

Minutes
North United Methodist Church
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
September 26, 2018
5:30 p.m.

Members

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

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

Ex Officio

Darren Cushman Wood
Josh Jordan

Absent

Kathleen Custer (LL)
Jack Leonard, Treasurer
Mark Foglesong (AL)

Guest

Amy Sell

1. Darren led the group in an opening prayer.
2. The minutes of the June 27th meeting were unanimously approved as distributed.
 - *There were no July or August meetings*
3. East Tenth Street UMC update (Darren)
 - [Josh Beach](#) has made rapid progress in leading the congregation. He now has full responsibility for worship planning and bulletin preparation and is working well with their lay leadership. Darren has received good feedback about his leadership. Josh has also started classes at CTS. In order to give him support for balancing his seminary and pastoral responsibilities, Darren has arranged for a guest preacher/worship leader once a month for the next four months:
 - October 28—Ronnie
 - November 18—Amy
 - December 16—Darren
 - January 27—Megan Fetter, East Tenth Lay Leader
 - Next year, others will be recruited beyond North staff. Darren has been using retired elders to preside at the table the first Sundays of the month.
 - In addition, as part of Servant Day, Ronnie is organizing a work team for Saturday, October 6 and a team to prepare and serve the community dinner on the second Sunday of the month (5 p.m.— 6 p.m.). He also is hosting a four-part Bible study that meets in tandem with the community dinner.
 - In the coming weeks, Darren will be sending a letter to some of our inactive members who live in proximity to or who may have an interest in worshipping on a regular basis at East Tenth.
 - As the appointed pastor for East 10th, Darren is serving on their Children and Youth Center Board of Directors. Darren has engaged John Drake in helping them assess their personnel needs in regards to finances. If anyone is interested in serving on this board please contact Darren.

- Board members are encouraged to visit any Sunday morning (worship, 10:45 a.m.) and show your support for Josh. In addition to Sunday worship, there are other opportunities for board members to show support with your presence:
 - Fall Festival, Sunday October 14th, 12:00 noon to 1:30 p.m.
 - Advent Festival, Friday, December 7th, TBA
 - Christmas Service, Sunday, December 23, 6 p.m. (after the community dinner)
 - Their address: 2327 E. 10th Street (corner of East 10th & Keystone).

4. Stewardship update (Darren)

- This year's stewardship campaign theme is "Celebrating Our Life Together." Stewardship Sunday is October 28. Throughout October, in addition to stewardship announcements, the team will offer to take photographs of members and their friends in the West Entrance. On Stewardship Sunday, those photos will be included in the hallway display, which will be on display for the rest of the year.
- Like last year, board members will make follow-up announcements throughout November.
- What you can do:
 - Complete your pledge in advance of Stewardship Sunday
 - Give one of the follow up announcements
 - This year, we are converting our EFT to a new provider, Shelby, which will be more user-friendly. This new option will be ready by Stewardship Sunday. Members who currently give through EFT will be contacted about this transition.
- 71 giving units use the electronic payment option, generating about \$25,000 a month. This accounts for roughly a third of donations made in a typical month.
- The EFT tool is separate from the new station at the welcoming counter in the West Entry where credit card payments can be made for one-time events, such as youth activities.

5. *A Way Forward* presentation and timeline for church discussion (Darren)

- Darren provided a preview of a presentation he will make to the membership on November 27th. Major elements of the presentation include:
 - A summary of the organizational and governance structure of the United Methodist Church.
 - A history of how the denomination has dealt with homosexuality, starting with the incompatibility clause added to the church's Social Principles starting in 1972. Darren noted that the church's approach became increasingly conservative in the 1990s and 2000s. Three main categories of advocacy groups were identified: Traditionalists, Moderates, and Progressives.
 - Following an impasse at the 2016 General Conference, a call emerged for more focused study and a special General Conference to focus on key issues.
 - Establishment of a Commission on A Way Forward, along with its vision and scope.

