

LEADERSHIP COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
December 5, 2019 6:00pm

John Samford – President, Pat Huibregtse, Jim Rowan, Ron Dechert - Vice President, Judy Coucouvanis, Sue Wortman, Pam Rutledge, Pastor John Kennedy

The meeting was called to order by President John Samford.

Pastor John led Leadership Council with an opening prayer.

Minutes from the last meeting, October 24, 2019 were passed after the spelling of Jim Rowan's last name was noted as incorrect and corrected.

Report from Local Church Discernment Committee (See [Attachment #1](#) for report)

Old Business

- **“Caring Cuts”** - Per the motion passed by Leadership Council at our October 2019 meeting, we received word from both Outreach and Member Care Ministry teams declining their help in planning and coordination “Caring Cuts.” This project has been offered by owners of the Renew Salon and Spa in Saline to provide homeless and low income individuals and families free salon services at Bethlehem. Since the salon has done this before in other churches they will take care of designing publicity and set up. John S. offered to get volunteers from Bethlehem to provide simple food and to act as hosts during this event which will take place on Sunday, January 19 in the Fellowship Hall. Leadership Council discussed other services which might be supplied at the same time as this event such as collecting coats, mittens, socks or other items. It was decided there was not enough time to organize such collects which might also overlap with projects currently underway, such as the Giving Tree. Saline Social Services said they would provide 200 gift bags filled with hygiene items to be distributed.
- **Staff Relations committee** – Vice-President Ron Dechert presented a draft document he created regarding the role of the Staff Relations Committee along with the purpose of this group. (See [Attachment #2](#)) After reviewing the document a motion was made to accept this draft document as the final Staff Relations Committee charter. The motion was seconded and passed by the Leadership Council members.
- **Center for Progressive Renewal** – Pastor John has been in contact with the Greg Carlson from the Center for Progressive Renewal (CPR) to determine if this may be a group to help us with vision, future direction and goals. Our next meeting will be a video call with Greg, January 23rd where he will clarify services he has to offer. We still need to know what this costs and what is involved but will get that information on this call or before. We will need the congregation's permission if the price for this is over \$15,000.

New Business

CROP Walk – John Samford received a message from Tom Ziesemer, Laura Seyfried and Katie Rowan stating they would like Leadership Council to support and endorse the hosting

of CROP Walk at Bethlehem for fall 2020 and 2021. See [Attachment #3](#) below for message and comments. The following motion was made, seconded and passed by Leadership Council:

Motion: *Leadership Council endorses and supports the decision by Outreach and Youth & Young Adult Ministry teams to host CROP Walk in 2020 and 2021.*

Discussion regarding Bethlehem Cemetery – The idea of trying to sell the cemetery was brought up because of legal concerns. If the cemetery was sued or had other legal issues Bethlehem UCC would be exposed and could also be sued. Ron Dechert researched laws and statutes regarding cemeteries in this state and found it would be very difficult and time consuming to try and separate the 2 entities in order to sell the cemetery. According to our by-laws the Cemetery Board requires 6 elected members. The nominating committee finds it difficult to get enough volunteers to fill this board. There was also discussion around the amount of clerical work involved with the cemetery. Perhaps the Cemetery Board could take on more of this work. Maybe the Cemetery Board could become structured more like a ministry team, with one elected chair and one secretary then other members of the board could be invited/encouraged to volunteer to serve on this board. Any changes would require changes to our by-laws. Leadership Council agreed that it would be difficult and time consuming to separate the 2 entities in order to sell the cemetery. No decisions were made.

Reports from Ministry Team liaisons (See also latest Ministry Team minutes [posted on the church web site.](#))

Finance Ministry Team - Jim Rowan commented on attending a Finance Ministry Team meeting and said it gave him a different perspective on how Leadership Council should work with this team when it comes to large spending requests. These requests require time so Finance can determine how and when money will be available from a big picture perspective. Finance has received the preliminary results of the financial audit performed by an outside firm and there appear to be no significant problems.

Facilities – There was a question regarding what is being charged for a day rental of the gym. John S. will look into this.

This meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer

Meeting minutes submitted by Sue Wortman, Secretary

- Next Meeting: Thursday January 23, 2020 6 pm (Video chat with CPR)

Attachment #1

Date: December 5, 2019

TO: Bethlehem UCC Leadership Council

From: Local Church Discernment Committee Lily Tinker Fortel, Jenell Buday, Patti Maki, Sue Muir, Jane Ziesemer

Re: Report on Progress

We write to update you on our process and progress as a Local Church Discernment Committee (LCDC) for/with Lily Tinker Fortel.

