

Central Atlantic Conference Board of Directors Report

In last year's Board of Directors report I remember saying that 2019 had been a year of pretty significant disruption and change. However, with the arrival of our settled Conference Minister, Rev. Freeman Palmer, I was looking forward to 2020 as a year of stability and progress. Well, I was definitely wrong about the stability part! However, I am grateful to God for the progress that I feel that we made, despite the challenges that 2020 presented for all of us.

We kicked off the year by having a Board retreat where we were able to take the time to connect as a Board and step back and think about where and how we should focus our work. I am thankful to our facilitator, Rev. Dr. Diane Johnson of Mmapeu Consulting, for guiding us through a process of prioritizing our work, assessing our working groups and thinking about what it means to be in covenant with each other and the various groups throughout the Conference.

Little did we know that the February meeting would be the first and last time that we would meet in person in 2020! In spite of that, we stayed focused on what we committed to do before this annual meeting. Accomplishments include developing our vision, mission and values as well as identifying Conference priorities that informed the strategic plan developed by the Conference Minister. All of this will be shared during Saturday morning's plenary session.

One of the key responsibilities of the Board of directors is to provide financial oversight. To that end, the Finance working group of the Board worked in partnership with the Conference Minister and Board treasurer to improve and streamline our financial processes, including our budgeting and reporting. This is important for the Conference to be able to prioritize their goals in a time that continues to be financially challenging.

Last year, we relaunched a fundraising effort through the CAC Friends of the Conference initiative. We are thankful for the generosity of many of you and we are continuing that work this year. The Board of directors has made their financial commitments for 2020 and we encourage your continued support of our focus on investing in justice and witness activities, assisting our local congregations and supporting the overall work of the Conference.

In 2020, the Board did the work necessary to build a foundation on how we will work in partnership with each other and with the Conference staff. As important as that is, there is much more to be done around how we ensure that we are in relationship with the various associations groups and ministries that make up the Central Atlantic Conference.

James 1: 2-3 asks us to consider it pure joy whenever we face trials because the testing of our faith produces perseverance. Well, I have no doubt that we have all grown in the perseverance category! I want to thank the members of the Board of directors for their perseverance in continuing to move forward under some pretty challenging

circumstances. But most importantly, I want to express my gratitude on behalf of the Board to all of you for continuing to persevere. Whether it is figuring out to have church service over Zoom, pressing forward with initiatives around justice and witness, being there for someone who may have lost a loved one to COVID-19, sharing the joy and love of Jesus with someone in need, or picking up groceries for an elderly neighbor, it speaks to the love and perseverance of this Conference during a time of turmoil.

I look forward to the story that we will all tell about how God's grace and mercy helped us to persevere through these challenging times. Let us continue to keep each other in prayer and may God bless all of you.

Peace,

Janese Murray
Chair, Central Atlantic Conference Board of Directors