

LEADERSHIP COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES: September 24, 2020 4:30 pm

Present: Ron Dechert, John Samford, Dindy Haab, Patricia Huibregtse, Pam Rutledge, Jim Rowan, Pastor Kennedy and Tim Authier 4:30 - 6:45 pm

- **Opening Prayer**
- **Approval of minutes** from 8/27/20 [Leadership Council meeting](#)
 - Minutes: Purpose, Format, Procedures, Confidentiality
Clarity and recommendation and confidentiality issues regarding personnel matters discussed. Pastor Kennedy led the discussion.
Intentionality - confidentiality about any personal matters.
Suggested 1 week be the limit for changes to the minutes.
Confidential items are noted by the Leadership council and Noted in the Minutes as:
Discussion of the matter and that's it.
 - Documents and sharing - some concerns about accessibility and Google intrusion
- **Old Business**
 - Update on Letter of Call to Pastor Lily Tinker Fortel - Pastor Kennedy and Ron provided an update to the Leadership Council.
 - Reopen discussion of [Convergence proposal](#)
 - From Leadership Council minutes of February 7, 2020:
“...evaluate further and possibly look into hiring Convergence at the beginning of our programming year in the fall of 2020.”
 - From BUCC Bylaws -- Leadership Council Roles & Responsibilities:
(LC) Shall, in consultation with the Pastor, engage in strategic planning for the future of the Church and, in collaboration with the various Ministry Teams, set the overall policy and direction of the Church.

Notes: Discussion about bringing Convergence in to help develop vision and plan - developed a proposal for a year's worth of help and a plan for this process. Convergence is used by many churches in the UCC. Cost was impetus for passing on this and to revisit in the fall. Covid has reduced interest in Convergence by others and travel costs may be reduced.

Cost is prohibitive to what they have to offer. What they have to offer may be helpful but, as an organization do we need this? Especially with the cost.

Can we target specific consultants? Use our skills strategically.

Challenging times but where things are now with the church is somewhat better. Sense of purpose to the church; get to the point of “here we are” and this is what we mean to each other. A shared vision - something we are building with one another. Leadership Council sets vision for the church in conjunction with the church body.

Suggestion: Do we want to revisit this as a later time?

o Pastoral Review

- Approval of [Time-Line](#)
- Approval of [procedure/material](#)
- Steps by [Thursday, 10/1/2020](#)
 - [Council takes Pastor Evaluation \(Form A\) survey](#)
 - [Council takes Church member self-reflection \(Form C\) survey](#)
 - [Pastor takes Pastor Evaluation \(Form A\) survey](#)
 - [Pastor takes Pastor Self Reflection \(Form B\)](#)
 - Time set for evaluation discussion with Pastor, Pres, VP
- Steps by [Monday, 10/5/2020](#)
 - Results tabulated by President/Vice President
 - Council discusses results without Pastor present, decides on Pastor discussion format (Zoom meeting 4:30)
- Step by [Saturday, 10/10/2020](#)
 - Council discussion summarized by Pres/VP for Pastor discussion
 - Step by [Saturday, 10/31/2020](#)
 - Pres/VP hold discussion with Pastor before 11/1/2020

Notes: President Samford provided a review of the timeline & notes the process for the first steps. Process of the review and discussions explaining what happens. The timeline is to be followed and move forward.

Discussion of the date for the results review by the Leadership Council - Approval of Tuesday, 10/6/20 from 4:30 - 5:30 p.m..

Use of Survey Monkey for the evaluation tools. President Samford will resend the Survey to the Leadership Council for the review.

o Parking Rental

- Historically have had authorization to rent up to [7 spaces](#).
- Currently rented 3 “regular” (daytime) spaces & 1 24/7 space @ \$150/month
- Other interest in 24/7 expressed, for varying periods of time
- Due to less need for church parking, more spaces available
- Need spaces for Pastor, staff, COPD & GroundCover “customers”
- Could expand beyond 7 spaces, e.g. alongside house
- Parish Administrator offered advertising: signs, Facebook, Craig’sList
- Need to offset loss of other rental income

Notes: Why can’t we open up more parking allotments for rental?

Currently we are at 2 spots made available for rental with 1 taken. Question: is the agreement month to month for 24 hour rental? Yes, that’s the idea. Makes sense for when things change and we want the parking spots returned.

How many do we increase it to? Proposal - 7 spaces for 24 hour parking. Even looking at moving to 12 spaces.

Proposal for going back to the original 7 and if there's more interest bring it back to Leadership and we can consider it.

Concern about monitoring the parking situation - especially if there's advertising about church parking. Discussion about monitoring parking.

Football Saturdays returning & potential tailgating - 24/7 parking will provide funding greater than Saturdays. But tailgating parking should still be allotted.

Use of historical 7 spots is the plan.

Leadership reached consensus for this plan.

- **New Business**

- **1)** Review of recommended changes to evaluation forms received previously from our ministry teams. I will try to make drafts to send to LC before Thursday mtg. **Notes: See Above**
- **2)** Request from Facilities that Leadership provide guidance pertaining to cleaning/ disinfection procedures and responsibility.

