

SLT Meeting

February 12, 2024 (5:15pm)

Attending: Bev Enger Bruce Larson
 Barb Owen Katy Van Dyke
 Phil Mueller Avis Richter
 Bill Bertram Alyssa Thomsen
 Pastor Duane Coates Gail Pederson
 Randi Watterson (recorder)

Absent: Jan McCarthy Holly Neuberger
 Justin Horsager

Agenda: Phil Mueller moved to accept the agenda. 2nd. Approved.

Minutes: The minutes from January 17th, 2024, were amended to read “Katy and Bev will make a decision, together, regarding an emergency closure of the church during weekdays, if the Pastor is unavailable to make this decision.” Bill Bertram moved to accept the amended minutes. 2nd. Approved.

Devotions and Prayer: Pastor Duane gave a devotion on Psalm 25 and said a prayer.

Old Business

Cultivation letter – Pastor Duane and Cassidy are still working on completing a membership list. The count is at 341. Katy will help Cassidy work on this. Katy will do some calling of members and asked for volunteers to help.

Safer Sanctuary Training Brenda Lint will lead a meeting regarding safer sanctuary training – working on policies. People from other churches will be attending. This will take place on February 24th @ 10:00am.

Transition in banking signatories, credit card – The appropriate people have signed at the bank. A new credit card will be issued in Pastor Duane’s name.

New Business

Discuss pros/cons of SLT structure – Katy stated that the SLT doesn’t work the way it was initially planned. Smaller groups are to meet and bring their thoughts and decisions to the larger SLT group. Phil suggested that the length of terms of service for SLT members should be extended (3 years changed to 6 years). The member could be elected for a second 3-year term.

He also thought that a husband and wife should be able to serve at the same time.

Bev asked me (Randi Watterson) what I thought about the new committee set up regarding the former Worship and Mission committees. I stated that I was fine with my role in setting up the altar for weekly services and communion Sunday, but would welcome more help, if people wanted to expand on what I was doing. Also, I stated that other than the Christmas Shoebox Mission, there were no longer any ongoing mission projects. Barb stated that the conference has dropped some of the previous mission projects.

Pastor Duane stated that the SLT Board has 5 functions: Administrative Board, Nominations, Staff/Parish, Finance, and Trustees.

Avis stated that a large board for a church our size should have people of expertise serving as Trustees. Bev stated that as an SLT member, she does not want to be part of every one of the functioning groups. Barb stated that members are not in each group, but share in the final decisions. Katy asked if the small groups bring recommendations to the SLT board and this board confirms the decisions?

Pastor's Report – Pastor Duane will be out of the parish from 1pm, Thursday, February 15 until 7pm Monday, February 19. The UWF is handling the service on Sunday.

Confirmation starts on Wednesday, February 21 at 4:30pm. At this time, we do not need mentors. They plan to meet weekly through May 8 and confirm those 7th and/or 8th graders who the student, parents, and pastor feel are ready. This will probably be on May 19, pending consultation with parents. The resource is “Submitting to be More Vile: The Illustrated Adventures of John & Charles Wesley”, by Charlie Baber. This will be augmented by reading the 24 chapters of the Gospel of Luke.

Lent starts on Wednesday with a 6:30pm Ash Wednesday Service in the sanctuary. Lenten services start on February 21 and run each Wednesday through March 20. There will be a meal at 5:30pm, with the service following around 6:15pm. The theme is “Multiplying Love.” It is about casting a vision of inclusive love for the United Methodist Way of Life. Pastor Duane is currently teaching that book to adults in the library on Sunday mornings, helping people to see the strength of the Wesleyan witness to this theological truth claim, while at the same time thinking about the justification of traditionalist thought and inviting people to have compassion for those who hold that view.

