

## **Penn West Conference Proposed 2023 Budget Plan**

### **Penn West Conference Mission:**

**“Engaging in covenantal relationships; sharing God’s love with all”**

The Conference Budget is prayerfully prepared by the Financial Stewards, in consultation with the Conference Minister and in consideration of Conference investment and endowment policies, as we seek to faithfully fund the mission of our Conference while remaining attentive to the realities of our income and expenses.

Please note that the ministry and mission of Penn West Conference would not exist without the faith, love, and generosity of each church, and each Faithful Steward that supports the ministry and mission of Penn West Conference. We give you our sincere thanks and praise!

The Financial Stewards, in preparing a budget, can only predict Conference income for the upcoming year on past, current, and projected trends in giving through OCWM gifts, and the personal gifts generously given by our Faithful Stewards. With input from our ministry teams, the Financial Stewards estimate what future expenses we may expect in the coming year in order to give a realistic balance to the budget. If there are budget items in the proposed 2023 budget that you wish were increased, know that we wish so too. Trends in giving have limited what we believe we can do with our budget. The growth of our Penn West ministry is up to each one of us.

The good news is that in 2023 we are able to offer our Conference staff a modest 3% salary increase. Although, before we pat ourselves on the back for this increase, we must remember that they received no salary increase the past two years, therefore the 3% increase is far less than they truly deserve, yet better than nothing.

You will notice that there is a reduction in the youth ministry budget. Our Youth Ministry coordinator, Melissa McLean, resigned this past year, and at present, we have no plans to hire another youth minister. However, we are well aware that Youth Ministry is key to the future of Penn West. Therefore, we kept some funds in the budget for youth events, and seed money for youth ministry in the future. In fact, Rev. Ackerman, encouraged by the Conference Long Range Planning Team, has recently begun conversations with our three sister Pennsylvania Conferences to perhaps find ways to share resources for ministry, including ministry with youth.

On Friday evening, during the Annual Meeting, at 6:45 in the Performance Center, there will be a celebration and time for the Financial Stewards to thank our Faithful Stewards and our churches for their gifts to Our Churches Wider Mission. At 7:30 there will be a Budget Listening Session. Our Treasurer and Financial Stewards will be able to address any concerns/questions you may have, and we will have a discussion of the United Church of Christ stewardship theme “From Bread and Cup to Faith and Giving”.

We hope to see you at Annual Meeting Friday June 10, 2022!