**GWA CFO Virtual Forum**

**September 26, 2022**

Persons attending: Kevin Batman-Wesleyan Church, Jen Neal-Church of God, Keith Cox-Nazarene, Jo Lammey-Free Methodist, and Don Williams-Missionary Church.

The agenda for the meeting covered an update from each person as well as the areas of concern generated by the participants.

The Areas of Concern were these:

1. I’m curious to know what everyone else is doing for compliance with OFAC. We don’t have a process in place for that, and it seems to be an area of ever-increasing scrutiny.

 2.  How to strike the balance between compliance/risk management and responsiveness/relationship when dealing with national teams?

3.  Well-balanced funding models for the future of church associations.

4.  HR issues that we need to have on the front burner.

5.  Extending denominational administrative and financial services to regional/district offices and churches.

6.  What's the denominational headquarters footprint going to look like in the future?

Added to the above list were conversations about wages for 2023 and what services from the national head quarters are churches seeking?

During the discussion about wages for 2023 the range was between 4-6%. The Wesleyans are doing a compensation study to assess how they are keeping up with the marketplace. Several said they are having difficulty filling positions from executive assistant to accountants. In the Fishers area of Indianapolis, it seems you need a starting wage of at least $20.00 per hour plus benefits for an entry level job to be competitive.

It was also noted that remote work is becoming a stable in most organizations which also feeds into the discussion about footprint of the organization. The Free Methodist have already reduced their headquarters footprint and all others are discussing and looking at the possibility.

ECFA has placed an emphasis this year on the OFAC compliance. OFAC is the Office of Foreign Assets Control. Any organization sending money overseas usually depends on the bank serving them to ascertain the “vendors” are not on the OFAC bad list. It seems ECFA feels you should also double check.

Two ideas that were highlighted was the Innovation Team from the Missionary Church and the Training of Young Leaders by the Wesleyan Church. The Innovation Team is looking at all aspects of the operations of the Missionary Church headquarters from personnel needed, to job realignment, to funding, to building needs, etc. The Wesleyan Church had identified young leaders to expose them to the workings of the church through training and attendance at the General Conference.

Income post Covid to national budgets had the extremes: income is less than needed or income is up. The groups that do assessments have made changes to comply with the input from local churches and districts. The funding models for the future will need reflection and discussion as headquarters responds to the desires of the grassroots.

The Free Methodist are getting transfer growth from United Methodist churches who are leaving the United Methodist denomination and not going to the new Global Methodist Church denomination. The Missionary Church will be receiving certain conferences from the Evangelical Church after January 1, 2023.

The discussion about denominational headquarters offering administrative services to districts, conferences, churches, and sister organizations had mixed reviews. Some are offering accounting services to districts and conferences, sister organizations, but not to churches.

Changes in leadership was discussed noting the institutional knowledge that would be walking out the door and the need to capture a method to retain contact or data.

James Coulston is retiring from his position as General Secretary-Treasurer for twenty five years at Evangelical Methodist Church Int’l Hqtrs and his successor will be Rev. Brian Hammond.

Submitted by

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