

## **Session Summary** **May 22, 2018 Session Meeting**

Following are highlights of the May 22, 2018 Session Meeting. *For further clarifications and/or questions, please feel free to contact one of the elders listed at the end of this summary.*

After dinner and fellowship, Pastor Ray called the meeting to order with prayer.

### **Devotion and Prayer as a Session**

Elder Barbara Smith began the devotion time by reflecting on the fourth chapter of the book *Growing Young* by Kara Powell, Jake Mulder, and Brad Griffin. This book is the basis of upcoming devotions this year. Chapter 4, "Take Jesus' Message Seriously," touches upon research findings focused on two current belief systems: Moralistic Therapeutic Deism (MTD) and the Golden Rule Gospel. "Growing young" churches are making shifts in how they describe the message of Jesus and paying attention to the life and words of Christ. Participation and challenge are two central features of churches "growing young". Evangelism looks different than in the past century and includes building authentic relationships, listening well, and being honest about questions and doubts. Barbara noted that the concepts in this chapter apply to all people, not just young people because we all need to take Jesus' message seriously. Barb then elicited comments/questions from the group.

### **Pilgrimage Retreat**

The annual Pilgrimage Retreat will be held June 7th-10th, 2018 at the DeKoven Retreat Center in Racine, Wisconsin. All elders who have not yet participated were encouraged to attend.

### **Building Committee Report**

Doug Hood, Chair of the Building Committee, presented spreadsheets of the church's Reserve Funding Plan. He explained that this is a study, done by a management consultant group, in which all the structural components of the church are looked at. Assumptions are made about how old the asset is, how long the life span is, and when it will need to be replaced. Projections are then made as to the cost of fixing or replacing these items/assets. Doug emphasized that if we don't maintain the reserve fund, we decrease the ability to pay for the facilities.

### **Interpretation of the FPCE Demographical Survey**

Katie Fitzgerald, an NU doctoral student in statistics, presented her analysis of the FPCE Demographical Survey given to the congregation in February. There were 267 respondents.

Highlights of the report included:

- This is an intergenerational church.
- Of those from the congregation responding, Baby Boomers made up 40%.
- Over 50% of respondents had a Master's degree or higher.
- It is a challenge to get single adults involved in church activities.
- Small Group participation was a positive, and Millennials are more likely to be involved in a small group (according to those responding).
- Relatively few new Christians responded to the survey with 70% of respondents having regularly attended a church prior to attending First Pres.
- Respondents are not likely to bring visitors (an emphasis on discipleship and evangelism would be encouraged).
- People heard about the church through friends, family, or personal connections.

### **New Strategic Plan**

Pastor Ray explained that with the celebration of the 150th Anniversary, we should be asking ourselves where we are going next. He posed the following questions: What does it mean to be a church that makes disciples? How do we reduce or get rid of silos? How do we approach staff openings? What are our current church goals?

Pastor Ray is recommending that Session look into developing a new strategic plan, possibly using a consulting firm. He gave an example of one such group, *Ministry Architects*, whose emphasis is on children and youth ministries. It was suggested that other options be looked into such as local practitioners and people from within our congregation, and that the strategic plan focus on the church as a whole rather than one or two areas.

It was agreed that Pastor Ray would come back next month with several other approaches to developing a strategic plan. A timeline would then be created.

### **Staff Report**

Caryl Weinberg, Director of Missions, reported on behalf of the staff:

- The staff is in support of creating a new strategic plan.
- Staff busy has been very busy creating various summer activities (e.g., Children's Ministries - "Popsicles in the Park"; Worship Ministries - "Campfire Gathering in the Parking Lot").

Ms. Weinberg then reported on behalf of the mission ministries:

- The Mission Ministry Council is focusing on communication. They are developing video clips of the mission partners.
- There will be a mission trip to the Holy Land in June 2019 led by Rev. Hylton and K.K. Yeo.
- The Mission Council has paid attention to the demographic survey and is looking for ways families can be included in mission work.
- Three of our Muslim Refugee families are asking a lot about Christ.
- Several mission partners will be attending the 150th Anniversary Celebration. There will be a mission brunch after the service on Sunday, July 29th.
- There are many missionaries currently in town.