Our group has met five times since the beginning of October. We begin each gathering with a reflection/devotional/prayer led by a member of the group. Our conversations then turn to Lily's discernment process.

Our initial meetings included reviewing responsibilities of LCDCs and other materials provided by Rev. Campbell Lovett, Michigan Conference Minister. We agreed on expectations of our LCDC, and guiding principles for our process together.

It is clear to each of us that, because of her roots, experiences, teachings, and her ability to greet others with peace, pause, and possibility, Lily has the skills, knowledge, and faith to continue on this journey successfully. Even with that clarity, it has been great to learn more about, and explore with Lily, her background and her pull (or call) to ministry. To this end, we've explored Lily's roots including her faith background, biography, and resume. We've read and discussed some of Lily's written work, including sermons, seminary papers, and Lily's Statement of Faith (modeled after the UCC Statement of Faith). We have explored theological beliefs and influencers and our understandings of the ministry to which she is called. We have also reviewed and provided feedback on a portion of Lily's ordination paper (required by the old Manual on Ministry), and elements of her Marks portfolio (required by the new Manual on Ministry). We also offered input on the development of Lily's commissioning service and participated in the service on November 17.

Each member of the committee was assigned two Marks of Faithful and Effective Ministers, with which we became familiar. Then, we reviewed materials Lily provided reflecting her experiences and preparation for each Mark. All but one of us have had a one-on-one meeting outside of our regular meeting times to explore our assigned Marks with Lily.

In our time together, Lily has made progress on her ordination paper, the Marks portfolio of her strengths and growing edges in each of the Marks of Effective Ministers, and completing other tasks related to her process as a Member in Discernment. We will continue to update you on our process. We anticipate that early in the New Year, we would like to attend a Leadership Council where we can provide more information on our process and Lily can present materials to the Leadership Council.

Attachment #2

Staff Relations Committee Charter, December 2019

What is the Staff Relations Committee (SRC)?

The SRC is a standing committee that meets on an ad hoc basis to fulfill the duties outlined in this document. It is comprised of three members; the Vice-President of the congregation, the Senior Pastor, and 1 additional non-elected church member. The Vice-President will serve as the chair of this committee and will be responsible for convening the committee as needed to address issues, concerns or reviews as they arise. The SRC directly reports to the Leadership Council as needed.

What is the role of the SRC?

The SRC has the following charges (roles) established by the Leadership Council. Any changes in these established roles must be approved by a majority vote of the Leadership Council or the governing body of BUCC as established by our by-laws.

- 1) Facilitate the review and resolution of employer-employee or employee-employee conflicts that cannot be directly resolved by the Senior Pastor. It is important that the SRC assist the senior pastor to foster understanding, respect for all, and effective communication within and between church staff, including church leadership. The expressed purpose of the SRC is to prevent unnecessary conflict and discord. The SRC should seek to establish a process to engage staff, review conflicts, re-direct communication, and facilitate resolution while meeting the staff duties and responsibilities outlined in the BUCC by-laws and employee handbook. When the chair determines it is necessary, additional outside resources should be engaged.
- 2) Conduct periodic review (upon request from Leadership Council or Senior Pastor) of staff compensation to determine equity, fairness, and competitiveness. Every staff member and the pastor should appreciate the church being intentional about creating and implementing a fair and equitable compensation structure. This requires periodic review of current internal compensation practices and external job market review. Recommendations from these reviews would be presented to the Leadership Council for their review, approval/modification, and presentation to the governing body if necessary.
- 3) Develop and facilitate the implementation of Fair and Just Personnel Practices. The SRC should demonstrate, through their actions, good personnel practices. This may require additional training/education for SRC members. The personnel practices should be in accordance with the Christian committee to recognize the value of all persons. The personnel practices should be appropriately addressed in the employee handbook which is provided to all newly hired personnel. The employee handbook should be reviewed and modified, as needed, at least every two years. Any changes to the employee handbook must be presented to the Leadership Council for approval. Once approved, all current employees should be provided with a copy (paper or digital) of the revised handbook for their records.

Selecting Committee Members

The BUCC by-laws identify two people as integral to employee issues: 1) the Senior Pastor, and 2) the Vice-President. The Senior Pastor serves as the head of the church staff, while the Vice-President is identified to work with, support, and guide the Senior Pastor in regards to personnel issues. As such, these two persons are appointed, by the Leadership Council, to the SRC with the Vice-President serving as the chair of this committee. A third member of the SRC is appointed by the Leadership Council. When considering who should be elected as Vice-President or appointed as the third member of the SRC, the following characteristics should be considered.