Pastor Duane thinks it is time that the Dakotas Conference have this conversation, as controversial as it is. (In fact, he thought it was time 6 years ago.) This book and

Holy Scripture are the foundations of the Cabinet-level videos that will be the centerpiece of our mid-week Lenten services. The videos will be from members of both the Minnesota and Dakotas Conference Cabinet. Pastor Duane will strive to make the classes different from the worships. For the five later Sundays in Lent (February 25 – March 24), he is beginning to explore a lectionary-based series called “Depths of Love”, which will accompany the Lenten study, but not be so focused on that vision. Pastor Duane will be very busy during Lent: Adult Sunday school, Wednesday confirmation and services, choir and Thursday Bible study class. The youth will do the Maundy Thursday service on March 28. There will be a Good Friday service on March 29. It was discussed that the offerings taken for the Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, and Good Friday services could be donated to the Barnes County Ministerial Association Assistance Fund, which is similar, but goes beyond the Matthew 25 Fund. Katy moved to donate the money given at those three services to the BCMAAF. 2nd Approved. Pastor Duane expressed his appreciation for the Staff Appreciation potluck and tokens of appreciation.

Workgroup Reports

Trustees – Bruce received an estimate of \$11,000, from Kohn Electric, to replace the church electrical boxes. Steve Nielson is waiting for an estimate from Grotberg Electric.

Katy suggested that the doors of the church need to be re-keyed and that a camera should be set to check on who is coming in and out of the church. She stated that sometimes doors are left open.

Financial – Avis reported that Loan 121 – the commercial loan on which we are making payments of both principal and interest was amended in 2020 to extend the loan renewal date ten years to 3/15/2034. The payment amount and rate may change every five years, beginning on April 15, 2024. The current interest rate is 3.0% and the new rate on April 14, 2024, is projected to be 7.7%. This would be an increase of \$4,500 per year in interest payments. The loan officer is hoping to get a little better interest rate than stated.

Loan 122 – is the \$199,627 loan that we are making interest payments only on and the \$200,000 CD is up for renewal on 3/15/2024. Current interest rates are 3.0% on the CD and 5% on the loan. The estimated new interest rate for the five-year CD is 2% and the loan 4%. The estimated cost to renew the loan is \$250.

As of January 31, 2024, the Capital Campaign checking account balance is \$33,798.24. Avis recommends using \$23,000 of the capital funds to reduce loan

#121. She wonders about the possibility of asking for some Endowment Funds?
Also, should we have a Capital Campaign?

The information needed to refinance the loan – church financial information for the past 3 years (2021-2023), a balance sheet, and income & expense statements. FCCU Commercial Loan officer Marshall Erickson 701-788-3025, marshall.erickson@myfccu.com.

Avis stated that she still has some questions for Nikole Nelson, the church's accountant, but will be patient as it is tax season. Avis stated that the church is maintaining its monthly giving level. Church Windows will be changed to Power Church.

Phil stated that we may lose some of our large donors due to their passing. He suggested that Curt Van Dyke be asked to help with refinancing options.

Katy stated that her son, Tony, works for Thrivent, and they would be willing to discuss helping us organize a Capital Campaign.

Phil stated that we would need to emphasize that the Capital Campaign money raised would go to pay off existing loans first, before paying for other projects.

Phil stated that he will be contacting the previous audit group members regarding a 2023 audit for the week of April 22 – 25.

They would be requesting a report from Nikole Nelson for the Kiosk financials, also.

Staff Parish – there is a recommendation to change the Job Description of the Christian Education Director to include being paid on Sundays, when they are doing something job related. Currently, they are being paid from 8:00 am to 10:30am. There was discussion regarding this, and it was tabled until the next SLT meeting.

Ongoing Signature Ministries

We Love Washington School – The UWF is purchasing \$10.00 Kiosk gift cards for each school employee for Valentine's Day.

The Kiosk has made a total of \$44,000 in church donations.

Pastor Duane gave a closing prayer.

Meeting adjourned.

The next SLT meeting is March 11th at 5:30 pm.

Randi Watterson (recorder)