

Minutes of the MUMC Leadership Board
May 19 2024 Monthly Meeting 3:00 pm - 5:15 pm
Room m311 / Zoom ID 925 6848 4101 / Password 177678

Attendance: John Heskett, Rev. Dr. Andy Blacksher, Craig Looney, Doug Christopher, John Miller, Jennifer Forsythe, Joy Parisien, Dave Divjak, Mindy Brinkhorst,
Participating via Zoom: Scott Hammon
Visitors: John Himpel, Dominic Pisoni

3:00 Call to Order- John Heskett

Minutes: Joy Parisien

Joy and Concerns: John Miller shared that his daughter, Marissa, was the salutatorian of her graduating class. She also was the recipient of this year's Chancel Choir scholarship. Andy Blacksher expressed his thanks for the gift basket he received from the Leadership Board. He was truly overwhelmed, as were we when he revealed that he does not like Reese's Pieces! (peanut M & M's are his favorite).

On a sad note, Craig Looney shared that a dear family friend passed away quite suddenly. We also learned that Herb Walker, a beloved member of MUMC, is now in hospice.

Devotion John Heskett offered a prayer in response to these concerns.

Approval of Board Meeting Minutes from 4/14/2024

John Heskett noted that Kurt Schuermann's name had inadvertently been left off and that will be corrected before these minutes are made available to the congregation,

Presentation of the Financial Audit for 2023

Dominic Pisoni from the RubinBrown company covered the basics of an audit which was conducted following the "audit guide for churches". This audit covered 4 areas: Cash, Bank Reconciliations- looking at accounting records, Income- donations from a 10 week period of the year were examined and Payroll Testing- focus is on employees most recently hired

Overall, RubinBrown felt that Mary Petit and Rev Blacksher had done a really great job in managing the financials of the church. The only concerns were with proper preauthorization...routine bills did not necessarily have written authorization if they were for \$1,000 or less. There were no issues on the income side. It was suggested that documented policy procedures be written down so that a guide would be available to assist anyone who might have to fill in for Mary. This is currently being worked on. Four people work in the accounting at MUMC, three paid and one volunteer. Dave Divjak made the motion to approve the audit, seconded by Jennifer Forsythe, approved unanimously. The audit needs to be formally submitted by June 1st.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Leadership Institute at the Church of the Resurrection, September 25-27

Fourteen people have signed up to attend this District learning opportunity. 11 staff and 2 congregants will attend in person, with one staff member attending virtually. The cost to attend in person is \$278 for all 3 days, \$200 if only attending Wednesday through Friday and \$78 online. Rev. Blacksher thinks very highly of this event and is delighted to be going with so many from MUMC.

Facilities and Grounds Report

Scott Hammon, MUMC's Facilities Manager gave a rundown of the issues he has addressed since he was hired and those that are in the offing. The outage of parking lot lights was the first thing he tackled. Sanctuary shingles have been replaced. In June the 2 flat side units will have their shingles removed and have any necessary repairs completed before being re-shingled. Currently there are leakage issues with the steeple and skylight being worked on. The lightning strike that destroyed the chapel's elevator board remain on order. The fire alarm system which was also shut down by the strike is back up and running. All heating and cooling units have been repaired and are currently functioning. MUMC is a large facility with buildings ranging in age from 25 to 178 years, plus there are 3 homes around the church that require maintenance. It's a tall order. Scott could not say enough about Ron Pfeifer, a volunteer who helps him out. The list is endless... a squirrel in the rooftop fan, ovens that don't turn on, water fountains that need fixing. Scott is trying to put together a facilities team to help him keep track of maintenance issues, which will hopefully allow them to be addressed in a more timely manner. If you are interested in being a part of this team or have questions or concerns about MUMC's facilities, contact Scott at scott.hammon@manchesterumc.org.