- 1) Be an example of Christian character by demonstrating respect for all persons
- 2) Demonstrate a commitment to the governing body of BUCC
- 3) Demonstrate an ability for effective communication
- 4) Demonstrate ability to maintain confidentiality
- 5) Demonstrate ability to foster trust among church staff and the governing body
- 6) Demonstrate ability to negotiate and reconcile differences

Length of service

The Senior Pastor will serve on the SRC throughout his/her tenure at BUCC. The Vice President's term of service is identical to the length of service defined for the Vice President by the BUCC by-laws. The third member's length of service is open-ended, at the discretion of the individual assigned to the SRC and the Leadership Council.

Attachment #3

We are writing with news that the Youth and Young Adult and Outreach Ministry Teams have voted to support Bethlehem hosting CROP Walk for 2020 and 2021.

We represent the Youth & YA MT (Katie Rowan cc'd) and Outreach MT (Laura Seyfried cc'd) to ask that this news be shared with the Leadership Council at their December 5 meeting. **We ask for Leadership Council's endorsement and support of the decision by Outreach and Youth and Young Adult Ministry Teams that Bethlehem host CROP Walk in 2020 and 2021.**

Both Pastor John (cc'd) and I support this decision. Tom Zieseemer (cc'd), who was the lead organizer last time Bethlehem hosted also supports the decision.

Tom Zieseemer was approached at this year's CROP Walk by Mary Pratt, a co-chair of our area CROP Walk planning committee about this possibility.

This group has considered the list of hosting congregation responsibilities from Mary Pratt (pasted below). We have considered these responsibilities with awareness of the possibility that some at Bethlehem will have concerns about our capacity to host. We believe that Bethlehem has the capacity to thrive in hosting CROP Walk. We believe this will be an exciting opportunity for Bethlehem - both as an event we can take pride in hosting; and as an exciting opportunity to open the doors of our downtown church to the broader community for such an important cause.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Lily, Katie Rowan (Youth and YA MT), Laura Seyfried (Outreach MT), and Tom Zieseemer.

Hosting Congregation Responsibilities from Mary Pratt:

- CROP Walk scheduling is flexible - they aim for the first couple of weeks in October. Thus, we don't need to worry about a conflict with Bethlehem's Oktoberfest.
- The host congregation is asked to host a meal for walkers (soup and bread is the popular option the last several years).
- In addition to CROP Walk, itself, the host church is expected to host a Recruiters Fair 4-5 weeks before on a weeknight. ****I've been; this is a pretty lowkey, easy-lift event****
- This year, the hosting congregation had:
 - one person serve as the liaison for the congregation and CROP Walk organizers. This person was also the recruiter for St. Clair's.
 - Somebody help with setup and takedown of tables
 - 6-8 people who worked in the kitchen and helped serve the meal.
 - ****I imagine we'd also want greeters/ushers who could help people navigate the church****
- She asked Bethlehem because of our past involvement and because the downtown location is great for a walk.

FINANCE MINISTRY MEETING MINUTES
December 12, 2019

Present: Karen Samford-Chair and Tom Krell

Not Present: Sue Muir, Jim Rowan, Edgar Vasquez and Pastor John Kennedy

No significant issues were found in reviewing the monthly reports for November.

Karen will talk with Betty about the Investment report which may not have been updated properly for Fiscal 2020.

An Unbudgeted Funding Request from David Hahn is requesting \$407.49 from McKay Congregational Funds to purchase new choral binders. It has been approved by Pastor John and does not need approval from Finance. This is only to inform Finance.

Karen will talk to Betty to on the process for putting pledge donations for the Fellowship Hall renovation into the investment fund.

In reviewing the Congregational Self-Reflection Summary, it was decided *providing adequate feedback regarding the use of funds* is a goal. The majority of actions taken by Finance apply to requests from other ministry teams or Leadership Council and reporting to the congregation should be the responsibility of the requesting team. Should something arise not fitting into that category, we will see that the congregation is made aware of it. Karen will send this to Ron Dechert along with a suggested rewording of question 5 in Section II to read "I feel it is easy to get enough people to fill the boards, committees, task forces, or other groups."

Next Meeting – 7:00 PM, January 9, 2020

Submitted by Karen Samford

FACILITIES MEETING MINUTES
12/11/2019

Present: Tom Ziesemer, John Irwin, Michelle Loukotka, Ron Dechert, Julie Rhodes, Steve Darr (invited)
Absent: Pastor John Kennedy

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 pm

Minutes of the 11/12/2019 meeting were accepted with this correction. Replace **Old Business item e.** with: Facilities approved Julie's suggestion to allow the directors and assistants of AAYC to use up to six places in our parking lot when they are in Milwaukee 2/14-16/2020 and Detroit 3/11-15/2020 for concerts.

