

Instructions for Virtual District-Wide Charge Conference for Sunday, November 15, 2020

The Crossroads District will hold a District-wide Virtual 2020 Annual Charge Conference as a precautionary measure based on current public health risks. We have put together some instructions to help organize our online Charge Conference for an effective and productive experience.

District-Wide Virtual Charge Conference on Zoom

Our District-wide virtual Charge Conference will be held by Zoom video Conferencing. Zoom is a widely used video conferencing program that can be used on a computer, laptop, notebook, tablet, or smart phone. A telephone call is also an option, but we will not be able to ensure the ability vote by telephone. Zoom will require that you download software before the meeting if you have not done so already. You may download Zoom in advance by clicking or searching this link: <https://zoom.us/download>. Once you are on the Zoom Download Center, select, "Download", under the heading of **Zoom Client for Meetings**.

Pre-Registration for Charge Conference

Pre-registration is being set up and is required to receive your Zoom login information to participate in the Virtual Charge Conference. You can pre-register at this link: [REGISTRATION](#). The Zoom login information will be sent to those who have registered. We will not be posting the login information publicly online. This method is put in place to protect our Zoom Charge Conference.

Charge Conference or Church Conference for your Church?

This online gathering will be a Charge Conference and the voting members of a Charge Conference are the members of the Church Council. However, if you should want to allow all members of your church who are present to vote on the action items, pastors can contact the District Superintendent or the District office and request a Church Conference.

Charge Conference Packets

Completed and signed Charge Conference packets and related paperwork must be turned in to the District Office prior to November 15th, especially the paperwork related to the action items.

Attendance & Roll Call

Members must be present and logged on to the Zoom meeting on November 15th and acknowledge attendance during the church roll call for your church to be counted as present for the Charge Conference. We encourage pastors and leaders to ensure that all church members who need to attend will have access. This may include setting up a meeting at the church or at a location where someone has internet access so everyone can see the screen together. The roll call will be held by clusters based on clusters of Victoria, Yoakum, Seguin, Bastrop, Columbus, and Gonzales.

Voting

It is assumed that Charge Conference reports would have already been approved by the Church Council. Voting will be done by Zoom polling. A screen will appear for each action item and each person present will have an opportunity to vote "For" or "Against" the item, While all churches will vote at the same time, it is acknowledged that each church will be voting on its individual action items. Action Items will include: 1) Pastor's Compensation, 2) Election of Nominated Officers for 2021, to include Lay Delegates to Annual Conference, (3 Candidates for Ministry, and 4) Affirmation or renewal of Lay Servants. There will be a test vote at the beginning of the meeting.

Voting When Multiple Church Leaders are Gathered in One Location

In cases where groups are gathered, it is suggested that one person be designated as a **vote counter**. All present will be asked to vote as normal and the counter is to determine the results. If the vote for or against is unanimous, the group vote is to be entered in the Zoom poll to represent the group. But if the vote is split or against the action item, the person hosting Zoom is asked to place the number of votes for and/or against in the **Zoom Chat**. If it appears that several persons on behalf of a church are unanimously voting against an action item, the Charge Conference for that church will be suspended on the action item in question. A special Called Charge Conference will be scheduled immediately to address the item. In this scenario, all other items acted upon for that day can stand as achieved.

Nominations from the Floor

Nominations work, along with all Charge Conference items, is expected to be complete and approved by the Church Council prior to this meeting. It is understood, however, that new nominations may arise from the floor of Charge Conference for several reasons, including the fact that no one was available to fill a particular position. This can be handled in a couple of ways. First, the Charge Conference will establish that the Church Council may fill vacancies as they occur throughout the year. But if a nomination is made to challenge a currently nominated officer, the Charge Conference for the church in question will be suspended on that item and a special Called Charge Conference can be scheduled later. All other items acted on for that day can stand as achieved. So again, the church will be given the option to either let the Church Council handle the vacancy or schedule a special Called Charge Conference.

New Candidates for Ministry

By Book of Discipline, new Candidates for Ministry must be voted upon by written ballot. To meet this requirement, we will ask for one corporate vote on all Candidates for Ministry, specifically for any new Candidates for Ministry. We will ask churches with New Candidates to mail the written ballots from their Charge Conference members to the District office as soon as possible following the Charge Conference.

Special Circumstances where an Individual Charge Conference may be Called

The conditions under which an individual Charge Conference may be held are limited this year to situations where churches may have a building project, property related, or some other unusual or complex church matter that will a more detailed presentation before action can be taken. Please contact the District Superintendent or the District office if your church has an issue like this.

Conclusion

Our goal is to be in full compliance with the Book of Discipline requirement to conduct the business of the Annual Charge Conference, but to do so in such a way that we keep our church leaders safe from any risks that come with traveling from different locations during the current public health crisis. But we hope to make this a meaningful experience in the process. We are excited about the presence of Bishop Schnase to our meeting, we look forward to worship experiences during our gathering, and we are working on a way to celebrate the ministries of the District throughout this year. We will miss being together in person for this year. But we hope to make the most of this opportunity to unite in a time of Holy Conferencing as the body of Christ called the Crossroads District of the Rio Texas Conference.