

Core Leadership Meeting, April 29, 2019

In Attendance: Jim Phillips, Rich Detering, Jen Hoerber, Sarah Fritze, Linda Detering, Melinda Lilley, Robbin Price, Joe Lee, Brad Beman, Peter Namita, Dorothy Beeman, Laura Baumgartner, Monica Luedke, Andy Luedke

Brad opened the meeting in prayer.

Reconciling Ministry: Inclusivity Statement: Now that the congregation has voted to be a Reconciling ministry, there are a few things that need to be done to officially join the Reconciling Ministry Network. The first item on the agenda was creating a statement that showed our inclusivity. The Considering Reconciling Committee worked long and hard on crafting a statement, and they brought it to Core Leadership for consideration and final approval:

Aldersgate is a vibrant and inclusive Christian community. We welcome and affirm all people, and as a Reconciling congregation embrace their expressions and experiences of gender and sexuality. Together we are growing in faith, love, health, and service.

Monica explained that the wording was carefully chosen. The committee included the key elements of our original mission statement unchanged. They added the word “affirm,” because that word expresses safety to the LGBTQIA community. “Expressions and experiences” demonstrates that we welcome those that the Book of Discipline calls “practicing homosexuals.” The statement was meant to be welcoming, clear, and as concise as possible. Monica has also discussed the requirements of the statement with someone on the Reconciling Ministries Network national board, and this statement meets their criteria, which are pretty flexible.

There was some concern in the group that the pronoun “their” might be off-putting. We also talked for a while about ways to make the statement more concise.

In the end, we decided that the statement was appropriate as written. It was pointed out that what will really matter is how the statement is seen by those outside the church. Also, since our mission statement is a living document, we can revisit it in the future if we feel it needs to be improved in any way. At this point there was a motion:

Motion: That the statement crafted by the CRC be accepted as our mission statement.

The motion passed unanimously (including Patty Ferguson, who gave us input via email). We thanked the CRC for all the hard work they put into crafting it.

Reconciling Ministry: Annual Financial Contribution: Another requirement of becoming a Reconciling ministry is a suggested \$500.00 minimum annual donation to the Reconciling Ministry Network. Although Jean Harris was not at the meeting, she had told Joe that the Outreach Team is willing to cover this expense. There was another motion:

Motion: That we allow Outreach to cover our \$500.00 annual contribution to the Reconciling Ministries Network.

This motion also passed unanimously.

Reconciling Ministry: Photo for their Website: We also need a photo for our listing on the Reconciling Ministries Network website. It was suggested that we get as many members of the congregation as possible for a picture out in front of the church on Mother's Day. Brad asked if anyone had access to a drone for taking a dramatic overhead shot. If we can do this, we will. The photo will show us as a welcoming congregation on the RMN website when people are looking for a Reconciling church. We'll also use the picture on our church website.

Mother's Day is on May 12. Our goal is to have all our Reconciling Ministry paperwork in by May 13. At that point, we will be added to the list of Reconciling congregations and will officially be part of the network.

Stewardship: We all agreed that Jim did a great presentation on Sunday, clear, concise, and informative. Thanks, Jim!

Our mini-stewardship campaign will continue for four more weeks. Next week we'll hear about Wendi and the terrific work she does, and Jen's brilliant work with youth and families, then we'll focus on the music program. May 19 will be the Sunday we turn in pledge cards. Pledge cards just went out and should arrive in the next few days. The goal is to get \$210,000 in pledges to cover our needs for July through December of this year. This will allow us to give our staff a long overdue cost of living adjustment. During this campaign there will be information in the weekly newsletter and the bulletin, as well as the stewardship moments in worship.

There was a question about why the various teams were asked to give budget numbers for 2020 as well as budget numbers for July through December before this mini-campaign. Jim explained that this allowed us to plan ahead a bit and look at what we'll be needing for next year. There will be a regular stewardship campaign in the fall, at which time we'll encourage pledges for all of 2020, as we moved back to a January to December fiscal year. If any group needs to change their numbers for 2020, there will be plenty of time to do that before the fall campaign.

Jen suggested we put a stewardship page on our website, with the letter, graphs, and updates for those who are interested. We all agreed that this would be useful, and Melinda will work on making that happen. There was also some interest in a thermometer or some other visual sign of our progress, perhaps on one of our bulletin boards, for those who don't go to our website. This can be discussed further as the campaign progresses.

Technology Proposal: Our CenturyLink contract for phone and internet service ends in July, and the Tech Team has been working on finding the best plan for our future needs. Peter started by thanking Dave Sandford for helping him investigate the

options. The two of them have carefully investigated both CenturyLink and Comcast, and they feel that Comcast can give us the better deal. Specifically:

- Comcast believes they can connect to our current phones.
- They will pay to bring broadband to the church, something they've never been willing to do before.
- They will charge us \$150.00 less each month than CenturyLink will.
- They can provide faster data service.

