

Common Table Meeting, March 13, 2017

In attendance: About thirty members of the church community

After a terrific soup supper (thank you, Patty and Colleen!), Brad opened the meeting in prayer.

New Staff: Brad announced our newest staff members, Pam Johnson, Bell Choir Director, and Hanae Straub, Choir Director. He also took the opportunity to express gratitude for our fine staff. Dave Carver is doing a great job maintaining the facility, Dorothy is building a great preschool, Jen has grown our family and youth ministries in countless valuable ways, and Wendi Brick keeps everything running like a well-oiled machine in the office. There was general agreement from all those present that we are blessed with brilliant staff.

Associate Pastor Update (and Youth Ministry update): Brad has been in conversation with Rich Liang, our District Superintendent, about how we can increase our staffing in the most cost effective and productive way. We have known for a while that we would benefit from an associate pastor and an assistant to help with youth ministry. There had been an opportunity to share an associate pastor with the Kennydale Church, but that possibility is no longer an option, in part because the candidate that seemed right for the job has moved out of the conference.

Brad has a meeting with Rich this coming Thursday, at which time they will discuss another possible candidate for a part-time associate pastor position here. Brad will be able to share more after that meeting. Because seven different churches in the conference are currently looking for a youth ministries staff person, and because the associate pastor being discussed may have abilities in youth ministries, we're waiting to see how the associate pastor position unfolds before we decide how to approach our need for someone to support Jen. We hope to know more about how all of this is developing soon.

It was asked if our numbers are growing. Our numbers remain pretty consistent, and have for many years now. Brad believes that church growth depends on adequate staffing. An associate pastor could help with pastoral care and other duties that would create strong programs and attract people to our community. Brad acknowledged the importance of fiscal responsibility, too. He also pointed out that growth is based in relationships, and encouraged us to seek out new faces at church and welcome them.

T-Shirts: Robbin went off on a brief tangent about Aldersgate t-shirts, which we are hoping to have available before Mission Sunday on April 23. She described some options and said she would present information to Core Leadership at next Monday's meeting in hopes of developing a shirt that everyone likes.

One Board Governance: Brad described the church's move toward one board governance, which aims to simplify the way the church is run and make it easier to pursue our goals. A draft chart was shared that gives an idea of how this works. We are currently aiming for a hybrid structure, with elements of one board governance (Core Leadership as the decision making body), as well as some standing committees (Staff Parish, Trustees, and Finance) dealing with regular required activities. Other committees, notably Outreach and Worship, continue with a more flexible meeting schedule. Short term teams will develop around specific projects, for example the team currently working on planning our Mission Sunday event on April 23, and the team that came together to search for, interview, and recommend to Core Leadership our new choir director. Common Table events will continue to be held regularly so that the congregation can know how things are going.

The purpose of this change in governing structure is to keep things as simple, understandable, and flexible as possible, as well as to cope with a dwindling supply of volunteers for long-term committees, a problem endemic to churches in modern times. One board governance does fit into the structure laid out in the Book of Discipline; our standing committees are required by the Book of Discipline, but the other committees are not, so we have more flexibility in how we structure them.

Everyone was reminded that Core Leadership meetings (currently on the third Monday of every month at 7pm) are open to anyone who wants to come.

Anyone with more questions about how one board governance will work at Aldersgate is welcome to put a note in Joe Lee's box.

Homelessness Task Force Update: After our plans to house the Emergency Women's Shelter fell through last fall, it was proposed that the folks interested in that project be asked to form a Homelessness Task Force. Janice Zahn tried to set up a meeting, but very few folks were able to come. Without a specific project, there seems to be less enthusiasm and focus. Dave Maybee expressed interest in working on this, and Jean Harris offered to help him.

Faith Action Network Update: In the past, some members of our church have been individual members of the Faith Action Network (FAN). Now Aldersgate is joining this network as a member church. FAN is a politically active, church-based organization that advocates for issues important to people of faith, such as education and social justice. They seek to listen to all sides of an issue and work to raise awareness. The head of FAN will be coming to preach in June.

Mission Sunday Update: Jen and Christian have been working to find about seven to nine mission projects that we can focus on for our Mission Sunday on April 23. Currently the list includes:

Spring patio clean up at Sophia Way

Building a gazebo by the portable so that AA members can smoke out of the rain
(Stan McKenzie is leading this)

Creating Days for Girls kits (Jo Fritze is leading this)

Grounds clean up at Aldersgate, Newport Way Library, and Eastgate Park

Assembling birthday party kits for the Issaquah Food Bank

Washing Alexie's RV

The team is also exploring the possibility of helping Raging River Community Church in Preston with their Sunday Feeding Program.

On Mission Sunday we'll meet at the church for a brief time of worship (about 20 minutes), then we'll head out to work on the various projects. Lunch will be provided at the church that day, and we'll also be taking lunch to those working off site. Sign-ups for projects will begin on March 26 and continue through Easter, so be on the lookout for great opportunities to help out. Brad pointed out that the District Superintendent is preaching on March 26, so he'll be there to see us signing up for the various mission projects. (So let's knock his socks off!)

On Sunday, April 30, we will be having one church service and a potluck designed to celebrate what we experienced through our outreach on Mission Sunday the week before. Colleen will be working on this.

It was asked if we're inviting preschool families to this event. Although they are certainly welcome, we are not making an intentional invitation this time, since it is our first year trying this, and it can be challenging to find volunteer opportunities appropriate for preschool aged children.

Tom Breske mentioned that the gaga pit might not be ready for assembly by April 23, because of the heavy rain. It is possible that we might need to pour some concrete to create a good surface for the pit.

Steve Rummel shared a proposal that Stan McKenzie wrote for sprucing up the AA portable. Stan is hoping that the project will not have a financial impact; he is approaching Rotary clubs for funding. Several church members have offered to provide sweat equity. A group planned to look at the portable on the day after Common Table to see how viable it is and to check for mold and other serious concerns.

One interesting bit of trivia: According to Colleen, the portable was originally used as temporary housing for the Sunday school.

Youth Update: Jen mentioned that we have 17 youth and 4 adults attending SUMYT this weekend and asked that we keep them in our prayers. We were all impressed by the size of the group. Also, Group 345 (our third through fifth graders) is filling out March madness brackets, and everyone is welcome to join them if you want to be part of the fun. She also mentioned that we don't have to wait for Mission Sunday

to enjoy chances to pitch in and volunteer. She could use people to help with egg hunts on the Saturday before Easter, as well as on Easter Sunday. It's a lot of fun, so don't hesitate to let Jen know if you're interested.

At this point the meeting ended in prayer.

These minutes humbly submitted by Robbin Price. Errors and omissions are mine, and corrections are welcome.