**CUMC/WESLEY FOUNDATION**

**CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES**

**August 27, 2020**

**Minutes of Meeting**

**Members Present:** Brenda Allen, Adam Faeth, Jen Hibben, Mitch Hoyer, Jane Jacobson, Mary Lautzenhiser Bellon, David Orth, Steve Williams

**Members Absent:** Jennifer Plagman-Galvin, Jason Janssen, Gerry Kennedy, Mary Wickham

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

**Actions since the Previous Meeting**

The council held an electronic vote on July 31, 2020 and unanimously endorsed the following statement from the Tactical Team:

*We do not foresee that in-person worship in the building will occur until sometime in 2021 when safety can be largely assured.*

**Call to Order**

Chair Orth called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The council took turns sharing answers to the question, “How is it with your soul?”

**A motion was made (Hoyer) and seconded (Allen) to approve the minutes of the July 23, 2020 meeting. Motion passed.**

**Strategic Planning Questions (next 3 of 6 questions)**

Continuing a discussion from the July meeting, the council discussed the next three questions from Twila Glenn to ask before starting to create a strategic plan.

**Q4: What unresolved issues exist that we need to address to write a shared strategic plan?**

Hoyer said he had been thinking about what information the church might already have that would be relevant to strategic planning. He remembered three years ago the Future Church Team put together a Congregational Assessment Tool report. He said that one example might be the overall priorities gathered from the congregation in that report, and he wondered if those might still be relevant today. He said that often the broad statements you gather provide most of the benefit, and it takes a lot more effort to gain a little bit more insight.

Jacobson said that the past year shattered a lot of the old ways of doing things, but we are finding new ways to reach people. Jacobson said that she hoped we bring our new 2020 vision to strategic planning and take courage in the fact that we can plan in new ways.

Allen said the general conference had been on her mind as an unresolved issue. Drake said that while the implementation could take years, she hoped we would walk away from the general conference with a decision. Allen asked, how do we continue to reaffirm our values to folks so that people can feel good about being a part of this church? Pastor Lautzenhiser Bellon said that she hoped the church would go forward with the identity the church always had.

Jacobson said that part of our DNA as a church is Wesley Foundation, and with the continued efforts to defund Wesley Foundation, what does that mean for how Collegiate Wesley plans for the future?

Allen asked if there were still any rifts amongst the staff, congregation, and lay leaders. Pastor Lautzenhiser Bellon said that part of the strategic planning process might be something like therapy for the congregation. She suggested that part of the implementation might be activities like missions that are like physical therapy for the congregation.

**Q5: How can we be sure we write a shared strategic plan and not leave it on the shelf to collect dust?**

Hoyer said he would suggest forming an implementation team and assigning tasks to groups or people. He said that in his experience, there needs to be a point person or small group charged with keeping it moving. Jacobson said she agreed there should be an implementation team, and also an accountability team. She said writing a document with specific plans, and providing specific timelines would also help to provide guardrails. Pastor Williams suggested assigning tasks to existing committees, giving them deadlines, helping to promote their efforts, and celebrating their accomplishments.

Allen said she thought it was important to ensure people feel ownership of a strategic plan so they feel that connection and follow through. She said that when others do not have a voice in creating the plan, it is harder for them to own it and follow through. Jacobson suggested the plan should also tie back to the church’s purpose and vision.

Pastor Lautzenhiser Bellon said it might be interesting to have conversations with people who are light attenders. It might be interesting to ask people, what would our church need to look like for you to be more involved? She said we could also ask a similar question people who do not attend, what would it need to look like for you to come?

Hoyer said that one of the top priorities out of the Congregational Assessment Tool was attracting new families. He said he was not sure what kind of goals or strategies might have been developed around that three years ago, or around recruitment in general. Drake said that Lauren is doing a great job in her position, and we have had a lot of younger families in our new member classes recently. Drake said she wondered if we did a CAT assessment again, if we would see the same priorities today. She said she thought that ministries to the marginalized and attracting young families would still be priorities, but it would be interesting to see if that were true. She said that the conference might be willing to do another CAT, even though it had only been a few years.

