

Minutes
North United Methodist Church
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
March 28, 2018
5:30 p.m.

Members

Shannon Priddy, Chair
Ron Gifford, Vice Chair
David Wills (SPRC)
John Drake (Finance)
Eric Oehler (Trustees)
Kathleen Custer (LL)
Leslie Knox (AL)

Jack Leonard, Treasurer
Alan Archibald (MC/LL)
Mark Grove, Secretary
Jeff Eggert (AL)
Mark Foglesong (AL)
Jacqueline Blackwell (LL to AC)

Ex Officio

Darren Cushman Wood
Josh Jordan

1. Darren opened the meeting with a prayer.
2. The minutes of the February 28th meeting were approved as distributed (Kathleen/John).
3. Introductions and election of new at-large board member (Shannon)
 - Leslie Knox was unanimously elected to fill a vacancy resulting from Faustin N'tala's resignation. The term finishes at the end of 2019.
4. Update on Land Development (Ron)
 - Following the failure of the land development project to be selected in the first round of tax credit awards, members of the Land Development Task Force met with Flaherty & Collins and walked through the scoring on the tax credit application.
 - The process is a combination of objective, subjective, and is comparative in nature. The proposal maxed out on many of the objective categories. There is a formula tied to number of bedrooms and amount requested.
 - We had requested what we thought was a reasonable amount of credits, but other proposals requested slightly smaller amounts.
 - We will reapply in the July round. We don't expect the competition to be as tough in July as there aren't as many projects in the pipeline and due to their particulars of their applications, those who completed in the first round may find their scores more difficult to raise.
 - It also should be easier for us to tweak the financials to get our tax credit per unit lower and look at possible cost reduction or increased revenue to make up the cost.
 - The Federal Government is funding an Opportunity Zone initiative (designated by each state's governor). Having such a designation may result in available funding. Our census zone is on a list provided by the Local Initiatives Support Corporation Indianapolis ([LISC](#)) in addition to submissions from North and Midtown. These emphasize the importance to development of neighborhood

and private sector partnerships and primarily are given to areas of urban and rural poverty. The governor will make those designations soon.

- In a continuing effort to keep North's membership informed, Task Force chair Pablo Svirsky provided the following summary at both services on March 18th and the summary appeared two mailings of NorthNet.
 - *The timeline for the development project has been pushed back six to eight months. While our project scored well in the competition for funding, we were not awarded the tax credits that help fund the project in the first round of applications. Based on feedback from the scoring, we believe we can improve our application and should reapply in July. This is not unusual; many projects don't get awarded the credits in their first attempt, and get them in the second round after tweaking the application. We will work with Flaherty and Collins to improve our application for this summer. The next round of awards will be made in November. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to Pablo Svirsky or Pastor Darren.*
 - The project FAQ handout available in the West entry also has been updated.
- One potential related opportunity has recently emerged. The Laborers Union has been active in projects that may lead to jobs for which their members could be hired. This connection may provide an opportunity for apprenticeships that may then move into job opportunities.

5. Committee/Board/Senior Pastor Reports

- Finance (John)

2017

- North finished 2017 \$85,000 over budget in pledged gifts, noting that \$60,000 was prepaid 2018 pledges (presumably prompted by anticipated changes in tax law and future treatment of charitable gifts).
 - We also finished with \$30,000 more in unpledged gifts than budgeted.
- Over the course of the year we experienced significant savings in expenses with some vacant positions and the decision to bring security in-house.
- Jack Leonard will provide the year-end summary in a report to the congregation.

2018

- Through February, we are up \$62,343 in pledged payments year-to-date, but that includes a roughly \$50,000 pledge that typically comes in later in the year.
 - Adjusting for that, we are still ahead in pledged payments, but not as much.
- Non-pledged contributions are down \$3,023 YTD.
- Salaries remain below budget due to a vacant position.
- Overall expenses are about \$11,700 under budget YTD as well.

- Trustees (Eric)

- The trustees approved three projects:
 - Replace the air conditioning unit for the chapel/choir room.
 - Paint and plaster the parlor.
 - Redo the bridal room.
- Chuck Teague is looking into upgrading our current signage at the corner of 38th and Meridian to an electronic sign. As reported at the [February meeting](#), we

learned that the current structure was built to accommodate such a sign. In addition to the cost of making the conversion there likely are zoning issues for such signage that need review. If all goes well the change may be possible in early summer.

