(SoMAC) met by teleconference on 16 September at 0900, Rev. Rick Rice presiding. Following members participated: Mr. John Whaley, Mr. Guillermo Melgar, Rev. Herb Burch, Ms. Jan Sorge, and Mr. Ken Goebel. Rev. Jim Beilstein, Rev. Mike Lange, Deacon Bruce Hindenburg, Rev. Jonathan Lange, and Rev. Clarence Eisberg had signaled their inability to participate. Rev. Jonathan Lange did join the meeting at an opportune time during the discussion of the Hmong ministry, Merced project.

Rev. Rice received letter notification that the C-P-H District had completed realignment of staffing. According to the letter Mr. John Whaley will continue to be the Mission Counselor(MC) for Circuits 9 and 16. However, Rev. Ed Krueger will be responsible for Circuits 3, 5 and 15. Furthermore, Rev. Krueger will now be the MC for the SoMAC. Ed has been working with Circuits 3, and 5 on the I5 corridor, and John has been running the 101 corridor. The MAC alignment will remain the same in accordance with established District regions. Members expressed their concern over this realignment.

Rev. Herb Burch reviewed the contents of the information letter on the Filipino Missionary at Large to the Central Coast Lutheran Mission Society. Pastor Gallang has found himself working more at his secular job, and does not feel he has been giving the mission the time and effort appropriate. He asked that CCLMS and District support be discontinued as good stewardship of God's gifts.

The formal part of the meeting opened with prayer from Rev. Herb Burch. The SoMAC reviewed project submissions for 2007 and evaluated them by asking if they were truly mission, represented good stewardship and whether they had local support.

Aims, Bakersfield: AIMS has had good growth under the leadership of Danny Vasquez. St. John's, Bakersfield has been the biggest contributor, and all the congregations have joined AIMS. The congregations in general need to participate more. The project is a good mission, represents good stewardship, and they have local support.

Cambodian, Stockton: We discussed the letter from Pastor Kou, in which he gave his evaluation and comments regarding the Cambodian mission. Certain cultural considerations came out in Pastor Kou's letter. Members agreed it would be helpful to get better reporting from Pastor Sok. We might request this through Pastor Kou, as he has a better understanding of what we are looking for. This project will not step down until 1 July 2007, as the reduction in support took effect mid-year 2006. In July 2007 support will be reduced to \$42,000 annually. Members agreed we should continue to reduce support to this project as scheduled, but will continue to support it as high priority for funding as a continuing District project. This is something we have to do. The MAC regrets the lack of good communication of progress or information regarding the ministry.

Discussion of the Cambodian project prompted a discussion regarding progress and evaluation reports to the MAC. Members finally agreed we need reports on these grants on April 30 and on September 1 as an addendum to grant requests. Funding will not continue to the projects without required reports.

Campus Ministry, Monterey: The campus ministry leadership has had the opportunity to examine this from a missional standpoint. Members remarked how the project appears to be better organized and focused as opposed to last year. This project request also represents a reduced amount for support, and as this project was also supported for some time by the C-N-H District, will continue to be a priority for funding. A footnote...The Campus Ministry board is working to support this locally, but continues to hope the District will continue to support this morally.

Central Coast Lutheran Missionary Society, VBS: The spiritual and overall ranking using the evaluation tool was quite high. Members remarked about the continued benefits of reaching young people and hope for the future.

Concordia, Visalia: This is not necessarily a new mission start, but a split off from Grace Visalia. We discussed the dichotomy between very traditional Lutheran values and practices and new young neighborhoods they expect to appeal to. The congregation does appear to be moving forward as they call a deferred vicar. The council reflected on use of Traditional values as opposed to more modern methods of evangelism. Upon further discussion, the MAC agreed to defer funding to this project as a lower priority.

E. Weberstown, Stockton, Hispanic Ministry: John Whaley gave a run down on the ministry, as he has had a chance to visit Stockton on repeated occasions. Deacon Martin Ureña continues to do good mission work in Stockton, and follows up on the contacts. This ministry appears to be bringing new life to the area. Members agreed this project should be supported.

Hmong, Fresno: The MAC received only a trial balloon letter, and no formal application. This represents a new ministry opportunity to acquire an additional worker and expands the scope of Pastor Kou's ministry. We would like the mission exec to look into this more and make recommendations before we take action. This might also be contingency fund material. We would like to encourage this, but leave this in the MC's court. Rev. Rice was asked to address this to Rev. Ed. Krueger who will be handling this area in the future.

Hmong, Merced: This request represents an increase from last year's grant. A lengthy discussion followed regarding the budget sheet, and certain items needed clarification. Jan Sorge commented on this as a ministry of St. Paul, Merced, and that Pastor Kou has made a very positive contribution. However, the size of the request could consume our entire budget if we fully fund it. Rev. Jonathan Lange joined the conversation during our discussion and helped answer several question. This project has local ownership and local support from the Anglo and Hmong congregations. The investment is there and represents good stewardship. The ministry is at the forefront of mission activity in our

District. We need to support this, but cannot support it at the level requested. We would recommend a step down to \$45,000 from the \$50,000 provided last year.

During our discussion of the focus and scope of the Hmong ministry, members discussed the wisdom of increasing the amount of a grant from previous years? We would prefer that growing ministries form a mission society or support that would eventually own the ministry so district can support new initiative. Therefore, the MAC is reluctant to grant increases in support from previous years.

St. Matthew, Sonora: This appears to be a congregational project they could do on their own. We might be supportive of the consultant from the Center for U.S. Missions, Michael Zehnder to help them set a course for their music ministry. MAC recommended we fund that portion of their request for the in-service by Michael Zehnder at \$3250.

The MAC also agreed the idea of providing a separate seminar for interested churches on music and ministry as presented by Michael Zehnder might be helpful. The MAC agreed to recommend an allocation of \$3000 to offer this to the District in general.

Trinity Hispanic Outreach, Stockton: John Whaley spoke on Trinity and the inroads Deacon Martin Ureña has made working with the two congregations. They seem to be working independently and not communicating with one another. Rev. Burch recommended we combine the two requests for Stockton: Trinity and St. Andrews with the hope the two congregations will work together. Further, we encourage the MC to work with the two congregations to encourage a joint effort. If funds are available, the MAC voted to fund the two projects at 100 percent. Otherwise, we would fund the combined projects at the \$25,000 level.

Rev. Rice suggested we take a tiered approach to funding all the requested projects. We have to fund Cambodian, Campus and Hmong ministries as they are ongoing missions previously supported through District. The evaluation tool yielded several tiers that formed during MAC members' assessments of grant requests. This remained an open question; whether to fund fully the first tier, then do a percentage wise allocation of projects 4 and 5, or prorate all projects across the board. We would request the full recommended amount of \$184,410, which represents a 50 percent reduction from the original grant requests. By doing our homework, we might hope to get better consideration.

Our next meeting date will be November 11, 2007 at 9:00 a.m. at St. Paul Lutheran, Merced. As this will be our first meeting with MC Rev. Ed Krueger, members agreed we will have to have a normal face to face meeting.

Rev. Jim Beilstein is working to recruit a lay member from Bakersfield, Rev. Herb Burch is recruiting a lay representative in Circuit 9. Rev. Rice will inform Denise at C-N-H District regarding the CCLMS Filipino Mission, and suspend funding that project. He will ask Rev. Ed Krueger to follow up on the Hmong Fresno proposal. Further he will address MAC concerns on realignment of the MC's to the District president,

especially with regard to the impact on John Whaley and the ramifications of change of advisor to the MAC.

Solo Deo Gloria