



Leadership Board Minutes for January 24, 2023
Parker United Methodist Church
11805 S. Pine Drive, Parker, CO 80134

Leadership Board Members:

Kim Bimestefer (Co-Chair)
Steve Brase
Lacye Cahill
Susan Gustin
David Haukeness
Jack Kear, Lay Member to Annual Conference
Julie Kronbach, Lay Leader
Rick Kucera

Doug McKinney
Dan O'Neill (Co-Chair)
Laura Easter Rainwater, Senior Pastor
Eric Ross
Elizabeth Gore Stanley
Tricia Woods, Little Blessings Preschool Director
Ron Wyckoff

Members joined by Zoom:

Tricia Woods

Guests in Attendance:

Laurie Hunter

Members not in Attendance:

Elizabeth Stanley

Approval of Agenda: Dan presented the proposed agenda

- I. Call To Order: Dan called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm
 - A. Opening Devotion – Rick Kucera
 - B. Review and approval of December 13, 2022 minutes
 - C. Dan reminded us of the yearly obligation of Board members to sign the Board members' covenant
 1. Members handed their signed copies to Laura
 - D. We reviewed the Board member class assignments and Teams
 1. Eric Ross has agreed to join the Finance team
 2. Lacye is interested in the Missions team
 3. The Trustees functions under the former structure have now been split into 1) the Building and Maintenance Team and 2) the Leadership Board acting as Trustees in legal matters
 - a. Tricia clarified that she is on the Building & Maintenance Team since Little Blessings is such a heavy user of church facilities
 - b. The Leadership Board Co-Chairs have signing authority on behalf of the Leadership Board
 - c. We agreed that it would be appropriate to call on expertise to assist with specific functions, such as reviewing the insurance policies
 4. Laura noted that many of the teams that support the church functioning (e.g., ushers/greeters) have been restarting in the wake of COVID
 5. Laura will post a list of ALL of the current teams/members as a Google document so can be continuously updated while being available to view
 - E. Julie discussed the Quiet Disciple nomination process
 1. A function of the Lay Leader ministry in District

2. Laura and Julie have discussed nominees for this recognition from our congregation
 - a. Someone not in a leadership position who works behind the scenes
 3. Please let Julie/Laura know if there is someone you would like to nominate
- II. Pastor's report
- A. Impact on our church of the creation of StarStone Fellowship
 1. Laura's meeting with Randy Jessen
 - a. Both will support people's desire to find their path to growing in discipleship in Jesus Christ
 2. Laura's conversations with others
 - a. There are many reasons why people are leaving now, not simply LGBTQ issues
 3. Kim described her conversation with Rahn Porter; focus on following Jesus
 4. Lacye described a conversation she and Doug had with youth a couple of weeks ago
 5. Doug described common boomerang effect of people leaving/returning. Also described differing emotional states – people who remain feel loss, while those leaving are excited
 6. Reminder that we remain a church with a diverse congregation and can celebrate our desire to remain in community together
 - B. Updates on people who have left the church, either officially or by conversation
 1. Withdrawn officially – 12 total
 2. Heard from them though not official – 8 total
 3. Heard from others though not official – 9 total
 - C. Current music program numbers
 1. Choir – 27 in January; common for there to be lower numbers after Christmas
 2. Handbells – around 11
 - a. John Bray has taken over leadership
 3. Others – not much change
 - D. New Members
 1. Have 8-10 who have taken the new member class and could join soon
 2. Have several who are ready to take the new member class that will be offered soon
 3. In many cases people initially attend online, then come in person
 - E. Financial Impact
 1. Only a couple of pledges have been withdrawn; most did not pledge for 2023
 2. Those who have left, or likely have left, contributed \$88,648.06 in 2022 (not including one \$100,000 gift made after February 2022 appeal)
 - a. Average gift per giving unit: \$9,744.90; skewed by 3 gifts over \$10,000
 - b. Average gift excluding those 3: \$5,698.09
 - F. Staff updates
 1. Jason's change in position
 - a. Will continue to work for the church at 15 hours/week
 2. Advisory Team to meet tomorrow to discuss staffing
 - a. Right-sizing process can help evaluate budget, staffing, etc. based on our current church size.
 3. Staff morale – Crisis Trinity (tell the truth, share grief, cast vision)
 - G.
 - H. Fellowship Hall upgrades
 1. Clarification – the donation that the church received was to make the Fellowship Hall “more useful.” Not specifically linked to the kitchen
 2. Laura thanked us for our input. Much of what we said has already been discussed
 3. Kitchen upgrades: It is something we might want, but there is not a situation where a group is unable to do something because we don't have an updated kitchen
 4. Laura will share our great comments with the team