- A summary of plans that came out of the commission: *One Church and Connectional Conference*. The *One Church Plan* was recommended by the Council of Bishops.
 - A third, *Traditionalist Plan*, was requested and eventually developed by a minority group of bishops.
 - A fourth plan, known as the *Simple Plan*, and not part of the Commission's work or recommendations, was developed and proposed by the United Methodist Queer Clergy Caucus.
 - Each plan was summarized with focus on its
 - Principles
 - Features
 - Issues & Problems
 - Dissent & finance issues that relate to all plans were listed.
 - These will be considered at the General Conference next year where one may be selected (with presumed modifications). Or no consensus may be reached and as a result, nothing may happen.
 - At its June meeting, the North board had discussed possible ways to involve the church's membership in education and conversation regarding the different plans in anticipation of the [2019 St. Louis meeting](#). After further reflection, Darren concluded, with agreement from the board, that given the absence of details on the plans at this point, it would not be worth the effort to hold multiple sessions and instead go with the educational presentation Darren previewed today.
 - By having already gone through detailed discussion and having taken board action in 2011, North already has taken a position regarding full inclusion of LGBTQ persons in its congregation, a process most other UMC churches have not undertaken. As such, we are not in a position to have to go through such a [discernment process](#) now in anticipation of the special 2019 meeting. Any next steps can wait until after we see what, if anything, is passed in St. Louis.
 - In the meantime, members can reach out to the Indiana [delegates](#) who will attend the conference.
 - Bishop Trimble will host a [Call to Prayer and Conversation](#) regarding *A Way Forward* for the Central District on November 18th at Castleton UMC from 2:00-4:00 p.m.
 - Darren will provide his presentation to North's membership on November 27th.
6. Committee/Board/Senior Pastor Reports
- Finance (John/Josh)
 - August was not a good month for pledged income, with one large annual donation not yet in. When that payment arrives, our shortfall in pledged income YTD would be reduced to approximately \$21,500.
 - Non-pledged gifts are down \$16,500 YTD.
 - We are benefitting from reduced expenses with total expenses YTD \$45,137 below budget.
 - We had passed a deficit budget for 2018, but we are in a weaker position for the year than we had hoped. Ideally we will make up some ground in the fall and 4th quarter.

- On the balance sheet, the balance in our Capital Campaign checking account is now \$32,500. Disbursements from this account can only be used to pay interest on the loan.
 - As of March 2019 our current balance in that account will be exhausted and we would need to identify a source of funds to make up payments of \$4,500 a month for the remaining eight months of 2019.
 - Josh doesn't know if one option for funding could be from the endowment.
 - This will be discussed at the next Finance Committee meeting.

2019 Budget preparation

- Staff have provided proposed expenses for 2019.
- Health insurance expenses for staff positions will be up 15%.
- We don't yet know much the cost of insurance for the building and property will increase.
- By prior board agreement we are scheduled to increase our apportionment payment in 2019 by 25%. That increase may need to be reviewed.
- October 21 will be the next finance Covenant Conversation with the congregation at which time we want to be honest without being overly negative. Any advice would be appreciated.
- Trustees (Eric)
 - We sold the church van. It was little used and the catalytic convertor had recently been stolen.
 - Interior painting continues.
 - A couple of memorial trees have reached the end of their life span and need to come down. The memorial markers that had been installed when the trees were planted can be moved to other locations in order to keep the markers visible on the property.
 - The hackberry tree near west entrance has been seen by an arborist and it also should come down.
 - These will be discussed at the next trustees' meeting.
- Staff Parish Relations Committee *SPRC* (David)
 - SPRC met with Josh Beach this summer to become acquainted with his internship. They will have a three month review to see how things are going, probably at their October meeting.
 - The annual pastor assessment is underway. SPRC will hold interviews in October and submit a final assessment to the district in November.
 - At its next meeting, the committee will address other matters tied to the budget.
- Ministries Council (Alan)
 - Recent activities include the Celebration of Ministries event as well as the Fall and Advent festivals. The council will review budget items at its next meeting.
 - For more details, see the Ministries Council's [minutes](#).
 - The council wants to get a better understanding about people's connection to North (or lack thereof) why they sometimes drift away. Are new members being actively engaged and retained?

Board Discussion

- Declining attendance over the course of this year (continuing a trend) was cited as some evidence of declining engagement and lower attendance/membership results in reduced financial support.
 - In response to a question about whether this was being studied, Shannon noted that HEM had been looking at it and noted that the board had sponsored a Task Force on Strategic Direction several years ago to consider this and related issues. While that group had made recommendations which were then referred to Ministries Council, it wasn't apparent to what level they had been adopted and acted upon.
 - Shannon also noted that Amy Cuomo was reviewing a number of areas as part of her MBA, and would follow-up to see if a specific area of study had been identified.
 - Board members agreed these issues need additional review, probably starting with a follow-up on the recommendations of that Task Force.
 - See [December 2015](#) for the Task Force report (see pp. 2-3 and 8-13) and the [January 2016](#) (pp.2-3) minutes for follow-up discussion.
- Leadership Development (Kathleen)
 - Nominations are well on the way to filling positions for the 2019 classes. Please continue to suggest names if you have someone in mind.
 - Celebration of Ministries went well, but additional feedback would be appreciated!

7. No Executive Session was held

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

2018 Meeting Dates

- October 24
- November 28
- December 19 (3rd Wednesday)

November 11 Charge Conference

- Epworth UMC
6450 Allisonville Rd
6:00 p.m.