Notes: Discussion about the governor's restrictions and who is responsible for the cleaning/disinfection? Renters are to abide by the agreement. BUCC provides hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes. Before the next group, someone would have to come in and fog the gym prior to the next group. Facilities take care of hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes. Burden of mitigation is not as onerous as Facilities were concerned about.

Ron shared he would take care of the fogging gym during his time when in with the Nurses. Concern expressed about the policy being followed - if in the building you wear a mask. Absolutely no exceptions to this. Request made to ensure enforcement of the mask wearing rules. Idea of submitting to our communications about the processes we are taking, the work we are doing. Sharing with the church, Ron suggested to write it and send to President Samford for review.

Segued to a review of the processes for churches who are having in-person attendance is shared detailing how they are conducting services and working to provide a safe environment. Plus churches are not "prosecuted" for in person attendance in the state order.

Go ahead and continue with the rental - but be clear about the agreement, and mitigation process to be followed.

- **3) Ron would like to propose that Leadership work with Finance to develop a 5 year spending plan.**

Notes: Sustainability is a concern. Ron shared his concerns in regard to the budgetary process. Proposal of a 0 deficit budget.

Reports from Ministry Teams liaisons—anything to which to call Council’s attention
Member Care - Birthday list question: can birthdays be included in the directory - discussion of privacy and internet security. Concern about privacy.

Report from Pastor John

- **Pastoral to do list from Leadership:** Form new Pastoral Relations Committee, Apply for Sabbatical grant, Fill out surveys.

Notes: Pastor Kennedy shared his experience of the church growing as a community. The teams and their efforts and engagement are helpful and hopeful indicators of where we are. Shared about people joining and discussions/interactions he’s having. Emphasis on connection and sanctuary.

Strategic planning - to come back to this, what questions we need to ask, goals of the church. Shared his appreciations for those who’ve helped and supported the church along the way.

FINANCE MINISTRY TEAM
September 10, 2020

Finance Ministry Team: Karen Samford-Chair, Tom Krell, Edgar Vasquez, Jim Rowan-Leadership Council Representative and Pastor John Kennedy

Michigan Covid Grants – We did not get the “Small Business Restart Program” grant. We have not heard yet about the “Work Place Safety” grant.

Roof Mortar Project – We have about \$6,000-\$8,000 in plaster and paint work remaining. The total will still be under the \$60,000 approved by the Congregation.

Foundation Issues – The wall in the basement, west of where the foundation repair stopped may need to be repaired. The Facilities team is investigating what is actually causing the water issues.

Income and Expense – The first quarter giving is on track. Rental income is down. The Gym is now available, however there are issues with cleaning. Nursing is renting the Lounge in addition to the Fellowship Hall.

Bank Reconciliation – Tom reported there two outstanding checks to musicians and Betty Clark has contacted David Hahn to look into these.

We spent the remainder of the meeting planning for the “Report Out” to the congregation on September 20th.

The meeting was closed with the Lord’s Prayer.

The next meeting will be October 8, 2020 at 7:00 pm

Submitted by Karen Samford

FACILITIES MINISTRY TEAM - BUCC

Meeting Minutes of 09/08/2020

Present: Tom Ziesemer, John Irwin, Michelle Loukotka, Ron Dechert, Julie Rhodes

Absent: Pastor John Kennedy

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 pm.

The minutes of the 08/11/2020 meeting were approved as printed.

FINANCIAL REPORTS:

- a. M&R is the only area of the budget that has been reduced to below the 30% of the budget for this year. Emergency Repairs will be charged for Roto Rooters work on the downspout at the 4th Avenue canopy entrance. Charges for A/C repairs in the office will be moved from M&R to funds remaining in the Heating & A/C improvement fund. John I. suggested we look into the water charges for the church; they have not shown any reduction even after we fixed a number of leaks, the building use is a fraction of the norm, and we have not been used the sprinkler system this summer.
- b. The standard charges were made to the McKay funds this month. There were no charges against the unbudgeted funds.

OLD BUSINESS:

- a. Payeur did adjust their bid for the foundation work on the SW side of the building. There is still a substantial difference in their bid and the one from Davis. While both now reflect work on just the portion from Payeur's previous work to the front of the building, Payeur would hook connect the water draining in that area to the existing sump pump. The bid from Davis is only to waterproof the wall; there is nothing to redirect the water that will continue to drain there. Steve will look for someone to make a third bid.
- b. Jim Stadel installed the kick plates on the exterior sanctuary doors. We will reassess the appearance next year.
- c. Koch & White inspected the furnace and water heater in the 4th Avenue parsonage; both need to be replaced. K&W will give us a bid. Two more bids will be sought.
- d. The final invoice from GC was \$48,240.00. This is \$11,760.00 below what the congregation authorized. That remaining funds will be used for the plaster repair and painting made necessary by the roof problems; this was part of the original scope.
- e. We have a new custodian from Corporate Cleaning working in the building. Julie reported that he needs a lot of direction but that he does follow the direction given. We will continue to monitor this with the thought of possibly changing companies.
- f. LC approved rental of the gym following the Governor's latest edict. After discussing what would be involved in time by staff and the Facilities Team, we asked Ron to put this before LC again and ask them to address these logistical questions

