

Warwick Memorial United Methodist Church
38 Hoopes Road
Newport News, VA 23602

Minutes of Leadership Team Meeting held on July 21, 2016

Members present:

Carlos Liceaga, Team Leader
Jim Cole, Evangelize
Linda McLawhorn, Worship
Linda Carrithers, Worship
Josie Mitchell, Serve (Internal)
Nolan Reid, Finance
Sandy Marcuson, Trustees
Pastor Bert Cloud
Pastor Gina Anderson-Cloud
Pastor Peggy Langille
Linda Brooks, Secretary

Other Attendees:

Maggie Vincelette

Welcome - Carlos called the meeting to order at 7:07.

Opening Prayer - Jim

Devotion - Carlos

Discussion Agenda

1. Approval of agenda. Delete item on AC in sanctuary and replace with SPRC and Finance updates.
2. Maggie Vincelette's report on Annual Conference. Maggie and Jason attended the Annual Conference. In the three years Maggie has attended the conference, Bishop Cho has placed an importance on going back to the spiritual disciplines that strengthen our relationship with God and that help us to walk the path God has planned for us. Bishop Cho said: "Jesus had no reservation in obeying His Father. Today our prayer life is not that deep and humble. We put many conditions and limitations on seeking and obeying God's will. Instead of following God's will unconditionally, we want God to approve and bless our plan." Bishop Mark Webb encouraged us to "trust God's promises and God's plan to use our life in significant ways." At the General Conference in May, the Council of Bishops asked to delay voting on issues surrounding homosexuality. A special commission will be created to examine the paragraphs in the Book of Discipline that address this topic and will possibly offer recommendations for changes or revisions in a special General Conference which could be called in 2018 or 2019.

Rev. Tom Berlin, the clergy leader of the Virginia delegation to General Conference, presented a thoughtful, thorough and dynamic explanation of this conflict and the impact it has on the long term vitality of the Methodist Church. He believes the work of this special commission to be the most important work of the UMC in the next decade. This issue is important to the life of the church because it applies to real people: our friends, coworkers, parents, children, and neighbors. The church has been debating this issue since the 1970s, and people are leaving the church because of this conflict. Ninety seven percent of the denominational budget comes from the U.S., but, while U.S. sectors of the church are shrinking, African and Asian sectors are growing. African and Asian delegates tend to be more traditional and can be a strategic voting block on topics regarding homosexuality. There will be hard questions and difficult conversations for the commission, but it is necessary work so that we can focus on the real work of spreading Christ's light to those who remain in the dark. Prayer and conversation with God will remedy the deficiencies within our own spirits and strengthen our relationship with Him to create a way forward.

3. Carlos' report on Jurisdictional Conference. Since being elected, the Virginia delegation held five whole day meetings to prepare for the General and Jurisdictional Conferences. Each delegate was given prayer beads to encourage them to stay in prayer and remember that people were praying for them. Sermons were great. Captured a few phrases: "Disciples show it, that is how you know it;" "No roots, no fruits;" " Love acrostic: Let Jesus lead, Obey, Values grow the mission for a Christ filled world, Expect unity to flow from following Jesus;" "We will not hate haters;" "Dying to live for Christ, not living to die." The Fresh Expressions ecumenical and international movement was mentioned. Expect we will hear more about it. Four guiding principles tie Fresh Expressions together:

- a. Missional – Joining God's mission by going to those not currently served by any church.
- b. Contextual – Grounded in the language and culture of the people in and for their particular context.
- c. Formational – Focused on discipling people in the way of Jesus.
- d. Ecclesial – Forming local, tangible Christian communities that are able to step out as churches in their own right.

The Missional Initiative is on Basecamp.

4. SPRC and Finance updates.

- a. SPRC – Blair. Revising personnel policy.
- b. Budget – Nolan. Getting ready for fall campaign. In good shape financially. Next budget meeting is the 26th. Leah Lively is the new financial secretary.

5. Pastor Gina's presentation on mid-size churches. Slides are on Basecamp. WMUMC is a mid-size church (100-150 – 300-350). A mid-sized church is a "pressured" church because

people expect a full array of ministries, but the church doesn't have the people or financial resources of large churches. The growing mid-size church is under stress because of inadequate facilities, staffing and finances; poor administration; and increasing complexity.

a. Four types of churches: family (less than 50), pastoral (50-150), program (150-300) and corporate (350+). Family church functions as a family with pastor providing lots of pastoral care; has matriarchs and patriarchs. Pastoral church has a cadre of leaders; pastor seen as spiritual leader, congregation as large family. In a program church, pastor has central role, but role is shifted and spiritual feeding is led by laity. In a corporate church, pastor is seen as an administrative leader, preaching is primary role, less pastoral care.

