

Report of the World Relief Committee

October 2022

The WRC met on October 24, 2022. This was the first meeting of the Committee in 2022. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Committee has adjusted its meeting schedule to meet later in this year. The Committee makes decisions about the use of the undesignated funds given to One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS), therefore the group began meeting later in the year so that the decisions made were more informed by giving to OGHS already received in the current year. The ABC calendar “offering window” for OGHS is the months of May, June, and July. The majority of the undesignated OGHS offering funds are received in the months of June, July, August, and September.

The group welcomed Bill Poland, representing the BGM, as a new voting member. The Committee also welcomed Bridget Lipin back to the Committee, serving again in the role of staff representative from OGS.

The work of the Committee focused on reporting on undesignated OGHS donations received in January-September 2022, projecting undesignated OGHS donations that may be received in October-December 2022, and based on this information setting the budget for how these funds will be allocated for 2022. Through September 2022, undesignated OGHS offering receipts were \$745,756. (Note: This includes a one-time gift of \$60,000 from Lansdowne Baptist Church, PA after the closing of this church.) Ivan Greuter, a Committee member, prepared a projection for what undesignated gifts we might conservatively expect to receive in the months of October-December. The projection was based on the three-year period prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and the years since the pandemic. After discussion the Committee set a proposed budget based on the receipt of \$917,000 in undesignated OGHS funds in 2022.

Ukraine Relief and Response – Through September 2022, \$1.3 million has been received for Ukraine Relief. \$1.1 million of these funds have either been spent or committed to initiatives related to the emergency response, recovery, and rebuilding phases of this response. The primary partner we are working through is the European Baptist Federation (EBF). The EBF is coordinating the work of all Baptists partners in Europe who are responding to this crisis. In addition, we have supported the small relief initiatives of IM Global Servants serving in Europe, the response of Church World Service in Moldova, and the ministry of L’Arche to people living with physical and developmental disabilities. Most activities to date have been concentrated in the areas of housing, food, transportation, and psychosocial support. Very small efforts have been made at rebuilding within Ukraine, for those few who have returned to their homes to assess if they are able to return on a more permanent basis.

Domestic Disaster Response - Rothangi Chhangte from ABHMS updated relief activities for the floods in Kentucky, Hurricane Fiona in Puerto Rico, and Hurricane Ian in Florida. Relief needs are still being assessed. AB Men have plans to respond, and pastors in affected areas have been asked what their needs are.

Endowment for OGHS – in November 2021 the Committee decided how to utilize a \$500,000 legacy gift received from after the closing of the FBC, Palo Alto, CA. The decision included using \$125,000

to establish an endowment for OGHS. After a year of stock market volatility, the Committee asked World Relief Officer, Lisa Rothenberger, to seek counsel from OGS staff or the BGM Investment and Finance Committee on when it is most prudent to establish and fund this new endowment.

The Committee will meet on December 12, 2022 to receive applications for approval for funding within the 2022 budget set at this meeting.

Janice Fletcher, Chair