If we can get them a letter by Tuesday, April 30, we will also get a \$300 Visa gift card for accepting their proposal. Peter pointed out that the letter only gives them permission to see if they can indeed make a broadband connection work without disrupting anything at the church. They will need to lay a cable to get broadband to the church, but new technologies should make this easier than it has been in the past. In any case, we won't sign a contract with them until we know they can provide what they claim.

There was a concern that Comcast has had problems with interruptions in phone service. Joe suggested that we could probably get reliability data from the company. Someone also asked if, since we're only signing up for a one year contract, they could suddenly increase our rates next year. According to Dave Sanford, the rate we are getting is not a promotional rate, but a business rate, so the hope is that that wouldn't happen.

Peter also suggested that we could keep our wireless hot spots as a backup system.

There was some more discussion of technology, which went over the head of the I'm-great-at-grammar-but-don't-asked-me-about-broadband-I'm-an-English-major secretary, and finally there was a motion:

Motion: That we give approval for switching our internet/telephone service to Comcast, conditional upon favorable results of their pre-evaluation of getting broadband to our building and successfully connecting to our phones.

The motion passed with 11 for, and 1 opposed.

Rich will sign the letter as head of Trustees. Every step of the process will need to be overseen by Core Leadership, since we want to make sure this is done correctly. Peter said he would send out detailed emails to keep us all in the loop.

Appointing an SPR Hiring Task Force: We still need to find a Facilities Coordinator, and the custodial service we signed up for isn't working very well either, so we are looking to replace it as well. We need a task force that will consider the best way to fill these needs, craft job descriptions appropriate to the need, and actively recruit candidates.

There was some discussion, and Joe asked who would be interested in being part of this effort. Rich, Dorothy, and Laura volunteered, and another church member was mentioned as a possibility, but would need to be asked (and I'm certainly not putting him or her on the spot here). Then there was a motion:

Motion: That a task force be created that will include Dorothy Beeman, Rich Detering, and Laura Baumgartner, among others, to decide how to fill the custodial and facility coordinator needs of the church.

The motion passed unanimously.

Harvest Dinner Date: Wendi has a request for building use from a group doing a CPR/AED class on November 16. There was concern that this might conflict with preparations for the Harvest Dinner. We all agreed that no decisions on Harvest Dinner could be made without consulting Patty, so Joe appealed to her via text while we discussed the issue. One choice is Sunday, November 10 (Thanksgiving is late this year, would the 10th be too early? Would we be able to find turkeys? A Harvest Dinner without turkeys would be like a s'more without marshmallows. Or chocolate.). The other choice is Sunday, November 17, the day after the CPR class. Patty was willing to go with either date, although she expressed some preference for November 10.

In the end, we concluded that the CPR class could happen in the youth room if necessary. So either date will work. Wendi can go ahead and schedule the class, and Harvest Dinner will be on the 10th, but could happen on the 17th with no problem if necessary.

Other Business: ACP Landscaping: Since we currently don't have a Facilities Coordinator, Ted Snyder and others have been doing tremendous volunteer work keeping flowerbeds and grass neat and tidy. However, no one has been able to find time to work on the area in front of the preschool. Dorothy has the 50th anniversary of the preschool coming up on June 1. Naturally, we all want the preschool to look nice, especially with such an important celebration coming up. She isn't sure whether to pay an outside provider or ask the church to do something, and she came to us for advice.

It was suggested that we need a work party. I did not hear anyone volunteer to organize this. Dorothy said that if the church is unable to do it, then the preschool will pay to have the work done.

Other Business: Vacation Bible School (VBS): Jen posted the sign up page online for our 2019 VBS last week. She has not as of yet done any promotion, but we already have 45 sign ups! Apparently, the word is out about the sheer awesomeness of our program (thank you, Jen!). Jen's only concern is that last year we had to cap registration because of a lack of volunteers. It takes a great many volunteers to make a successful and safe VBS.

So here's the important part: **Vacation Bible School will happen from Monday, July 22 to Thursday, July 25.** During that four day period we need many volunteers.

We also need volunteers before the program starts to create props, decorate, and do other important tasks.

If you can possibly help with Vacation Bible School this year, let Jen know right away. Whatever you can contribute is helpful. And it's fun! Just ask Rich, who did it last year!

At this point, Laura closed the meeting in prayer.

These minutes written by Robbin Price. All omissions and errors are mine, and corrections are cheerfully accepted.

Summary of Motions:

That the statement crafted by the Considering Reconciling Committee be accepted as our mission statement. The motion passed unanimously.

That we allow Outreach to cover our \$500.00 annual contribution to the Reconciling Ministries Network. The motion passed unanimously.

That we give approval for switching our internet/telephone service to Comcast, conditional upon favorable results of their pre-evaluation of getting broadband to our building and successfully connecting to our phones. The motion passed with 11 for, and 1 opposed.

That a task force be created that will include Dorothy Beeman, Rich Detering, and Laura Baumgartner, among others, to decide how to fill the custodial and facility coordinator needs of the church. The motion passed unanimously.

Next Meeting: Monday, May 20, 7pm