

SLT Meeting

March 11, 2024 (5:15pm)

Attending:

Barb Owen	Bev Enger
Gail Pederson	Jan McCarthy
Justin Horsager	Bruce Larson
Phil Mueller	Katy VanDyke
Avis Richter	Anita Tulp
Pastor Duane Coates	Randi Watterson, Recorder

Absent: Holly Neuberger Bill Bertram Alyssa Thomsen

Paul Lint was present for Staff Check-In.

Some of the confirmation students were present. Skye Nielson was present in the room. The following were present on Zoom: Jenna Elston, Annaliese Mueller, Ham Mueller, and Jossi Zahn.

Pastor Duane gave a devotion on Luke 15 (Parable of the Lost Sheep). Prayer.

Approve Agenda: Two items were added to the agenda. To New Business – Discuss change of church service time to 9:30 am during the summer months (Jan McCarthy). To Old Business – further discuss structural changes to SLT (Phil Mueller). Barb Owen moved to accept the edited agenda. 2nd. Approved.

Approve Minutes: Avis Richter made a correction to the minutes in the financial section. Current interest rate on the CD was changed from 3.8% to 3.0%. Phil Mueller moved to accept the corrected minutes. 2nd. Approved.

Staff Check-in: Paul Lint, Co-Youth Director, stated that the youth are doing well. He was excited that some of them were attending the present meeting. All youth are welcomed, loved, and cared for at Epworth UMC. Paul, Brenda, and family will be leaving Epworth for an appointment in Spearfish, SD. The timing is yet unknown. The Epworth Youth are accepting and supportive of each other. Phil Mueller asked Paul – “Who are we looking for in our next youth leader?” Paul stated – someone in town. Someone who knows what it means to be welcoming and inclusive. Someone who has a passion for working with youth, but is not perfect and realizes that we all need God’s grace. Skye Nielson stated that the new leader should be fun and have a lot of energy! Phil asked Paul if he would be available to help identify a new youth leader. Paul said that he would be happy to help. Pastor Duane asked Paul if 1/12 of the yearly leadership fee for 2024, for each month, should be transferred to the Youth Account. Paul agreed to this.

New Business: Cassidy Fraedrich, Office Manager, requested that the SLT consider changing the church management software from Power Church and Microsoft Church Windows to Church Trac. Cassidy presented information about the advantages of Church Trac. It would cost less, as it would replace both Power Church and the two-component Microsoft Church Windows. It has a good support system and offers a quick start up. After discussion and questions, Bruce Larson moved to change the current software system to Church Trac. 2nd. Approved.

Avis Richter asked when the new system would go live? Cassidy will collaborate with Nikole Nelson as to the appropriate timing of going live. Cassidy will coordinate the transfer of information to the new system.

Old Business: Safer Sanctuary – the Safer Sanctuary Task Force (Katy VanDyke, Barb Owen, Gail Pederson, Brenda Lint, Bonnie Ranum and Pastor Duane Coates) will establish Epworth’s Safer Sanctuary Policy. The SLT will approve any policy changes before the new policy goes into effect. This policy will be reviewed on a yearly basis.

SLT Structure – Phil Mueller stated that there needs to be a better understanding of how the SLT should work. He would like to see a change in the SLT membership policy. Pastor Duane stated that there is a book “Mission Possible” by Kay Kotan that presents information on how the new board structure should function. This book is available from Amazon for \$25. Some of the SLT members will be purchasing this book. There will be further discussion at a later date.

New Business: Katy VanDyke would like to see a summary of the monthly SLT meeting in the monthly Newsletter. The SLT members agreed to this. Katy will write the summary.

There is a request for Epworth to contribute to sponsoring a speaker on “Diversity and Inclusion” at VCSU. This would take place on April 11, 2024. The total sponsorship fee is \$5,000. The speaker, Taylor Brorby, raised in North Dakota, is author of the Pulitzer-nominated book, “Boys and Oil: Growing Up Gay in a Fractured Land.” The speaker is requesting a meeting with people of faith. Barb Owen moved to offer Epworth Church as a location for the people of faith meeting at 3:00 pm on April 11, 2024. 2nd. Approved. Phil Mueller moved to give \$300 toward sponsoring this speaker. 2nd. Approved. This will come from the money in the Open Table Ministry fund, which has ceased to function.

There was discussion regarding the changing of the church service to 9:30 am, with coffee fellowship following, during the summer months. Pros and cons were discussed. This was tabled until the next SLT meeting. Katy VanDyke will check the attendance numbers to compare how that time change affected attendance in past years.

Workgroup Reports: Trustees – Bruce Larson did not have an update about replacing the church electrical boxes, as he is still waiting to hear back from Steve Nielson regarding an estimate from Grotberg Electric. Discussion regarding rekeying the locks on the church doors was tabled until Bruce is back in Valley City.

Staff Parish – The Staff Parish Task Force met and is requesting that the new Christian Education Director be paid on an hourly basis to include church attendance. The church budget would need to be changed to allow for this. This was tabled. There is an opening for a new Youth Director, as Paul and Brenda Lint will be leaving.

Pastor’s Report: Pastor Duane Coates reviewed the Holy Week Schedule. There will be two more mid-week Lenten Services on March 13 and March 20. The Maundy Thursday Service and the Good Friday Service will each be at 6:30 pm. Pastor Duane will be gone on April 14 for his Grandniece’s Baptism. The Annual Conference is requesting that each church initiate Green Team Creation Care. Pastor Duane would like Cindy Heidelberger to speak on this subject on

Sunday, April 28. There will be two services on Easter Sunday, March 31 – 8:00 am Worship, 9:00 am Breakfast, 9:30 am Egg Hunt and 10:30 am Worship.

Financial Workgroup: Avis Richter reported that the General Fund checking account is down by \$5,000 for the month of February. Giving is up 58% since this time last year. Avis made the following three motions for the building loan refinancing: 1) Avis Richter moved that Epworth UMC approve of renewing the CD and CD Loan #122. 2nd Approved. 2) Avis Richter moved that Epworth UMC approve of the loan modification on Loan #121. 2nd. Approved. 3) Phil Mueller moved that Kathryn VanDyke and Avis Richter be authorized to sign bank documents. 2nd. Approved.

Justin Horsager moved to accept the financial reports as presented. 2nd. Approved.

The church audit will be conducted on April 25. A form will be sent out to the individuals holding check books. The members of the audit team are Curt VanDyke, Rhonda Marshall and Kelly Pederson. The SLT will determine the scope of the audit. The church credit card statements will be reviewed, and the team will talk with Cassidy Fraedrich, the church financial secretary. Brenda Lint will be asked to put the Youth Group checkbook in order. The coffee Kiosk will be asked for their financial information.

The next SLT meeting will be on Monday, April 8, 2024, at 5:15 pm.

Randi Watterson (Recorder)