

2020 Great Lakes/ Gulf Presbytery Meeting

COVFAMIKOI Report

2019 Conference

Recap

The Lord richly blessed our 2019 COVFAMIKOI family conference. The conference took place June 22 to June 27 again at Lindsey Wilson College in Columbia, Kentucky. The attendance for the 2019 conference was 355 representing 20 congregations. The attendance was an increase of ~ 25 from our 2018 conference.

The keynote speaker for the conference was Dr. John Snyder who is the pastor at Christ Church in New Albany, Mississippi. The theme for the conference and Dr. Snyder's talks were "Meditating on the Weight of His Majesty." The speaker for the High School group was Jay Dharan, a student at RPTS, and the Junior High speaker was Joel Hart, associate Pastor at Second RP.

Conference Staff

A big thanks goes out to all who were willing to serve the conference in different avenues. Susanne Hart & Bethany Mauser again served as the nursery coordinators, Melanie Sturm with the help of Anastasia Sturm again led the pre-school program; Ginny & Nathan Enas, and Elizabeth Faris taught the Early Primary group (ages 5-6); Barb Mann & Jen Harzler taught the Primary (ages 7-8); Stephen Roberts, Janelle Schisler, and Will Hanson taught the Elementary program (ages 9-11). Zachary and Flo Blackwood again served as the Youth Program Directors coordinating the program and counselors for the Jr. High and High School. David & Anna Allgaier served as the Phase II coordinators. Ben Larson was the lead precentor. Cargill Faris and Calvin Held served as recreation directors.

Conference Leadership

Erich & Bobbie Baum served as Conference Directors, Charley & Beth Moore were Conference Managers, and Zachary & Flo Blackwood were the Youth Directors. Following the 2019 conference, the Baum's & Moore's stepped down from their roles on the conference leadership. Both couples have served the Covfamikoi conference for quite a few years. Their tireless labors are greatly appreciated, and without their efforts, the conference would not have been a success!

Following the 2019 conference, Ken & Christy Nelson have taken over the role of Conference Directors, and Ross & Kaitlyn Cerbus as Conference Managers. Zachary and Flo Blackwood will continue in their role as Youth Directors.

The advisory committee appointed by the Presbytery serves as a sounding board for the leadership. The committee consists of Jeff Kessler, Ben Larson, and Jonathan Schaefer.

Financials

The financials for 2019 are attached for your review. Our current balance stands at \$15,962

Future

The 2019 conference was blessed with 355 individuals. This attendance level is about the max that could be handled comfortably at Lindsey Wilson College. The main meeting room and number of usable rooms for housing are the restricting factors. Due to this, the new leadership decided to look at potential other venues to use for the 2021 conference and beyond. With no conference in 2020, due to the International Conference, we felt it gave us time to identify if we should move the conference to a new location.

The leadership reviewed several venue options, and after reviewing with advisory committee, we are close to settling on a “new” venue for our 2021-2023 conferences. This “new” venue won’t be brand new to several in the Presbytery as we are close to finalizing our move to Johnson University (previously Johnson Bible College) in Knoxville, TN. Johnson Bible College served as the host for Covfamikoi for most of the 80’s and 90’s. Since we last held Covfamikoi at Johnson, in 1999, they have added a new dining hall, new residence halls, a brand-new recreation facility, and have upgraded other facilities. We believe this new facility will be a blessing to our Presbytery. Knoxville, TN is a beautiful setting, the Johnson campus is secure, and we have room to grow at Johnson.

We are currently finalizing the details and hope to have a contract signed soon with Johnson. The tentative dates for the 2021 conference will be July 10-July 15. The costs of the conference have not yet been established, but we anticipate the costs being slightly higher than 2019. During our search for a new venue, it became clear that the costs of housing a high-quality family conference continue to rise. However, due to a strong bank account balance, we are going to maintain our requested \$2,000 support from Presbytery for the coming year.

Promotion of Covfamikoi

A promotional video of Covfamikoi is being created. The goal is for this video to be shown to every church in our Presbytery to help churches promote the conference to their members and give a glimpse to those who may never have attended, what Covfamikoi is all about. This video should be finished by early summer and our goal is to distribute it to each church in the Presbytery by mid-Fall. Please help us in promoting Covfamikoi. If you have any suggestions or requests for how we can help you “market” Covfamikoi, please let us know.

Recommendations:

- 1.) That Presbytery approves \$2,000 for conference expenses.

Respectfully submitted,

Ken Nelson, Conference Director