

Customers praise GuideStone as ‘trustworthy’

August 9, 2016

NEWPORT BEACH, Calif.—Vision, integrity and purpose characterize people and organizations of influence, O.S. Hawkins, president of GuideStone Financial Resources, told the agency’s board of trustees.

He called 2016 “the Year of Influence” for GuideStone, referencing 2 Corinthians 10:13, which says, “But we will not boast beyond limits, but will boast only with regard to the area of influence God assigned to us, to reach even to you.”

People who responded to a recent customer satisfaction survey overwhelmingly identified GuideStone as “trustworthy,” Hawkins reported.

“It takes integrity to maintain trust,” he said. “We are thankful for the trust our participants place in GuideStone, and we continue to work diligently to maintain that trust.”

Retirement and investment contributions up 20 percent

GuideStone’s board of trustees met in regular session in Newport Beach, Calif., to visit to the world headquarters of PIMCO, a long-time subadviser in GuideStone’s investment work and one of the world’s largest bond investment companies.

Chief Operating Officer John R. Jones told the board GuideStone Funds are available now on 20 intermediary platforms, including Fidelity and Schwab, as a result of reaching out to Christian financial advisers. Financial planners use intermediary platforms to access the investments they offer to their clients. As the number of platforms offering GuideStone Funds grows,

the number of potential investors grows with it.

Year-to-date, retirement and investment contributions are up 20 percent compared to the same period in 2015.

Expect rate increases in medical insurance

Chief Financial Officer Kim Walthall reported GuideStone continues to work diligently to keep medical rates down; however, medical inflation has been higher than projected. Published reports have indicated some state and federal healthcare exchange insurers have requested rate increases ranging from 50 percent to 65 percent for 2017.

While rates for GuideStone's medical plans will increase for some participants in 2017, they will not be anywhere near the rate-increase requests seen by exchange-based insurers, agency officials reported. GuideStone's rates will be communicated in September, and churches should prepare for rate increases, regardless of their provider for next year, the board learned.

GuideStone's group medical participation continues to be strong in 2016, thanks to competitive insurance plans, rates, customer service and broad provider networks along with the diligence of the sales and support teams, staff leaders told trustees.

Property and casualty beneficial

GuideStone's alliance with Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Company continues to prove beneficial for both organizations as well as the churches and ministry organizations served, trustees learned. Premiums, year-to-date, for the property and casualty agency, which serves Texas and Alabama, total \$18.6 million, up from \$17.3 million at the end of 2015.

While enjoying a 99 percent renewal rate, GuideStone continues to grow

the property-and-casualty part of its business, adding more agents to serve churches and ministries in Texas, as well as looking for opportunities in 2017 and beyond.

Mission:Dignity assists retirees in need

Mission:Dignity, GuideStone's ministry that provides financial assistance to retired Southern Baptist ministers, workers and, in many cases, their widows, continues to add new contributors to its donor base. During Mission:Dignity Sunday, celebrated across the Southern Baptist Convention June 26, an all-time high of 8,274 congregations participated.

To refer a retired Southern Baptist pastor or widow in need, visit MissionDignity.org, and select the "Refer Someone in Need" link on the right side of the page. Eligibility guidelines and links for more information are available there.

New executive officers named

Trustees approved three new executive officers.

The board named Harry Nelson chief strategic investment officer. In that role, he will provide leadership to GuideStone's investments division. Nelson joined GuideStone in 2013 as executive director of investments sales.

Trustees named Mark Borchgardt chief services and operations officer, and he will oversee day-to-day service, operations and quality initiatives. He joined GuideStone in the finance and accounting area in 1996 and has held a variety of positions, including financial reporting, retirement and investment product development, strategic planning and retirement services.

The board approved Harold R. Loftin as chief legal officer and general

counsel. Loftin will provide leadership and counsel on regulatory and legal needs. He joined GuideStone in 2013 as associate legal counsel.