Faeth asked if there would be any value in starting on an implementation plan for some of the priorities that we think still apply from the CAT report three years ago. He said we might be able to find a few core things we can move forward on, and if we later find out these are no longer priorities, hopefully we have not wasted too much effort by that time. Allen said that maybe we could start by reviewing the CAT and seeing if some of the priorities are still relevant. Hoyer said that maybe Pastor Lautzenhiser Bellon and the staff cannot wait for six or eight months while we come up with the plan.

**Q6: Who should be involved in writing a shared strategic plan?**

Chair Orth said that ideally, we would want every voice in the congregation to be a part of writing the plan. He asked how we might get the voice of the people that are not part of the congregation yet.

Jacobson said she thought we need the voice of our youth. Chair Orth asked if there was a different way to bring in the youth voice rather than having them attend strategic planning meetings. Maybe we could find a way to give them voice like going to a middle school Sunday school meeting and asking for their opinions. Jacobson said that meetings do not have to look like they did before if we can find ways to leverage new technology.

Hoyer said that while we need to gather input from lots of different people, it helps to have a small group of people that actually sit down and write the plan. That way the plan has a focus from all those inputs.

Pastor Lautzenhiser Bellon said that there could be lots of different groups of people who are marginalized. She said that sometimes ministry means giving to those groups and not expecting anything in return, and sometimes a ministry might be serving together with those groups, and that empowers them.

Allen said there might be different roles in writing the strategic plan, such as participating in focus groups, or sitting on committees, or reacting to drafts and providing feedback.

Hoyer asked whether the clusters establish yearly goals. Drake said she was not sure it was a formal process, but the groups she has been a part of have evaluated the last year and discussed where they want to go. Allen said that she remembered that as a former cluster chair, the goals for the year were part of the charge conference.

**COVID-19 Response Team Update**

Pastor Lautzenhiser Bellon said that the tactical team reaffirmed that one of the things we need to avoid during the pandemic is singing because it has been proven to spread the disease. She said there have been a few requests to use the space within the church for singing, and the team was not comfortable having our space used in ways that we thought were unsafe.

**Property Needs Assessment Team Update**

Chair Orth said that Plagman-Galvin was working on putting a survey together to go out to the congregation. He said that survey was not just about the church building, but about the entire property.

**Nominations Committee Update**

Drake said that the groups within the ministries and administrative council have been working on suggestions for people to fill the open spots next year. She asked for suggestions for other nominees and feedback on the suggested nominations so far.

Chair Orth said that Administrative Council will need to fill both a chair and vice chair position for 2021 because Plagman-Galvin asked to step down starting in 2021.

Allen said that when Pastor Lautzenhiser Bellon was reading the Book of Discipline, she found that the lay leaders should be part of the nominations process. Allen said that Jacobson was welcomed and appreciated by the nominations subcommittee and Kennedy would be too once he had recovered.

**Yard Sign Proposal**

Chair Orth said he forwarded an email to the council with a proposed design for yard signs that the congregation could purchase. He said that the church would order bigger versions of the signs to display at the church. Drake said that the church has not spent anything on marketing yet this year, so the big banners would come out of that budget line item.

Chair Orth asked how sure we were that digital worship would continue at the same 10:00 a.m. time beyond the next few weeks. He asked if the yard signs might have the wrong information in a few months. Jacobson said she thought it was a good idea to provide details because they would make it easier for people to connect. Pastor Lautzenhiser Bellon asked about a digital sign that would roll through these messages in the proposed design.

**A motion was made (Jacobson) and seconded (Williams) to continue with the proposal to purchase the yard signs and the larger signs for the building. Motion passed.**

**Leadership Institute from Church of the Resurrection**

Chair Orth said that this year’s version of the Leadership Institute was entirely online and will be September 24th and 25th starting at 10 a.m.. He asked for anyone interested in attending to let him and Pastor Lautzenhiser Bellon know. Drake said that the church does have a budget line for leadership training.

**Wesley Foundation Kickoff**

Pastor Hibben said she and Loonsfoot just wrapped off the Taco Truck kickoff event for Wesley Foundation. She said the event was scaled back this year to try to limit the number of volunteers who were needed and how much they would have to do. She said there were some new first-year students who were really excited to participate in Wesley Foundation this year.

**Adjourn**

Pastor Hibben provided the closing prayer. The meeting adjourned at 9:17 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Adam Faeth, Secretary