b. Struggles: Desire to keep church one big family. People who hold positions don't always hold power, pastor carries expectations no human can fulfill, tradition has more pull than vision, natural desire to do more (not less).

c. Reality: Fewer mid-size churches than 10 years ago; some have gone from mid to large; many more declined from mid to small; of all, mid are more likely to grow in any one year; mid have young constituency.

d. Opportunities for mid-size: Culture is shifting to smaller boutiques (not Walmarts); critique of "mega" model of church not all positive, even from pastors. Healthy responses to challenges mid-size face: Build or maintain a complete array of ministries to meet spiritual, educational and outreach needs of all ages (some offerings will be stronger than others but must be in place); mid need something distinctive that is competing for current and potential members; some capture in vision, some in particular ministry focus, some have distinctive spirit.

e. What's worked for Pastor Gina: Contracting with a good ministry coach (planning and evaluating ministry); having a spiritual director; spending intentional time listening to church and reflecting on what is heard; reading a lot (about ministry and culture and intersection of two); attending good ministry training; using a resource "as common language" with church leaders; and pointing in direction of where Spirit is hovering and encouraging leaders to do the same.

Nolan asked where the pastors think we are, their vision and do we have structure. Pastor Gina says we have small church mentality although we are mid-size. Need for pastoral care but need to move forward. SPRC says they can run church, but Pastor Gina does not see a vision. Making progress but still under pressure. At a plateau, not declining; made some leaps but overall there's a plateau. Pastor Bert is encouraged that we're holding our own, grim for a lot of churches, can't rest where we are, need to continue to offer array of ministries, can't let up or could cascade down. People expect things in place with perfection and we don't have that. We need to understand we're incomplete. Reference to whether structure is in place, Pastor Bert commented that people complain they don't know what's going on and don't know everyone. Want to be one body. Need something distinctive and compelling as church community of faith so we can find traction. People of faith can pick their church. Lots of people are spiritual not religious. Reality is challenging.

5. Transformation or Evidence of God's Work.

a. Worship – Linda McLawhorn. Want to be a church that is revitalizing and has young people—not a Water’s Edge. Need to offer full array of programs for young families so they come and stay. Question asked about the children from Courthouse Green. Jim Rogers gave Peggy contact at Denbigh Presbyterian to see how they work Courthouse Green. Over 85 children have cycled through the lunch program, have core who attend regularly. Older kids (6-10 kids) stayed for VBS because they are hungry for this. Tremendous opportunity if we had transportation. Peggy met with key folks about Courthouse Green Tuesday night. Need to figure out how to keep connection. Pastor Gina forming relationship with folks.

b. Trustees – Sandy.

(1) New kitchen coordinator is Nolan Reid III. He’s met with Jim King and Leta and will schedule two dates for congregational training.

(2) Bus on Craig’s List. May have nibble for \$12K. Money will go to K account to purchase van.

(3) New organ within K account budget. Organ in place but not fine tuned; complaints about volume.

(4) Child Protection Policy. In final stages. Hope to have in place in fall. Extends to all ages of congregation. Looking at locking some doors at end of SS. Narthex and hall open. Have usher walking hall and parking lot. Someone needs to have eyes open during prayer. Must have two trained adults within seeing and hearing distance when working with children. Language is very specific. Have to protect youth and volunteers but also deter predators. Sandy and Lynnah attended workshop on what needs to be in place. Especially important for youth away trips; may need four adults for each trip. Pastor Bert put policy on Basecamp for LT review and comment.

c. Evangelize – Jim. Working on kickoff Sunday in September and Upward funding.

d. Prayer work – Pastor Bert. Working details. Great group of folks on Wednesday morning.

e. Worship – Linda Carrithers. Stephanie Hobson has agreed to coordinate setup of chairs. Bob and Trish will continue to be involved.

f. Pastors.

(1) Pastor Gina has been assigned by the Virginia Conference to the Committee on Episcopacy for our new bishop, which is like the local SPRC is to the local pastor, except this committee relates from the conference to the bishop. The work of this group is to advise the bishop on her work and to evaluate the bishop’s performance. Pastor Gina will also continue in serving our DS in a similar role on the District Committee on Superintendency.

(2) Linda Carrithers got a group of creative people to plan Lampstand Service to make it a more contemporary worship.

(3) Nice to have an Associate Pastor so pastors can work the vision.

(4) Kickoff Sunday in September.

(4) Fall series. Pastors will rotate services. Pastor Gina will preach 7 services, Pastor Bert 6 and Pastor Peggy 2.

(5) Stewardship season four Sundays.

Closing Prayer - Peggy

Meeting adjourned at 9:03 pm.