5. Steve – noticed that kitchen looks better. Team of staff and Little Blessings worked together to make space more usable as break room for Little Blessings

III. 2023 Budget

- A. Ron presented the year-end finances for 2022
 1. We currently show a surplus of \$463,854
 - a. Part of that can be applied to meet a budget shortfall in 2023
 - b. Part is previously committed to Little Blessings
- B. Laura presented the 2023 budget
 1. Budget as a whole has a deficit of about \$100,000 which can be offset by money in our reserves
 - a. Comment – “If this isn’t a rainy day for the church, then when is?”
 2. Under Special Offerings, there was general support among the Leadership Board for having a once-a-month request to support specific functions/ministries of the church, such as supporting police officer presence on Sundays
 - a. Julie – need to be careful to balance with Missions requests
 3. We know we will have challenges with increased energy costs that are affecting us all
- C. Staff salaries
 1. Budget shows a decrease of \$123,417 in staff salaries in 2023
 2. The budget as presented assumes that all staff remain in place at current salaries through May
 3. The budget as presented reflects recent staffing changes (changes in music ministry personnel/responsibilities, Jason taking a full-time job outside the church but continuing part-time with PUMC)
 4. A committee is actively analyzing current church staffing needs
 5. Julie – is there a way to share staff with other churches?
 6. Kim – urges prompt action on determining future so as not to leave staff in suspense
- D. How to communicate budget situation to congregation?
 1. Previous decision to discuss with major donors has not advanced – holidays, etc.
 2. Lacye -- suggested holding information sessions open to all in church
 3. Kim – urged transparency on deficit
 4. Ron/David – offered to work with church treasurer to put budget information into easy-to-understand chart format
 5. General agreement that we do not want to have a plea for increased contributions similar to early 2022
 - a. Likely to be more effective to focus on special offering pleas
 - b. Dan – aside from one very large contribution in 2022, special plea not super successful
 6. Discussion of how to discuss in worship services
 - a. Laura expressed concern about having too much emphasis on money in church services – not to dilute focus on worship
- E. Ron moved that we pass the budget as presented with the caveat that the Finance Team should review every quarter
 1. Passed unanimously

IV. Endowment Fund

- A. With changes in church governance structure, need to add two members of Leadership Board to have signing authority for actions related to endowment funds
- B. Passed unanimously to add Ron and Dan to Endowment Fund signature card
- C. Dan thanked Laurie Hunter for her service on the Endowment Board
- D. Laurie mentioned that she would welcome new members to the team

V. Discernment Team updates

- A. Kim led us through a review of the action items that resulted from the Discernment Teams

- B. Laura and Susan reported on their conversation with two representatives of the Mountain Sky Conference on the congregation's concerns about the Guide to Pride/Queer Theology 101 materials that had been posted on the Conference website (this material has since been removed)
 - 1. We felt heard
 - 2. We agreed to send a follow-up letter to the conversation participants summarizing our understandings from the conversation
 - 3. We agreed that we will inform our congregation of this action and make this letter available to view, but not disseminate the letter widely (e.g., not display in Mid-Week Message)
- C. We agreed that we want to make clear to our congregation that we can chart our own course—we can determine our own mission, values and vision without any vetting by Mountain Sky Conference
- D. Laura -- wondered how to strengthen the message that everyone is welcome
- E. Lacye – could model by having groups within the church that represent different focuses
- F. David – suggested reframing from **inclusion** to **refusing to exclude ANY groups**. "We refuse to use Jesus' words to make anyone less"
- G. Updates to wedding policies
 - 1. Laura is working on
 - 2. We agreed that at this time we need to emphasize that we follow the Book of Discipline

Additions to the Agenda:

None

Future Meeting(s):

The next two meetings are

- Tuesday, February 28, 2023 from 6:00-8:00 p.m. – Regular business. Eric Ross will lead the devotion.
- Sunday, March 5, 2023 from 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Special meeting to develop the Values, Vision and Mission statements

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Review of Minutes:

The meeting minutes of January 24, 2023 were submitted to Dan and Laura for review on January 26, 2023.

Susan Gustin, Leadership Board Member

Addendum: On January 26, 2023 Co-chair Dan O'Neill asked for an email vote on a garbage contract recommended by Sarah Blankman, Director of Finance and Administration. As of January 27, eight of the fifteen total members of the Leadership Board had voted yes on the garbage contract, so the contract will be adopted.