**CUMC/WESLEY FOUNDATION**

**CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES**

**November 14, 2019**

**Minutes of Meeting**

**Members Present:** Brenda Allen, Denny Coon, Adam Faeth, Jen Hibben, Jason Janssen, Gerry Kennedy, David Orth, Steve Williams

**Members Absent:** Jane Jacobson, Jodi Risdal, Mary Wickham

**Staff Present:** Lindsay Drake, Lauren Loonsfoot

**Guests:** Jaye Johnson

**Call to Order**

Chair Orth called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. and provided an opening devotion. He asked to move Johnson’s talk to the front of the agenda since he has a long drive home.

**Presentation by Jaye Johnson**

Johnson led the council in an exercise in strategic planning based on the book *God Dreams* by Warren Bird and Will Mancini. He said the goal was to look at what the church had already done and think about next steps.

Johnson shared the Vision Pathway developed by Bird and Mancini.

Mission What are we doing?

Values Why are we doing it?

Strategy How are we doing it?

Measures How will we know when we get there?

Vision Proper Where is God taking us?

Johnson suggested some strategies based Collegiate Wesley’s purpose statement:

**Share** God’s love with all people

**Encourage** everyone to learn about themselves and their faith

**Invest** in people so they realize their God-given gifts and adopt a life of service.

Drake said these ideas were similar to the discipleship pathway developed by the church.

Johnson said that once the church identified strategies, the next step was to ask, What will you measure to know if you are successful in doing these things?

Johnson talked about the Vision Proper.

Beyond the Horizon 5-20 years

Background Vision 3 years What are the four major roadblocks?

Mid-ground Vision 1 year What are you going to work on?

Foreground Vision 90 days What are you going to work on?

Johnson suggested a possible beyond-the-horizon goal would be to develop leaders to boldly guide Collegiate Wesley to show the love of Christ to those who have been hurt, excluded, ridiculed, and judged unjustly by the church and the world.

Pastor Hibben said that the goal was not just to focus on those who have been marginalized, but to build a community for all.

Johnson asked the council what impediments they saw to achieving this goal.

* Chaos in the United Methodist Church as a whole
* Not practicing showing the love of Christ to each other within the church
* If there are differences, how do we ask the hard questions in a safe place so that after the conversation, we have been able to express differences and still remain a body of Christ?

Johnson said he teaches that conflict is not bad in a church; it is necessary and needed. He said that apathy is a bad sign.

Allen said it takes exponentially longer to rebuild trust after something happens. Johnson suggested that rebuilding trust starts with the leaders showing vulnerability and expressing where they are coming from in making decisions. However, that approach has a risk in a low-trust environment because other people might try to take advantage of that expressed vulnerability.

* How are people invested in the church?

Johnson said that disinvestment is a natural consequence of turmoil in the church, not practicing our values with each other, and not knowing how to talk to each other.

* What happened with Pastor Jill
* Church Finances
* Treatment of Anna Blaedel
* Leadership challenge

Johnson said that in a healthy church, if a person is on a three year rotation, the first year to figure things out, but then you spend the next two years building up people within the church to replace you. He said each person should have three people they are building up.

Johnson said that one suggestion would be to implement a behavior covenant, but it would be one of the hardest things to implement. Williams asked if there was a starting point. Johnson clarified that the hard part of the behavior covenant was calling out the first violation, not writing it up.

Drake suggested a way to build a covenant within a small group was to start with a framework and get buy in. Johnson suggested another approach would be to develop the broad strokes with the congregation but to develop the details later.

Allen suggested that the council could start by putting a covenant together, and then she could take that idea to ministries council, and then the clusters could adopt something similar within their own groups.

Johnson asked if the council was familiar with the Diffusion of Innovations theory. What percentage of an organization do you need in order to flip the organization? Johnson said you need 33% of the organization to make a change. He said a common mistake in churches is to let complainers hold you back. He said the complainers are important because they tell you things that no one else will. So go back to early adopters with what the complainers say and ask if they feel the same way. If so, pay attention; if not, write it off.

Johnson suggested that sometimes congregations going through a difficult time will try to say that it is behind them and bury it. He encouraged the church to instead name their issues and take some time to work through them.

Pastor Coon asked if this sort of presentation would work for the entire congregation. Johnson said that it could work to help find next steps, but with the conflict the members bought up, it could turn into a complaint session. Instead he suggested a World Café model, where people sit in small groups, and rotate randomly between tables, so they cannot sit with their buddies the whole time.

**Approval of the October Minutes**

Chair Orth said he found two corrections to the minutes. In the attendance, Darra Johnson was present, and Ryan Risdal was no longer a member. He also said that Jane Jacobson was a Lay member to annual conference.

**A motion was made (Kennedy) and seconded (Janssen) to approve the October 16, 2019 minutes as amended. Motion carried.**

**Charge Conference Recap**

Kennedy asked if the council should invite the congregation to the Church Council meeting where we approve the budget. Williams said he would be careful to set the expectation that the congregation was invited, but they would not be voting. Chair Orth asked if the council was the right venue to invite people, or if it should be Finance Committee, since they would be the ones to bring a proposed budget.

**Affirmation of Pastoral Statement**

Williams suggested that the council affirm the “Pastoral Statement on the Just Resolution Involving the Rev. Anna Blaedel” sent to the congregation.