FINANCIAL REPORTS:

The percentage of our budget items used to date are in line with having completed six months of the current budget year.

OLD BUSINESS:

- a. The information received from John Samford regarding Facility Team's responsibility at the parsonage is being used to develop a line item of M&R costs at the parsonage for use in the 6/2020-6/2021 budget.
- b. AllStar started the installation of additional cameras for building security today; they anticipate finishing tomorrow [December 12].
- c. Ann Arbor Door Systems replaced the operating system for the garage-door opener at the parsonage. Our original information that it was installed 12/21/05 was incorrect. The new door installed at that time was connected to the old operator.
- d. Butcher and Butcher returned [11/22/2019] to complete the work as contracted. Mike will send a report with recommendations for additional work [some on the copper areas] that needs to be done by Grunwell-Cashero.
- e. Ken Cook has not repaired the disposal in the main kitchen yet.
- f. A new sign for the "Men's room" in the 5th Avenue hall has been ordered. This will identify that it is a gender-neutral, family and handicap-accessible restroom.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Sunday, January 12, 2020 from 12 noon to 4:00 pm, staff from Renew Salon will be in the FH to provide hair cuts for low-income and homeless individuals. The salon will handle a large part of the publicity with M-Live, Saline Reporter, etc. They will also work with local companies and individuals to provide care packages of personal-care products. Julie is coordinating for BUCC.
- b. The exhaust fan that services the 1966 addition lost a blade; it is original equipment and parts are not longer available. We have requested Finance to make undesignated funds in the amount of \$3355.00 available for this repair.
- c. Ron will advise LC that Facilities wishes to have refurbishment of the Lounge be moved to the top of the priorities for future projects.
- d. A workday will be scheduled for February 22, 2020. All the filters in the AC units need to be changed; a decision will be made prior to this about where to move the Archive materials and the Admin filing—either classroom # or the Sunday School room next to the Art Room.

- Unnecessary items will be removed and the room repurposed. We also have old dehumidifiers and old light tubes to be disposed of.
- e. There is an area of the wall across from the door to the women's restroom in the FH where the paint is peeling. It is not apparent whether the water is coming from the foundation [Payeur stopped the foundation repair in this area] or if it is from somewhere else. Steve Darr will do some exploration tomorrow.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm.

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, January 14th at 4:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Michelle Loukotka

EDUCATION MINISTRY TEAM MINUTES
December 4, 2019

Present: Eileen Koprowski-chair, Jan Eadie, Nancy Pieske, Karen Samford, Jane Schmerberg

We started by wrapping Christmas ornaments for the youth. Thanks to Jan for ordering them.

Mission Projects –

Easy Water for Everyone – We will start this project at the beginning of Lent. Nancy will come up with a model of the dialyzer filter.

Habitat of Genesee County - Lily will contact them to see if they have something like the house shaped boxes we used to collect for them last year.

Stone soup – We hope to do this on Feb 23 which is a confirmation Sunday.
The Sunday School class will make posters in January.

Cookies for St. Patrick's Day - Tentatively we will make and sell cookies on March 15.

Christmas Program – December 15th

The Saturday, December 14th practice is changed to 11:00 a.m. Lily will order pizza, Jane will bring veggies and cookies. Eileen will bring drinks. Nancy will make 4-5 halos for the play.

Sunday School Curriculum – Lily will invite Sarah Herwick to our January meeting to tell us about the curriculum they are using at the church where she is working.

Miscellaneous –

Jan will have all these activities added to the Church calendar.

Mr. Rogers Movie - Mary Jean Raab, has seen the most recent Mr. Rogers movie with Tom Hanks and would like us to consider having a movie night, once it is released on Netflix. We could have it on a youth group night, perhaps for Confirmation class, if it is available prior to the end of Confirmation. We will revisit this in January.

Next meeting is 6:30, January 8th.

Submitted by Karen Samford

WORSHIP MINISTRY TEAM
Minutes, December 9, 2019

Present: Caroline Ashenfelter, Harriette Ehnis, David Hahn, Pastor John Kennedy, Gary Rogers, John Samford, Pastor Lily Tinker Fortel, and Tom Zieseemer

Absent: Jennifer Vasquez

Gary offered a prayer to begin the meeting.

