

Agenda of the MUMC Leadership Board
November 10, 2024 Monthly Meeting 3:00 – 5:00 pm
Room 311 / Zoom ID 925 6848 4701 / PW 177678

In attendance: Pastor Ron Beaton, Pastor Andy Blacksher, John Heskett, Sue Belval, Joy Parisien, Craig Looney, John Miller, Doug Christopher, Dave Divjak, Mindy Brinkhorst, Joe Eltsner, Kelly Wicks, Kandi Karger-Robinson, Jennifer Forsythe, Sara Beebe, Suzanne Shimkus
Guests: Rebecca Janning, John Himple, Bill Ahal, Harold Lee

3:03 Call to Order

- Minutes – Suzanne Shimkus
- Devotion – Kandi-Karger-Robinson
- Joys and Concerns
- Prayer - Pastor Ron Beaton

Approval of October Board Meeting Minutes:

- motion to adopt by Joe, second by Joy, unanimously passed

Reports / Discussions

- Congregational Input
 - Bill Ahal - was asked to be on a group with Jim Belval and Dave Gnaegy, working to identify items around the building that need attention, will meet later this month
 - 2 groups: one for outside needs and one for inside aesthetics
 - Some major projects that this church has to handle in the upcoming months and even years - maintenance projects
 - Need a point person to be able to communicate with the construction company/contractor
 - Need to spend money wisely
- Pastor Ron Beaton
 - Reflect on October 20 church meeting & November 3 lead givers dinner
 - Oct. 20: Thought it went really well as a whole, Fellowship Hall was full
 - Able to articulate a lot that we needed to say
 - Staff was able to share goals
 - Brought up many questions and good discussions
 - Joe thought we should have taken more questions
 - Andy thought the same until he read them: they were all over the place, some were personal questions, so Pastors responded personally
 - Video was put on You Tube, not website or Facebook
 - Nov. 3: Dinner with lead givers in congregation
 - Thanking those that are extraordinarily generous, Annie Gunn's dinner was paid for by one congregant, 47 in attendance, some

discussion around involvement beyond giving or reinstating some giving

- Both events articulated where we are, finances in a challenging spot, a lot of work to do without raising a lot of alarm bells
- John Heskett said it was great to hear from ministry leaders and the good work they are doing in their specific areas
- John Heskett
 - Lead discussion on who MUMC wants to be going forward
 - What will MUMC be like in 5 years?
 - 200 year celebration may excite things a bit
 - More diversity in age of congregation - growth in families with children, Sunday School
 - Sara shared that there is a positive vibe among the young families - Kudos to Emily Pikkard, hopes this continues to grow
 - Ethnic diversity as well
 - Growth in community engagement - we are fairly affluent and can do more, should do more
 - 11:00 service does not bring a lot of young families - maybe some brainstorming some ideas to bring in younger families
 - Community dinners seem to be booming
 - Look into Young Adult congregants (20s) and how to bring in more
 - Austin was meeting with some friends today to make some plans
 - Demographic that is leaving organized religion, stuff to attract them without being “too churchy”
 - Joe shared that years ago the church hosted “West County Singles” group that brought some young people in
 - Pastor Ron shared that he participated in “Pub Theology” meetings at a local bar, he shared this with Austin who seem excited
 - Pastor Ron shared that a lot of literature was written that kids would go to college, be on their own for a while, and then find their way back to church after marrying and having kids. These days, though, many leave and never come back.
 - John Heskett shared about a book, *The Unchurched*, that says that if the current trends are left unaddressed, this generation will end up causing churches to close.
 - This board, working with the staff and clergy, has the responsibility and opportunity to decide where this church will go. We have to be very purposeful in thinking about what we will be like.

- John shared that at a previous church, they had public access to new utility registers. They would reach out and invite them to church, to small groups, etc.
- Andy encouraged John to add this to the agenda. He questioned, “How can we create a budget, when we don’t know where we are going?” It shouldn’t be the lead pastor deciding the mission and vision of the church. It should be the Leadership Board.
- How do we hear from outside this room, in the congregation?
- John shared that we have very talented congregants that would be appropriate to lead these conversations.
- Joe - can we find out which churches are successfully staying “afloat” and are booming? Can we ask what they are doing?
- Andy shared that they are daily sent “best practices” from other churches.
- Andy took a team to Resurrection recently. They are also running half their attendance than pre-Covid. We are about 1/10 of their numbers (attendance, budget).
- There are churches saying, “Here’s who we want to be, in this community and beyond,” and work towards those goals.
- Sue shared that there USED to be “visionary” workshops.
- Pastor Andy Blacksher
 - Review Financials
 - End of September - \$7K more than the year before!
 - Year to date - \$406K loss in expenses vs. income
 - \$46K more in revenue than expenses just in September
 - October is looking like we “thought September would,” nothing too worrisome or exciting, not finalized yet
 - Attendance has been steadily growing, headed in right direction in worship
 - Starting in July - began outpacing 2023 attendance, July - 8 people, August - 88 people, September - 5 people, October - 11 people
 - Question about the new chairs for Fellowship Hall - around \$6k raised, considering one other chair that is a hybrid model between what we currently have and the first cushioned chair proposed.
 - Draft of 1st Quarter Budget (discuss 3 options)
 - Not ready yet - Andy will email when it is available, reply all with discussion
 - Only changes made are a cost of living raise for staff and other expected changes, like insurance increase
 - Should hear from Apportionments soon
 - Apportionments pay for salaries for Bishop, District Superintendent, help struggling churches to keep their pastors,

pay for some of our ministries, it's a formula - about 12%, as a rolling average of previous 3 years

- Question about a change in money due to those leaving annual conference - Pastors believe the number may decrease, not increase
- Staff knows it's a preliminary budget, reevaluate after 3 months instead of a rash decision now
- Kelly - Question about changing the fiscal year from Jan. to Dec. to July to June, as pastoral appointments run
 - The switch to it would be challenging, though that isn't a reason why NOT to change it.
 - Andy said he was in a room of about a 50/50 split of churches whose fiscal years run differently
 - Kelly will look into exploring this option
- Charge Conference paperwork
 - Going through a packet:
 - List of retired clergy
 - List of those received into the congregation as members
 - List of those withdrawn or moved their membership
 - List of those who have passed
 - *Have not worked on removing "inactive" memberships at this time
 - "Report of Board of Trustees"
 - Includes some completed maintenance (examples)
 - Preschool carpet
 - Rebuilt 1 of 4 boilers
 - Bypassed and relocated a leaky natural gas pipe
 - Includes needed maintenance (examples)
 - Recarpet 114
 - 1 of 4 boilers needs replacing
 - Replace chairs and tables in Fellowship Hall
 - Certificate of Liability Insurance
 - Proof of Insurance for earthquake, wind and hail, deductible buydowns
 - Proposed new board members - class of 2027
 - Members of Nominations committee

Move to Executive (Closed) Session - motion by Kandi, 2nd by John Miller, all approved

- Discuss the Nov 1 dinner meeting with the Bishop
- Report on 220 Creve Coeur
- Discuss PSF (compensation) on Pastors Ron, Andy, and Mary Beth

Move OUT of closed session:

Motion to approve Charge Conference paperwork as amended by Jennifer. 2nd by Kelly.
Unanimous approval.

Closing Prayer – Joy Parisien
Adjourn