

Core Leadership Meeting, July 17, 2017

In attendance: Laura Baumgartner, Joe Lee, Patty Ferguson, Christian Hampson, Jean Harris, Jen Hoerber, Dorothy Beeman, Linda Detering, Rich Detering, Brad Beeman, Steve Rummel, David Lutz, Robbin Price

If I had to make a guess, I would say that the meeting opened in prayer, followed by a brief discussion about where the prodigal secretary was. Then Robbin arrived.

Old Business

ACP Update: Dorothy mentioned that the preschool is heading into its last week of summer camp, and although she doesn't have firm numbers yet, they are quite solid financially. We were all pleased to hear this.

VBS Update: In other news, Jen reported an astonishing response to Vacation Bible School, with 133 kids signed up, and 5 already on the waiting list (yowza!). Most of the church families are participating, and a number of preschool families and folks from the neighborhood will be coming. The large number is made a bit less daunting by the fact that Bellevue First is providing 15 volunteers to help out (thank you, Bellevue First!). This year we are also adding a class for 2- to 3-year-olds, so that we can avoid the problem we saw last year with disappointed younger siblings. ("No, honey, you can't stay in this really cool fun-looking place with your big sister...")

Many thanks to Jen and the dedicated volunteers that will be making VBS happen this year. And don't forget, it isn't too late to volunteer. There's a lot to do, and you get to do it with some of the cutest kids in town!

Parking Complaint Update: We had a complaint from a neighbor about the increase in trailer parking in our lot. It seems we've had a couple of additional folks parking there besides the kind gentleman who has been acting as our security. Brad responded to the neighbor, and the additional van and camper are once more parked on the street, so the neighbor is feeling better.

This update led to a larger conversation about people living in vehicles and how we might help them. Apparently folks have been living in the Albertson's parking lot, but that is no longer allowed. As a consequence, there are even more folks with nowhere to go. Jean pointed out that we have a role in educating folks to combat the criminalization of homelessness. It was also pointed out that if we open the parking lot to overnight vehicle camping, we would need to figure out how to structure the program.

Action Item: Brad offered to talk to Paula McCutcheon and Kelly Dahlman-Oeth at Lake Washington about their parking program, which they've done for years. He will bring information back to us for discussion. We will revisit this issue in the fall.

New Business

New Bulletin Format: Jen brought up the new bulletin format that we considered during the Core Leadership retreat in January. She brought the sample out again for us to look at. It has the advantage that it highlights the many activities of the church, while keeping the service information on one page, simple and clear.

Jen suggested that Vacation Bible School Sunday would be a good time to try the new format, since one goal is to reach new families with more information about the church, and we are likely to see some new families on that Sunday. There was some discussion about whether we would have enough flexibility in the space available for the order of worship (if, for example, second service wanted to include a call to worship) but we agreed that we could make it work.

(We revisited this item with a motion at the end of the meeting, but I'm going to poke a small hole in the time-space continuum and put the result here.)

Motion: *That we adopt the new bulletin format that Wendy created, starting on Vacation Bible School Sunday and going forward.* The motion passed unanimously.

Youth Assistant: The budget made it possible for us to have Jocie as a summer youth assistant, but now we have several possible candidates for an ongoing youth assistant. Jen estimates the position would be ten hours a week. This is good news indeed, although we do not have a chunk of change currently allocated for this in the budget.

Brad said he knows a possible candidate who has not yet applied but might be interested, and asked if he could contact that person. We agreed that he could, since he isn't on the interview committee, so there is no appearance of unfair bias or conflict of interest.

Rich reminded us that we had already decided to fill the position when a good candidate came along, asking the congregation to step up financially when we had someone terrific to offer them. And since Melinda was unable to be at this meeting, we decided to wait until she and David Lutz had a chance to consider the money situation. There is a search committee looking at the possible candidates.

Leadership Recruitment:

We discussed the difficulty of recruiting new leaders. We currently have several people at the end of their three-year terms (some of which have been more than three years long), including our finance chair. We also need a safety officer. It was suggested that we resurrect the nominating committee, but we would need folks willing to be on the committee. (Someone commented that the reason to be on a nominating committee is so you don't have to be on Trustees. Mind you, that might not be the best way to sell the idea.)

We also want to have new leaders in place in July, rather than waiting until the charge conference in November, so that we can ensure smooth transitions.

Christian reminded everyone that although we do not have a formal nominating committee, he is our Lay Leadership representative, a position he took over after Rick Wilson ended his term. He is happy to put energy into filling needed positions. Laura offered to help him, mentioning that she has past experience finding and developing leadership in a church.

Action Item: Christian and Laura will work together to build a structure for nominating people and filling positions, and will bring it back to Core Leadership in the fall.

Focus of the Church: There has been some concern raised that perhaps our worship is not Christ-centered enough. Is Jesus the primary focus of what we do on Sunday mornings? Are we effectively bringing folks to Jesus? Our worship is a bit different than other churches, and rather informal.

One person mentioned a preference for a more God-centered worship. Another pointed out that we can't be all things to all people and that there are many ways to worship. It was suggested that a greater distinction between the two services might offer clearer choices between tradition and contemporary. A couple of people miss singing some of the old traditional hymns in second service. And it was pointed out that worship is only part of what we do; many people can find Christ-centered fulfillment through Bible study or fellowship in a UMW circle.

Brad encouraged us to keep thinking about what our focus should be and said he would take the many ideas expressed back to the Worship Team.

Metrics: Joe would like more objective means of measuring our effectiveness. The number of children signed up for VBS and the size and success of the Preschool are examples of numbers that indicate how well we're doing. Joe would like to see us capturing more numbers and details like those, and including them regularly in Charge Conference summaries so that we can see how well we are accomplishing our goals over time.

Action Item: Joe will come up with specific numbers and information that he'd like to see us capture and put in our Charge Conference summaries.

One trend we have seen is that regular weekly attendance is no longer as common as it once was. Our average attendance is once every three or four weeks.

We were also reminded to think of all the people we impact that aren't necessarily in the pews on Sunday morning, such as the Young Adult group that Katie has successfully started, and the preschool.

At this point, we took a moment to show appreciation for the wonderful sermon David and Jean did after Annual Conference. We all found it informative and engaging. Thank you!

Bellevue First Crop Walk: Jean Harris reported that Bellevue First has invited us to participate in their Crop Walk, which will be held in early October. The first organizational meeting will be next Tuesday, and if we are interested, we need someone to attend. We enthusiastically decided to accept the invitation, and Christian has an idea of someone who might like to represent us at the meeting.

One last bit of good news: Brad reported that Butch Black has shown interest in becoming our new Financial Secretary, taking over for Linda Reichenbach. Thank you, Butch!

At this point, Brad ended the meeting in prayer.

These minutes respectfully submitted by Robbin Price. All errors and omissions are mine, and corrections are welcome.

Next Meeting: Monday, August 21, 7:00 p.m.

Summary of motions:

Motion: *That we adopt the new bulletin format that Wendy created, starting on Vacation Bible School Sunday and going forward.* The motion passed unanimously.

Summary of action items:

- Brad offered to talk to Paula McCutcheon and Kelly Dahlman-Oeth at Lake Washington about their parking program, which they've done for years. He will bring information back to us for discussion. We will revisit this issue in the fall.
- Christian and Laura will work together to build a structure for nominating people and filling positions, and will bring it back to Core Leadership in the fall.
- Joe will come up with specific numbers and information that he'd like to see us capture and put in our Charge Conference summaries.