**A motion was made (Williams) and seconded (Kennedy) to read the pastoral statement, add it to the minutes, and express support from Church Council for the statement. Motion passed.**

**Apportionments**

Janssen said that Finance Committee voted to pay the remaining balance of apportionments for 2019 in their meeting on Tuesday night. He said the committee also voted to put together a subcommittee to work on the transition from having a full-time financial secretary to using a third-party firm with volunteer support.

Chair Orth suggested that the council affirm these motions by Finance Committee.

It was moved by by Dohrmann, seconded by Faeth to pay in full the apportionments for the second half of 2019, as defined and allocated by the conference. Motion carried.

G. Kennedy moved, and Hoyer seconded, that the Finance Committee request of church council that a subcommittee, comprising Jason Janssen, Patty King, Jim Dohrman, and Ken Kruempel be formed to define Collegiate Wesley's future Financial and Accounting processes, in order to implement the transition to contracting these functions to be performed by Schnurr and Company. Kennedy amended the motion to include the stipulation that the committee will begin the sunset process in six months, but with the option of continuation as needed. Motion carried.

Council affirmed the above motions.

**Nominations**

Allen and Drake said they had not heard anything back from the council and cluster chairs yet for the nominations within the Council on Ministries.

Kennedy said the Administrative Council spent a large portion of the meeting coming up with a list of candidates to fill slots within the committees and boards. Kennedy said that they also have a chair now for the Administrative Council. Staff Parish is set with classes of 2020, 2021, and 2022 filled. Kennedy thanked Drake for lots of help.

Drake said the Church Council agreed to revisit the new structure in a year from the meeting last October where it approved the new structure. Drake suggested that everyone read the document again and suggest any changes that might be needed to update it at the January meeting.

Chair Orth asked if there were any ideas about what the terms for the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary of Church Council should be. Drake suggested staggering the terms of these positions so they did not all rotate off at the same time.

Janssen asked why the church treasurer was not listed as a member of Church Council. Kennedy said that the *Book of Discipline* said the treasurer should be a member of the committee on finance.

Williams said that in other organizations, the endowment members were separated from the leadership so the endowment would not be seen as a source of funds. Chair Orth said the idea was that this group would be working on the future of Collegiate Wesley and endowment would be a part of that.

Williams asked if there was a transition team looking at helping welcome a new senior pastor in the next six months. He asked for an item to be added to the next meeting.

Chair Orth asked the Church Council if they would agree to moving the meeting to a different night in consideration of Pastor Coon’s schedule. The Council agreed to meet on the 4th Thursdays of the month in the next year.

**Adjourn**

Williams provided the closing prayer. The meeting adjourned at 9:26 p.m..

Respectfully Submitted,

Adam Faeth, Secretary

Next meeting January 23rd.

Topics suggested for the next meeting:

* Transition team
* Behavior covenant
* Planning
* Apportionment meetings
* Review the new church structure

**Pastoral Statement on the Just Resolution Involving the Rev. Anna Blaedel**

Friends of Collegiate/Wesley,

As some of you have seen or will see in the coming days, a just resolution has been reached in regards to the complaint filed against Rev. Anna Blaedel. You can read more about it as well as Rev. Blaedel’s statement here.We are deeply saddened by our loss in Rev. Blaedel’s leave from the UMC and the Iowa Annual Conference.

We know that at Collegiate/Wesley the complaints against Rev. Blaedel have been particularly troubling because Anna is a part of our family here. We so often hear with great pride and admiration the connections you have with Anna from their youth here at Collegiate and the ways that their ministry has deeply impacted you. We continue to affirm the giftedness, the call and the leadership of Rev. Anna Blaedel. We commit to pray and support Rev. Blaedel and their family during this difficult time.

While the future of the UMC is still unsure and tenuous, we reaffirm our commitment to fight for a church that it truly inclusive at all levels and that creates communities of justice for all people, as Rev. Blaedel shares in her statement, a church that is "reconstituting the world." As a community we will continue to discern the path forward for Collegiate/Wesley employing creative and innovative holy resistance, truth-telling and radical inclusivity.

We recognize that in this system much harm has been done. We repent of the toll this has taken on Rev. Blaedel and all those who love them; emotionally, spiritually, physically and relationally, and the harmful and insidious ways this has affected others who are marginalized. Rev. Blaedel has stated this resolution is not just and we support Anna’s response. We also affirm the need for apology and repentance from those who have done harm.

Despite previous actions and inaction, we affirm the Bishop’s public apology when she said, “I ask for forgiveness for the ways in which our LGBTQIA sisters and brothers around the world have been disenfranchised and mistreated, and I covenant to continue leading with my heart into the future to which God has called us all.” We also affirm the Bishop’s new commitment to "to avoid, if at all possible, the processing of complaints, charges, and trials related to officiating at same-gendered weddings and LGBTQIA identity and credentialing." We commit to hold the Bishop accountable.

We invite you to continue to pray for Rev. Blaedel and all those that love them. We invite you to support Rev. Blaedel and their work here. And we covet your prayers for our church as we discern our way forward in the midst of all that is before us.

Peace,

Pastor Denny & Pastor Jen