Major Changes from General Conference

Regionalization was the biggest change at the Conference with the United States being recognized as a region. This will allow the United States to make changes to the Book of Discipline without requiring approval from other regions around the world. One such change was having language removed that barred LGTBQ people from being ordained or from being married in the church. Clergy, however, are not obligated to perform wedding ceremonies and the trustees of a church have the final say on whether their building can be used for such purposes. This General Conference was less bureaucratic than has often been the case, allowing for more conversation and true conferencing to take place. Lots and lots of changes were made. A full report can be found at umc-ne.org

Staff Review/ Implementation of the Reorganization Plan

Staff are still figuring out their new responsibilities and many are busy moving into their new offices. Pastor Ron Beaton, Pastor Andy Blacksher, Rev. Mary Beth Hartenstein, Tiffany Conway, and Mary Petit offices will all be located in the main office. Kevin McBeth has chosen to keep his office downstairs near the music room. The plan is for this executive team to meet weekly in the main office area so that they can coordinate all decision making.

Staff Evaluation Process

Emails have gone out to various members of the congregation asking them to fill out evaluation forms for staff that they interact with. Supervisors will be meeting with the people who report to them and there are new evaluation forms being utilized.

Dr. Susan Nienaber's Consultation with Board and Staff

The Leadership Board will meet with Dr. Nienaber, a trauma informed therapist, on August 25th, after the 11 o'clock service. The meeting is expected to last 3-4 hours. The decision has not yet been made about whether to meet at church or in someone's home. The staff will then meet with Dr. Nienaber on August 26th for a full work day. Although mandatory, the doctor can exclude people from attending if she feels it is not necessary. Her hope is to zoom with the staff a month before she meets them in person to get the process started.

It has been suggested that the Leadership Board and Staff gather in an informal setting in the near future...perhaps a barbecue, so that we can all get to know each other a bit better.

Finances

MUMC is doing a bit better this year, compared to last year, at this point in time. Expenses exceeded revenue for the month of March by \$94,202 with designated building revenues and heating/cooling revenues bringing the deficit up to \$108,973. The cost to repair the chapel elevator currently stands at \$8,000, and the repair to the fire alarm system cost slightly more than \$1,000. Neither were covered by insurance due to a \$10,000 deductible. Current days in reserve, 109.14, which exceeds the target of 90 days and does not include \$200,000 which has been set aside for repairs.

Communications Needs/Options

MUMC has gone from having four fulltime custodians, to one fulltime and one part time (3 days per week). The cleaning service the church that was hired has not been satisfactory. We still lack help in the preschool area, for afternoon and evening events, and especially for big events that occur on the weekends. Staff is overworked and

stressed by having to take on these responsibilities. The recommendation is to hire a full time person, 40 hours per week, to address these areas of concern.

A recommendation was also made by Pastor Blacksher to hire two people to work as a Communications team. One person's job will be to focus on internal communications (banners, flyers, slides, newsletter) and the other person's job will be to focus on external matters such as advertising and marketing. Interviews have already been conducted and two excellent candidates identified. Despite some worry being voiced about the church's finances, the Board ultimately decided the time was right to take this leap of faith. Everyone feels very positively about the direction the church is heading in as we look forward to Pastor Beaton's arrival. Doug Christopher made a motion, Dave Divjak seconded and the Board voted unanimously to approve these new positions.

Congregational Input

Though congregational member, John Himpel, initially stated he had nothing for congregational input, the prior discussion where Pastor Ron Beaton was mentioned, jogged his memory and he asked if he could speak. John recently attended a Midwest Mission meeting in Illinois where everyone present was asked to introduce themselves and name of the church they represent. When John responded, Manchester United in St. Louis, the woman sitting next to him turned and uttered "we hate you". John was quite taken aback, until the woman revealed that she is a member of Memorial United Methodist Church in Farmington Missouri...Ron Beaton's church! She proceeded to sing Ron's praises, noting all that he has accomplished at Memorial United Methodist and how much he and his family will be missed. Pastor Ron Beaton will begin preaching at MUMC in August. Exciting times lie ahead!

Evaluation Forms for Andy Blacksher

Our meeting had already gone over, so John is going to send out the forms for Andy's evaluation, giving Board members more time to peruse them and make comments. Everyone on the Board agrees that Pastor Blacksher has gone above and beyond since the day he arrived at MUMC. To show our appreciation the Board voted to give Andy a retroactive 5% raise. A Charge Conference will be called by Rev. Schuermann in order to get approval for this salary increase.

The meeting adjourned at 5:15.

