



## Leadership Board Minutes

Jan. 2, 2024

**Attendees:** Rev. Jim Peich, Gil Nichols, Carol Weaver, Sara Denother, Meggie Biesenthal, Sue Suddarth, Jeff Wright, Bev Todd, Mike Potts, Robin Heggemeyer, Jason Winscher, Amy Hamilton, Jarrod Grant, and Jay Deshong.

### A. Welcome - Gil Nichols, Chair

### B. Opening Prayer

### C. Devotion – Pastor Jim

1. Pastor Jim's devotional focused on the four domains (heart, head, hands and habits) involved in servant leadership.

### D. Volunteer for Secretary: Meggie Biesenthal took notes at today's meeting.

1. Sign-up sheets circulated for board members to sign up for taking minutes at future meetings and for leading devotionals at future meetings.

### E. Introductions - All

1. Each board member introduced themselves, said how long they've attended Cornerstone, what their vocation is or was, and why they wanted to serve on the board.

### F. Congregational Input

1. Congregation members are welcome at our open Leadership Board meetings to offer feedback, ask questions, and be involved in what's occurring at Cornerstone. No congregants were in attendance at this team meeting.

### G. Celebrations - All

1. The Board celebrated the West Entrance improvements - the doors having been installed and concrete work is ongoing.
2. The Trustees and volunteers have done a great job of cleaning up and decluttering around the church. An extra couch was sold immediately.
3. Nearly FIVE HUNDRED people worshiped with us on Christmas Eve. Double the number of in-person people worshiped at Cornerstone on Christmas Eve. Attendance at the 4pm service was just shy of 280.
4. A stained glass window is brightening the church office. Thanks to Gerald Dowler for making the frame, and the Trustees for hanging the window.
5. Our Christmas Adopt-A-Family project was a huge success; we assisted 17 families and 69 children.

## **H. Updates, Approvals, & Alignment**

### **a. Staff Parish – Jeff Wright (Chairperson)**

1. Staffing levels: After staffing cuts and restructuring of positions in 2022, we were able to maintain staffing levels in 2023. We have fantastic volunteers assisting us at this time. Staff compensation has remained frozen and is a goal to work on.
2. Custodial coverage: We are accepting volunteers to assist in cleaning the church as our custodian is retiring. Please reach out to Pastor Jim or Bev Todd if you wish to assist.
3. Staff Evaluations: Pastor Jim and staff will go through evaluations with the Staff Parish Team.
4. Staff Handbook: The handbook needs to be updated to reflect changes in policies. This is a goal for the team to work on.
5. The Staff Parish Team is made up of Jeff Wright, Carol Weaver, Jay Deshong, Meggie Biesenthal and Pastor Jim Peich.

### **b. Trustees – Bev Todd (Chairperson)**

1. Bev Todd, Mike Potts and Gil Nichols are the three trustees.
2. Custodial coverage: They are recruiting volunteers to clean the church.
3. North 40: Trustees are investigating potential uses of the North 40 property that could bring in revenue.
4. Sidewalks: The sidewalk project is going well. It is extremely important to note that our sidewalks cannot be treated with salt. We will use kitty litter and sodium chloride instead.
5. Sewage Tank: needs to be emptied periodically, was done recently when it was at capacity.
6. FOG in kitchen sink: If we continue to offer meals like the Community Dinners, we will need repair work done to the kitchen sink to help it process FOG. This will be an issue on inspections in the future. An estimated cost for this work is about \$5,000.
7. Kids Zone space: We are focusing on growing our Kids Zone ministry.
  - a. We are also looking at possible uses of our Kids Zone spaces during non-worship times, including talking to mentor churches in the area who operate preschools, and programs for homeschool families who may be interested in using our space during non-worship times.
  - b. The Trustees are soliciting ideas from the congregation for the Kids Jam space and the North 40 lots. Reach out to the Trustees if you have ideas.
8. Parking Lot: Trustees are looking at bids to resurface the parking lot in phases.
9. Hymnals: Are next on the clean-out project list. We have volunteers who will call people who purchased the hymnals to ask if they want them. The choir will keep using hymnals, and about ten or so hymnals will be kept available for use by congregants in services.
10. Money is the #1 problem for the Trustees. They had a list of 20 projects to complete over the last several years; they accomplished most of those projects with the exception of the sidewalks and parking lots.
  - a. Completed tasks include cleaning out the garage and selling the nativity scene.
11. Handicapped signs: Two signs have been added creating handicapped spots in the parking lot.
12. Sanctuary Projectors: The projectors in the main sanctuary are very old and need to be upgraded. They are not as bright as they need to be. There is a lag time on the screens, and also we have to use two formats for slides/etc, as the projectors do not use the same resolution, so formatting on our slides/materials has to be adjusted by Mike Cochran,

which takes up a lot of time. New projectors may cost around \$15,000. Options for new projectors are being investigated.