At the conclusion of her report, a prayer was offered for Caryl and the work she is doing with the mission ministries.

### **Personnel Ministry Council Report**

Rev. Kristin Mueller, Director of Children's Ministries, spoke to the Session about her years at First Pres. Some of the "pluses" included that FPCE is a church that values children, she has had a lot of flexibility when doing her job, there is an emphasis on spiritual growth among staff members, and it was a great move to include children in worship.

Pastor Kristin and her family will be moving to Indiana and she will be taking a position as Director of Children's Ministry at the Covenant Church in Lafayette, Indiana. A celebratory barbeque in honor of Kristin will be held on June 3rd at Dawes Park.

Before leaving the meeting, a prayer with the laying on of hands was said for Pastor Kristin and her family.

Pastor Ray reported that church organist Jack Harriff's last Sunday will be July 29th and a search committee has been formed to find his replacement. The Praise Band Director Search Team is well underway with several candidates being interviewed.

### **Designated Associate Pastor's Report**

#### *Youth Elder(s)*

It is recommended that two youth elders be added to next year's Nominating Committee slate.

#### *Formation of Young Families/Young Adult Council*

A Young Families/Young Adult Council will hopefully be in place by the fall. Details need to be formalized.

### **Senior Pastor's Report**

#### *ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate) Training*

A training session on active shooter response was held for staff members, usher team members, and various other laypersons. Beginning on Sunday, June 3rd the children's wing at the top of the first landing will only be open to children attending Sunday School and the adults who accompany them.

#### *Evaluation of Weekly Communion at Second Service*

The effectiveness of serving weekly communion at the second service will be evaluated in the near future.

#### *June 2018 Membership Class*

A new membership class will be held after the worship service on June 3rd and June 10th.

#### *Commemorative Items for 150th Celebration and Paraments*

Pastor Ray reported that a volunteer is designing Paraments for the communion table, lectern and pulpit, in colors to represent the church cycle. Commemorative items are being made for the 150th Anniversary Celebration utilizing symbols found in the front of the chapel. Postcards using the stained glass window designs are also being developed.

*Laurie Kaeser, Clerk of Session*

## **2018 Session**

### **Ordained Pastors**

Rev. Ray Hylton, *Senior Pastor and Moderator of Session*

Rev. Henry Coates, *Designated Associate Pastor*

### **Ruling Elders**

Laurie Kaeser, *Clerk of Session*

Daniel Allen, *Worship Ministry Council*

Sonia Bodi, *Mission Ministry Council, 150th Celebration Planning Committee*

Karen Bregman, *Pastoral Care Ministry Council*

Dwayne Dobschuetz, *Youth Ministry Council*

Katie Duke, *Children's Ministry Council, 150th Celebration Planning Committee*

Marilyn Haase, *Pastoral Care Ministry Council*

Susan Hood, *Youth Ministry Council*

Laura Jones, *Evangelism and Membership Development Ministry Council*

LeRoy Klemt, *Personnel Ministry Council Chair, Budget Committee*

Matt McLeod, *Adult Discipleship Ministry Council, Nominating Committee*

Hugh Parry, *Personnel Ministry Council*

Ricki Rosengren, *Worship Ministry Council*

Dan Shiau, *Adult Discipleship Ministry Council*

Barbara Smith, *Evangelism and Membership Development Ministry Council*

Marge Stromberg, *Children's Ministry Council, Nominating Committee*

Go Suigura, *TCC Board, Budget Committee*

May Tchao, *Worship Ministry Council*

Sharyn Wilson Woods, *Pastoral Care Ministry Council*

*Please see the Membership Directory for email addresses and/or phone numbers.*