

Core Leadership Minutes, July 16, 2018

In Attendance: Brad Beeman, Rich Detering, Linda Detering, Robbin Price, Bud Bennett, Jen Hoerber, Jean Harris, Dave Maybee, Steve Rummel, Dorothy Beeman, Melinda Lilley, Patty Ferguson, Christian Hampson, Joe Lee

Brad opened us in prayer.

Progress Toward One-Board Governance: Melinda's term as Finance Chair, already longer than anyone should have to do the job, will end after this meeting. As a consequence, finance activities will need to move to Core Leadership, barring a miracle where an angel comes down from heaven and declares that she will head finance. Unfortunately, we have probably used up our angel allotment with Melinda. Thank you, Melinda, for all your hard work for the last five years! Even this humble secretary, financially challenged person that she is, understood your explanations of church finances.

In other news, it is quite possible that down the road, Trustees might also need to move to become a Core Leadership activity. One-Board Governance is exactly that, and as we deal with the challenge of less volunteers, our CL group needs to take on more responsibilities. (By the way, folks, if any of you out there who aren't on CL want to be on the team, or want to volunteer in some other capacity, feel free to let us know!)

A Word about Transparency: Core Leadership meetings are open to everyone, as are Common Table meetings. Please come!

Mid-week opportunity at church: Sabrina and Brad have talked about having the church open for worship and prayer mid-week. Many churches around here open their sanctuaries for certain hours during the week, and encourage the entire community to feel welcome. We wouldn't be adding a formal worship service; rather, at set times the sanctuary would be open for individual prayer and reflection.

We would not need additional staff or volunteers, and the sanctuary would be open during business hours. We talked about offering music, but it was pointed out that we don't want to color the atmosphere in a way that might disrupt a person's prayer; not everyone finds the same experiences soothing or helpful.

For churches that have done this, it has successfully invited the community in, and has helped to build small groups. It would also be a way to make us more invitational.

It was suggested that we could put a flyer up at Newport Way Library and put signs up around the church that might say, "sanctuary open today for reflection and prayer" or something like that.

Someone suggested that it was logical to use the outside door and sanctuary door by the office, so that folks weren't encouraged to wander all over the church. Dave said

that when he joined the church the sanctuary was open 24/7, and every member got a key. One of Brad's old churches would give new members a key to the chapel.

On a practical note, it was pointed out that this would have no impact on our insurance.

There was some discussion about keeping the sanctuary open during all business hours, but it was pointed out that set times fit better into our busy calendar and give folks a predictable time that they can count on. We agreed that the chosen time should be formally put it on the calendar, so that it doesn't accidentally conflict with things.

Motion: We will open the sanctuary for one 3-hour period each week for prayer and reflection, and we will formally set aside a time for this. (We used the five-finger consensus model to show our approval (or lack thereof). All but one person gave an enthusiastic 5 finger agreement, and the one 4 finger vote was only because someone thought that we should open the sanctuary two times a week.

Needless to say, the motion passed.

Visitors: We had a lively discussion with our visitors, Bud and Dave, about how we communicate decisions to the congregation.

We certainly do not want to be secretive! We discussed how we are trying to be as transparent as possible, and discussed times when we haven't achieved this as well as we might have liked.

It was clarified that Staff Parish decisions specific to staff employment are required to be confidential. But those are the only exceptions.

We made a commitment to continue evaluating and improving our communication. It was also pointed out that sometimes people think a decision has been made when in fact we are just discussing possibilities, and we need to be clear when that is the case.

A couple of quick reminders:

- The church budget is available in the church office to anyone who is interested in seeing it.
- Links to the most recent Core Leadership, Finance Team, and Common Table minutes are available in the weekly newsletter (look on the left-hand side, a bit down the page), and newsletters are archived on our website (look under "Connect").
- Everyone is welcome at Core Leadership meetings. (The only time when we might need to ask visitors to leave is when we are talking about confidential staff matters.)
- Everyone is not only welcome, but encouraged to attend the Common Table events. Heck, we'll bribe you with food! And not just any food, but food

prepared by such esteemed cooks as Patty Ferguson and Linda Detering, among others.

Because much of the following discussion centered on staff and staffing decisions, we had to ask our visitors to leave. Apologies, but the nature of the conversation made it necessary.

Budget Update: We are in desperate need of solutions. Melinda gave us a brief overview: Our pledge income last year was \$27,500 short. Staff came in well under budget, but we are still \$12,000 in the red. This is the first time we've been in the red for at least five years (longer, if memory serves), and we usually have significant leftover money at the end of the year, so the shortfall was unexpected. We have a lot of money in the bank in holding accounts, so we didn't start July with no funds, but we do have some hard choices to make. Last year \$381,000 was pledge income, and now our pledges are down by \$30,000, so we're looking at a much smaller budget.

The bottom line is that expenses need to come down by about \$34,000 for the 2018-2019 fiscal year in order for us to have a balanced budget.

There was concern that we didn't have a better sense of this earlier, but we really couldn't get the big picture until all the expenses were in.

There was a great deal of passionate conversation (the secretary in particular became a bit hot and bothered and said many things that she would now like to retract), and in the end, we were unable to reach any conclusions, even though the meeting went an hour longer than usual. We made a commitment to get more information (and do some serious praying) and to meet again on Saturday, July 28 at 11:00am in order to make some decisions.

Everyone is welcome to join us on that Saturday morning for everything except confidential staffing conversations. Contact your Core Leaders if you have any questions or concerns.

Brad's article on the NextDoor website: As a final note, Brad mentioned that he had written an article for the local NextDoor website inviting the community to see us as a place where they could come and discuss many issues in a safe atmosphere. His aim is to move us toward a more invitational focus, as he described in his Sabbatical write-up.

These minutes respectfully submitted by Robbin Price, all errors and omissions are mine, and corrections are gratefully accepted.