13. Security Upgrade Grant: Gil is investigating grants available from the federal and state governments for security upgrades to the church facility. When applications become available, Gil and the Trustees will begin work on our application.
14. Panic Buttons: Have been installed; thank you to the United Methodist Women of Faith for providing the funds for those.
15. Always lock up: if you access the church by key, make sure to lock up behind you upon your exit, locking every door you may have accessed during your visit.
16. Front door Access: Jamie and Pastor Jim are tracking down who has what keys, codes, access, and the Trustees are deciding what to do about keys for the new front doors.

### **c. Finance – Robin Heggemeyer (Chairperson) & Jason Winscher (Treasurer)**

1. General Fund Pledges for 2023 are \$319,522.00, the church has received \$305,687.20, or 95.7% of monies pledged through 12/2/23.
2. Timeline for 2024 budget:
  - i. 1/9/24: Pastor Jim and Jason send draft budget to Robin for review.
  - ii. 1/11/24: Robin, Jason and Pastor Jim meet to review and adjust the draft 2024 budget.
  - iii. 1/16/24: Proposed 2024 budget is sent to Finance Committee.
  - iv. 1/23/24: Finance Committee reviews and recommends 2024 budget to Leadership Board.
  - v. 1/30/24: Recommended 2024 budget sent to Leadership Board.
  - vi. 2/6/24: Leadership Board reviews and votes whether to approve 2024 budget.
3. Finance Team is working to clean out accounts which are no longer being used. A lot of this happened in December.
4. November Surplus: We had another surplus in November, which meant a surplus for three out of the last four months. The year-to-date number came out of the negative to instead be a small surplus. Translation: WE ARE OUT OF THE RED. Final December numbers are not available yet but looking at preliminary numbers, we hope for another surplus.
5. Sidewalks: There are not additional funds at this time to expand the current scope of the West Entrance sidewalk work. We used some funds from the parsonage reserve with permission of the District Superintendent.
6. Canopy: A member suggested we should have a fundraiser to replace the canopy, which the Board did not address at this time.
7. Mortgage: As a reminder, we expect our adjustable rate mortgage to increase in October when it is scheduled to adjust to current rates.
8. Operating Reserves: The goal is to have 90 days worth of funds in our operating reserves. Presently we have 30 days. This number dropped as low as 18 days in September, but it has been climbing back up with our months of surplus.

9. Gifts to Mozambique: No contributions to the Mozambique well project in 2023. We may need to consider a special offering or fundraiser for funds to support this ministry.
10. November Budget high-level overview: Giving was just under \$40,000, including from all types of giving. This is down from October, but November had 4 Sundays to October's 5. Total expenses were \$38,000. Our fixed monthly expenses are approximately \$38,000 to \$40,000. Pastor Jim's goal is to increase our monthly giving to \$50,000 per month.
  - i. We have a combined 29% increase in pledges to the General Fund and Building Fund from 2023 to 2024.
11. Use of Kids Jam space: has to be not-for-profit purpose; if we have a daycare or preschool, we have to own it. Our previous preschool offered half-day sessions and lost money, which is part of the reason it closed. To meet needs of today's families, we would need to look at offering childcare from 6am to 6pm. It is worth looking into how much it would cost to operate and how much it could bring in.
12. Changes to Budget Process: Previously organizations would bring a "wish list" to budget meetings with the Finance Team. Going forward, Pastor Jim and Jason will come up with a preliminary budget for each round, then speak with leaders about their preliminary budgets. Also, budgets do not equal cash flow, so funds will be released throughout the year as they become available.
13. Inspections and Cost Calendar: Bev has started a calendar of when various inspections take place, and is including anticipated costs for these inspections.
  - i. Trustees will continue to keep emergency repairs in their budget.

