

1712 Woodburn Road  
Durham, N. C. 27705  
November 9, 1979

Mr. W. T. Coman  
Chairman, Finance Committee  
217 Pineview Road  
Durham, N. C. 27707

Dear Bill:

When the Finance Committee meets on Monday evening, November 12, you and the other members will have the painful task of cutting the budget requests so that they will more nearly approximate the expected income for the year 1980. I know that this is something that all of us wish very deeply that we did not have to do.

Since I will not be able to attend the meeting, I would like to have some in-put for the Council on Ministries and for myself personally by letter. I do understand that cuts in the Council budget will be necessary, and I accept that the Finance Committee will recommend them with great regret. I only ask you not to cripple us any more than is absolutely necessary. We have asked that the Finance Committee reduce the Council Budget by X number of dollars, rather than reducing or deleting specific requests within that budget, and I reiterate that request. However, I recognize that you cannot help looking at specific items in evaluating how much to cut. Let me point out that if you cut our 1980 requests to the same amount that the Council received in the 1979 budget (i.e., \$12,395.50), it will mean that the Council will have to reshuffle allocations within the budget in such a way as to increase the Education budget by \$600 in order for our education program just to keep up with what it is now doing. (\$600 is the amount of increase requested by Education, apart from the \$1800 request for a summer intern, and is needed just to keep our program where it is now, without any expansion.) So, if we receive only as much as we did for 1979, our total program will suffer in some area or areas by that amount, and it will mean an actual cut even though the dollar amount would be the same.

Speaking for myself personally now, I feel very strongly that we should not cut staff salaries. The recommended salary increases are already below the increase in the cost of living, so our staff members are already in effect taking a cut. If we have to cut, and we do, I would rather as much as possible of the amount cut be taken from conference askings than from our staff salaries and from our own program. Maybe I'm not being a good connectional Methodist, but to me our local needs take some precedence over conference needs; for if we do not meet our local needs, how can we hope to meet our conference needs?

I am grateful to the Finance Committee, and to you as chairman, for the thoughtful and prayerful way in which it goes about meeting its responsibilities. May the Lord make His presence known to you in this meeting, and bless and guide you.

Faithfully,

*Mary*  
Mary Whanger  
Chairman, Council on Ministries

copy: Eunice Mattox  
Ed Smith