- IPL wants to raise electric rates 25%. Board members discussed submitting a letter of concern to the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission which would have to approve rate increases.
 - Such a letter likely would be more effective if it came from multiple congregations and Darren will raise that possibility with Conference Superintendent Jim Bushfield. Letter to Utility Regulatory Commission.
 - The Citizens Action Coalition (CAC) has a [good summary](#) of the issues on its site.
- Staff Parish Relations Committee *SPRC* (Kathleen on behalf of David)
 - SPRC finalized details for a staff appreciation luncheon scheduled for April 10th.
 - SPRC expressed support for the Minister of Visitation model discussed by the board at its [February meeting](#) (see brief update below in Senior Pastor's report).
 - Pastor Ronnie Bell was among a number of religious and labor leaders [arrested at a 6 March rally](#) following the expiration of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program that had provided deportation protection for young people who were brought into the United States as children.
 - As Ronnie's action was undertaken as an individual and not as a representative of the congregation, Darren did not raise the matter with the church membership. Darren thought this helped keep the focus on the DACA issue, and not the pastor.
 - On the other hand, some North members who had seen the arrest pictured in the newspaper were concerned after not seeing Ronnie the next Sunday that he might still be in jail (Ronnie was away for other reasons).
 - It was suggested that given the placement of the photo on the front page of the Star, a neutral announcement might have been appropriate, not taking a formal position on DACA, but providing basic information about the event.



view [this link](#) for additional event details and photos

- Following his attendance at a North worship service, Bishop Julius Trimble congratulated Ronnie him on this action.

- Ministries Council (Alan)
 - The Lilly Endowment is looking to support arts programming in the city. The Ministries Council considered the concept of establishing a North Music Academy that could help better connect North with the neighborhood through provision of music lessons and/or music programming. The Ministries Council gave its approval to develop a formal proposal and seek funding from the Endowment as well as explore possible partnerships for such an effort.
 - A successful hosting of the Interfaith Hospitality Network occurred in the last week of February.
 - The 2018 summer Farmers' Market is in preparation.
 - A Summer Youth Program was discussed.
 - Rev Charles Harrison spoke on the evening of Palm Sunday as part of the Racial Conversations series. He promoted increasing job opportunities as a way to help young people avoid problems.
 - The Ministries Council discussed how different ministries get volunteers and will continue that conversation.
 - *Complete minutes from Ministries Council may be found by visiting [its website](#).*
- Leadership Development (Kathleen)
 - Leadership Development has filled a number of vacant positions. Several positions require Board approval, including Eric Lekberg for Leadership Development, Doshia Stewart for Trustees, and Leslie Knox for the Board of Directors.
 - All nominations were approved through unanimous vote.
- Senior Pastor/Administrative (Darren)
 - **Project Transformation.** Using a model developed in Texas, College students work with children in low-income communities to address academic, physical, social-emotional, and spiritual needs. It also provides ways in which college-age students can explore ministry opportunities and develop as young leaders of the church as well as revitalize churches in underserved communities.
 - [Allison Galloway and Sarah Fuquay](#), both veterans of Project Transformation internships, staff Indiana's chapter.
 - North and Cumberland UMC will be the first participants in the conference. North have not had a summer children's program for some time, if ever.
 - There are ties with the Land Development initiative as recruiting for children will go through some of those same partners (such as the Fathers and Families Center) as well as the Martin Luther King Center. While the MLK Center has its own summer programs, it may not be able to serve all who in the neighborhood who may be interested. We are hoping to serve 30-50.
 - We would expect some funding to offset our expenses. We have some funds available in our Undesignated Mission giving line as well as funds from the district. Providing this program would not affect our operating budget. That said, the project would be happy to accept donations.
 - The University of Indianapolis will provide housing for the student interns.
 - North had provided an engaged program for teens the last couple of years in the absence of programming from the then-dormant Martin Luther King Center.

With their new director now in place they have developed their own summer youth employment program. Given their better neighborhood connections, we may wish to partner with what the center is doing, rather than hosting a separate program.

- Career opportunities and workplace visitation is something we might provide. Let Ronnie know of workplace settings that may be appropriate for youth visits.
- Holy Week is upon us with multiple services coming up. Please pass word along on Social Media to encourage others to attend.
 - Pause for a moment about who you have not seen in church recently, reach out to them. The office can provide contact info as needed.
- Linda Mansfield now on board as North's Communication Coordinator.
- Darren provided an update on the proposal for the Minister of Visitation position (see above and the [February board minutes](#)).
 - Discussions have continued with a provisional deacon in the conference in hopes of providing work we need done with a part-time position at another Indianapolis Methodist church.
 - Darren and the candidate will meet with the District Superintendent to get his approval and assuming that is secured, the person may assume the Minister of Visitation role in early summer.
 - As mentioned in February, Covenant Relationship opportunities for how congregations can interact may be possible.

Shannon

- Indiana's [Annual Conference](#) still needs equalizing members. This is intended to increase the participation of lay people to match the number of clergy attending. In particular youth under 30, 30-46, and women are sought.
- 2019 is even more important as we'll be electing members for 2020 General Conference.

6. No Executive Session was held.

See [January 2015 minutes](#), page 6, item 7.

2018 Meeting Dates

- April 25
- May 23
- June 27
- July 25
- August 22
- September 26
- October 24
- November 28
- December 19 (3rd Wednesday)