Minutes of the previous meeting were accepted without change.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Review of the Living Nativity: Tom reported that 51 volunteers assisted in making the event successful. Pastor John shared his personal interaction with attendees who were moved by the experience. There was a consensus that we should plan for the Living Nativity on December 4, 2020. Tom has e-mailed the animal handler with our request.

Suggestions for 2020:

- (1) acquire a search light
- (2) expand advertising through social media
- (3) request funding from Outreach Ministry to support event
- (4) request advertising plan from Welcome Ministry Team
- (5) perform program 3 times only

NEW BUSINESS

A. Upcoming Christmas Eve Services were reviewed. Essentially, we are using the same format as last year. David confirmed the acquisition of the strings and solid brass. Harriette confirmed the harpist for the 11 pm service. E.J. Vasquez is to be asked to play the guitar for "Silent Night" at the 5:00 service. It was brought to our attention that the solid brass group is increasing their fee after Christmas. This will be discussed at a future meeting. The question was then raised regarding the singing of a verse of "Silent Night" in German. This is a tradition that the group chose to honor. Tom asked David to sketch out the sanctuary floor plan/setup for the 7:30 Christmas Eve service. This will allow others to assist in an accurate setup. Edgar Vasquez will handle the sound board for the 5 pm service. Jim Stadel will work the sound board for the 7:30 pm service. Either Kurt Schmerberg or Caroline Ashenfelter will "cover" the 11 pm. service. The church will remain open from 3 pm Christmas Eve. until after the 11 pm service. Pastor John said that he would "lock up" at that time.

B. Pastor Lily presented a video from Union Theological Seminary related to creative worship. She then facilitated a discussion of the teams' thoughts and reactions to the video. Key points of the discussion ensued:

- (1) sometimes ritual and tradition inhibit us
- (2) give each other permission to explore boundaries
- (3) worship should be done with intention whether it be traditional or innovative.
- (4) music, namely hymns, could be done with screens vs. hymnals
 - (a) words to hymns could be printed in bulletin vs. hymnals

(5) reaffirmed that communion by intinction vs. communion in the pews is a change that has been embraced.

C. David presented his views on “branding” for BUCC. He also expressed the importance of using social media to get BUCC recognized more widely. The group then affirmed that we should move forward to experiment with intention. This will be discussed at the January 13th meeting.

Meeting closed with the Lord’s Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Harriette Ehnis

MEMBER CARE MEETING

12/11/19

3:30 pm

Attendees: Jenny Foster, Judy Coucouvanis, Sue Buday, Mary Jean Raab, Julie Seitz

1. We used the meeting time to write 20 cards to members and their families who lost a loved one this year. We included a poem "My First Year in Heaven."
2. We decided to purchase Christmas cookies though Benny's Bakery in Saline to distribute to members at EVH, Redies and Brecon. We will hand them out during the BUCC caroling event on 12/20/19 at 6:30pm. Anyone from our group that can attend is encouraged to do so. Jenny will coordinate with Cress Slotten on which members we will visit for the event.
3. Judy reported that Leadership wants each ministry team to identify 1 - 2 items from the congregational survey that they can work on as a goal for 2020. Judy forwarded the final survey results to our team. Everyone should reflect on each response and whether the specific statement can/should be addressed through our ministry team. Leadership Council may ask us for our feedback, thoughts, and any actionable items/plans we identify. We plan to discuss this at our January meeting.
4. We decided to compile our report to Leadership with recommendations for removing inactive members from the membership rolls. Jenny will draft a letter with member names for the team to review before sending it to Leadership.

Next Meeting: January 29, 2020 3:30 pm

Bethlehem United Church of Christ
YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY TEAM MINUTES
December 11, 2019

Present: Katie Rowan, Lily Tinker Fortel

Survey Response:

Lily will condense our thoughts and goals into a paragraph of key take aways to submit in time for the January Leadership Council meeting.

Ideas for 2020:

Young Adult: Lily would like to lead a class/book discussion for young adults and church leadership on the topic of engaging millennials.

Youth Group:

We discussed several ideas for youth group programming relating to our congregation's partnership with Food Gatherers.

Possibilities include:

Food Gatherers related video and discussion regarding local hunger issues prior to Feb. Carrot Way service day. This could happen after church during confirmation. This could be open to the congregation.

Food Movie Night. This could be an event hosted by Youth and possibly Outreach with pizza, a movie related to hunger issues, and discussion.

Assemble "Lunches with Love" and/or "Birthday Bags" for agencies and families served by Food Gatherers as outlined on the Gathering Goodness page of their website.

Our next meeting will be January 15, 1pm.

Submitted by Katie Rowan