**CUMC/WESLEY FOUNDATION**

**CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES**

**April 23, 2020**

**Minutes of Meeting**

**Members Present:** Brenda Allen, Denny Coon, Adam Faeth, Jennifer Plagman-Galvin, Jen Hibben, Jane Jacobson, Jason Janssen, Gerry Kennedy, David Orth, Mary Wickham, Steve Williams

**Members Absent:** Jodi Risdal

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

**Call to Order**

Chair Orth called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. and provided the opening prayer. The meeting attendees took turns sharing a joy.

**COVID-19 Update and Continuing Work**

Chair Orth summarized the Collegiate Wesley’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The staff worked to move services online when the governor announced the limits on group gatherings, school, and business closures with about 30 minutes until the restrictions took effect. Chair Orth said that it seems like the church will have a little more time to plan how to reopen than when suspending in-person activities.

Pastor Coon asked for feedback about the process of reopening. Jacobson suggested surveying the congregation to ask how comfortable they were with returning to group gatherings. Wickham asked if there was any scientific information that might help the church decide if it was truly ready to meet with those group sizes. Allen said that Iowa State is still putting together a plan for the next academic year. Pastor Hibben said that the bishop was also providing some guidance.

Chair Orth asked for any volunteers who would like to be on the small group to meet weekly to go over the response related to COVID-19. Pastor Hibben, Pastor Coon, Jacobson, Wickham, and Loonsfoot volunteered.

**Strategic Planning**

Chair Orth asked the council for their thoughts about starting on a strategic plan given the current limits on gatherings and all the changes in the world. Wickham said that part of developing a strategic plan is gathering feedback and the current environment limits participation. Pastor Coon suggested it might be a good time to review the new church structure as part of developing a strategic plan now that we have a good idea of how it is working.

**Nominations Subcommittee Report**

Drake said that she had a brief conversation with Pastor Coon about how to proceed with nominations given that some groups are meeting more than others right now.

**Apportionments Subcommittee Report**

Pastor Coon said that Jacobson and he started to look at resources to put together an Apportionments 101 presentation plan. He said that there are some links that could be included in the weekly emails now to give members more information about apportionments. Jacobson said it might be a good idea to start dropping some nuggets of knowledge about apportionments. Chair Orth said he thought there was a misconception that the apportionments go to the bishop, but the funds go to a lot of different places. Chair Orth suggested adding a line to any communications encouraging members to contact the Director of Generosity or pastors if they wanted to talk with someone about apportionments.

**Property Needs Assessment Subcommittee**

Kennedy said that the subcommittee established a six-month project timeline. The steps would be gathering information about how the buildings and property are used, then discussing the results, and finally putting a report together. The group will look at what property we have, how it is being used, and gather any recommendations for how it might be better used. Chair Orth said that if there was not a better idea about how things should be used, the church would not make a change just to change something.

**Church Structure Document Subcommittee**

Allen said that at a previous meeting, the council decided the document about the new church structure should be revised into a living document that reflects that we are living in this structure. So the subcommittee moved the first section about the rationale for coming up with the new structure to an appendix on the background for creating the document and new structure.

Allen said the subcommittee had a question about whether to keep the church staff in the same section with Church Council, Administrative Council, and Ministries Council. Pastor Hibben suggested that the staff positions might be too detailed because roles change. Pastor Coon said he liked the first sentence about what the senior pastor does to assure the church is fulfilling its purpose. Faeth suggested that the staff roles could be part of a different section that listed leadership roles within the church to make it look less like one of the governing committees and more like a template for job descriptions. He said that maybe another example would be the description of what a Lay Leader’s role is.

Allen said the subcommittee also found out they had very different interpretations about what the roles of the Lay Leaders were. Kennedy said that the terms Lay Leader and Lay Members to Annual Conference are specific roles from the *Book of Discipline*. The Lay Members to Annual Conference are people that have been elected by their church to represent their church at the Iowa Annual Conference. The churches get a specific number based on the membership of the church. Their role is to provide reports back to the church from the Annual Conferences. The Lay Leaders are positions that are to be the relational point between the conference and the charge. Kennedy said that we used to have just one Lay Leader, and we decided to add a second one. Then the new structure came about, and there were two councils, Administrative Council and Ministries Council, and there were two Lay Leaders, so it made sense to put one on each of those councils. Then when there was trouble filling the vice chair positions on these councils, the councils asked the Lay Leaders fill that role. Jacobson said that one way to make it clearer that there were two responsibilities for the person was to list both roles such as Administrative Lay Leader / Vice Chair.

Allen asked if the Lay Leader has a term, or if it is an open-ended position. Kennedy said that the Lay Leader position is one of the few positions that does not have a term defined in the *Book of Discipline*. Kennedy said that he personally thought it should have a three-year term like other positions. Drake said that she thought that every position should have a term so the commitment was clear.

Kennedy said he thought the church should work to separate the roles of vice chair and Lay Leader. He said it was confusing when issues came up because people were contacting him as the Lay Leader of the church, but he was serving as the Lay Leader of the Administrative Council at that point. Allen said that Kennedy and Risdal are both currently serving as both the vice-chair and the Lay Leader.

Chair Orth said that he would like to see the Lay Leaders also serve as representatives to annual conference, and maybe the third member might be the current Church Council chair. Drake said she liked the idea of the Lay Leaders representing the church at Annual Conference.

Allen said the structure document said that each council also nominates a Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary. She asked if it was really the Ministries and Administrative Council who should nominate their leaders, or if it was the Church Council who would bring their nominations. Jacobson asked if it would be better if the nominations were a grassroots process where the nominations were bubbling up with each group nominating their leadership. Wickham said that you develop people by empowering them to make decisions.

Allen asked if the council wanted to keep the structure diagram. The diagram was intended to show the representation of other committees on each council, but it can give a false impression of a hierarchy in some cases like the Endowment Board, which is a separate entity. Pastor Coon said he thought it was valuable when he was starting at the church to get an understanding about how it was organized. Pastor Williams said he also found it valuable.

**Leadership Development Subcommittee**

Pastor Coon said he gathered 278 comments at the leadership night, and with the help of his wife narrowed it down to about 15 comments that summarized the 278. Pastor Coon asked for suggestions about what to do with these now. Kennedy said that the summarized comments almost look like a job description. He suggested we could send it to the new leadership in the Fall as a leadership covenant. Pastor Williams said he saw these were excellent attributes that we could all work toward. Allen suggested that this might also serve as a guide for training and development if we see there are gaps. Drake said that although there are attributes of Jesus on the list, she thought that there might not be enough about faith or discipleship. While these were all good attributes, they could apply to any good-intending organization like the Kiwanis. Pastor Coon suggested that another thing that might be missing is the idea of servant leadership.

Allen suggested that this could be shared with the church as the results of the leadership night. People always like to see the results of the things they put time into. Pastor Williams said he thought it was significant that this came from the members of Collegiate Wesley, not pulled out of a book somewhere.

Drake said she would like to see the church work toward a behavioral covenant for all the groups in the church.

**Church Council Chair Elect**

Chair Orth asked for any nominations for a chair elect to finish out 2020 and prepare to take on the chair role in 2021. Chair Orth said he could take the suggestions from the council to the nominations subcommittee meeting next week to review.

**Adjourn**

Drake provided the closing prayer. The meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Adam Faeth, Secretary