#### **d. Lead Pastor – Rev. Jim Peich**

1. Sanctuary Projectors: as mentioned earlier, new sanctuary projectors are a priority for Pastor Jim in 2024. They are critical to the 9am worship experience. The Leadership Board is asked to pray about the projectors becoming a reality for our church. They are poor quality, require staff to do extra work each week, and are likely to break any day. If that happens and we aren't ready for a replacement, this will negatively impact the largest worship service.
2. Director of Operations 90 day review: Jami Sandine's 90-day review is approaching.
3. Thanks to this group, the Staff Parish Team, Trustees and Finance Committee for moving all meetings to Tuesdays. The Peich family thanks all team members.
4. Pastor Leadership Course: Pastor Jim has been accepted into a virtual Leadership Course, one of 24 pastors from the global denomination who was chosen to participate. He will attend virtual group sessions and one-on-one sessions.
5. Annual Charge Conference: Taking place on Saturday, January 6. Pastor and at least one Leadership Board member must attend. Charge Conference Packet was due in November; reviewed briefly with the Leadership Board at this meeting. A question was

asked about having a Cemetery Representative. It is not required by the Book of Discipline to have a representative to the Leadership Board.

6. Year-end reporting deadline approaching at the end of January. Pastor Jim and Jami are working on completing the required year-end reports, and may be reaching out to ask individuals for numbers, etc. Please give them grace and also respond in a timely fashion.
7. A Saturday Service: This is a goal Pastor Jim wants to investigate in 2024.

## **I. Old Business**

1. None raised.

## **J. New Business**

### **a. Board Member Covenant**

1. The Board Member Covenant was presented to members. Jarrod moved to approve it, Sara seconded that motion. A vote was taken, with unanimous approval, 13 votes in favor, 0 opposed and 0 abstentions. The covenant is available on the church website.

b. Leadership Board Responsibilities: Shared previously by email in board meeting packet, largely taken from the Book of Discipline. Info is also available online.

c. Pastor Responsibilities: Shared previously by email in board meeting packet, largely taken from the Book of Discipline. Info is also available online.

d. Leadership Board Information on Website - Visit [www.csofallon.org/board](http://www.csofallon.org/board) to see. Contains meeting agendas and approved minutes. Meetings are also announced in the newsletter.

e. Other: Overview of Governance Models / Structures: two governance models for the church were discussed:

1. Traditional structure: the Leadership Board acts as a Church Council with separate Trustee, Finance and Staff Parish Teams performing their functions.
2. Simplified Accountability structure: The Leadership Board functions as the church council, trustees, finance, and staff parish. Everyone receives the same info at the same time and makes decisions collectively rather than in their teams and then presenting to Leadership Board as a whole. The Leadership Board becomes a policy and approving body (not a reporting body). Rev. Dodd from the Conference can come to the Church to offer a detailed overview of this structure.
  - i. Mike and Jeff moved to invite Rev. Dodd to come speak on this to the Church, Carol and Jarrod and seconded. The Board voted, with 13 votes in favor, 0 opposed and 0 abstentions. She will offer two 90-minute sessions, one during the day and one in the evening.

## **K. Announcements**

1. Volunteer Appreciation Event: January 13, will consist of an Open House, cake, prizes, games, possibly a ribbon-cutting for the sidewalk if it's completed. All are invited to attend if available.

## **L. Closing Prayer : offered by Pastor Jim.**

**Upcoming Dates**

**Jan. 6** Charge Conference (10 to 10:30a)

**Jan. 13** Volunteer Appreciation Event (2 to 5p)

**Feb. 6** Leadership Board Meeting (6 to 8p)



## 2024 Leadership Board Covenant

As members of the 2024 Leadership Board of Cornerstone United Methodist Church, we individually and collectively commit ourselves to these guiding principles and behaviors:

1. We will come to board meetings prepared and ready to fulfill our responsibilities;
2. We will be honest in all board matters and disclose potential conflicts of interest;
3. We will ask probing and clarifying questions prior to making important decisions;
4. We will try new ideas and consider all outcomes an opportunity for learning;
5. We will prioritize what's best for the whole church over our personal preferences;
6. We will not work against board decisions, even if we would have made a different one;
7. We will pray for and support one another as well as the staff and church;
8. We will care for other board members when they experience difficulty;
9. We will address and resolve conflicts quickly, directly, and biblically;
10. We will extend grace and forgiveness when offended and carry no grudges;
11. We will avoid gossip, triangulation, and sharing private or confidential information;
12. We will speak kindly and professionally about each other and the board in all contexts.

**This covenant was approved by the 2024 Leadership Board of Cornerstone United Methodist Church on Jan. 2, 2024 by a vote of 13 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions.**