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. We are getting bids for the plaster repair and painting that needs to be done to repair water damage in the sanctuary and the wall outside the gym.
- b. Water was found on the floor in the closed women's restroom in the FH. The source was the PVC condensation pipe; Ken Cook adjusted that pipe for direct drainage.
- c. We have rented two more parking spaces on the north side of the building. These will be 24/7 parking for two UofM students; one through November, the other through April.
- d. The ventilation fan for the 1965 addition has been tripping the circuit breaker frequently; Jim Stadel has checked and reset it. Julie requested that Vedder's check it but that has not happened in the two weeks since the request.
- e. The drain for the downspouts on the porch of the 1933 addition was clogged. Roto Rooter cleared as much of the blockage as they were able to but there is still some obstruction at the elbow. It seems to be handling water from the recent heavy rainfall. There is also an area at the edge of the roof above this porch where water cascades over the top. We will ask B&B to do an inspection this fall to see if the cause can be determined.
- f. The ceiling fan in the sanctuary was cleaned by Jim Stadel, John Irwin and Jessie Wilcox.
- g. Daily Rain will winterize the sprinkler system on September 28th.
- h. A third hardwire internet connection has been added in the FH; Julie has worked with Comcast to improve the technology connections in the building.

ESSENTIAL MAINTENANCE TASKS FOR JUNE

- a. Change filters in heating/air conditioning units in the sanctuary
- b. Clean air conditioning filters in lounge, chapel, cinema room, and classroom E
- c. Floor buffing: 1st & 2nd floor halls, choir and youth room, FH
- d. Carpet cleaning
- e. Schedule roof inspection by B&B for September 2020—we will do this as noted in item e. of New Business.

The meeting adjourned at 4:20 pm.

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, October 13th at 3:00pm.

Respectively submitted,
Michelle Loukotka

EDUCATION MINISTRY TEAM

September 2 and 22, 2020

Present: Eileen Koprowski-Chair, Jan Eadie, Julie Feldkamp, Nancy Pieske, Karen Samford, Jane Schmerberg, and Pastor Lily Tinker Fortel

VBS: Vacation Bible School – was held after worship service, each of the 5 Sundays in August. Supplies were sent out early each week. Participation was lower than we had hoped for. A couple Confirmands joined to help and were engaged in singing.

Virtual Sunday School –

Lily sent surveys to the families to see what would work for them. We will decide on the format of Sunday School when the surveys are returned.

Illustrated Ministries has a 12 week program on the Beatitudes. The Illustrated curriculum was used for Vacation Bible School and was easy to tie into the service, having kids participate. The Whole people of God curriculum doesn't work as well in an online platform.

Kelsey suggested having the Confirmands being pen pals with one of the younger kids.

Lily suggested Teachers could help with the Children's Moment, or maybe have a couple people read the children's version of the Bible story for parents to play some time during the week.

On September 22, after receiving the surveys we came up with the following:

Live Zoom Sunday school will be held on the second Sunday of the month from 11:00 to 11:30.

Kelsey will schedule 1-on-1 meetings with kids for whom that would work better.

Nancy and Jan will send a monthly craft package based on the curriculum during the first or second week of the month so it arrives in time for the second Sunday Zoom session.

Postcards with notes of encouragement will be sent twice a month: Jane (second week) and Jan (fourth week). Lily will get card stock for post cards if needed.

Kelsey will work on a monthly "Bethlehem Kids" EMT Newsletter to be mailed with the Illustrated Ministry coloring pages the week before the first Sunday.

To engage the kids in the Sunday Service, we will work to record weekly Bible Story and/or Children's Moment. Kelsey, Jane, Julie and Eileen are willing to help with this. We'll also work to engage more children/families in liturgy, etc.

Pen Pals - Kelsey and Lily will work on assigning kids who wish for Pen Pals with youth and others.

Lily will order the curriculum from Illustrated Ministries \$130 for Beatitudes – \$13 for coloring pages.

October 11th will be Sunday School Kickoff. We will ask the kids/families to provide pictures of school space or video of the school experience. The Youth group will most likely be willing to share their school experience. Zoom Sunday school will be held from 11am to 11:30 am

October 11th is also CROP Walk – it will be completely virtual.

October 18th will be Blessing of the Pets.

October 25th will be Halloween Julie and Eileen will send Halloween craft/candy packages the week of the 19th.

Easy water for Everyone – we will have a month long push after Crop Walk.

Eileen noted that in her messages she will use “Fall VBS” to refer to Virtual Sunday School

Next meeting 7:00, Oct 6 (changed to Oct 13)

Submitted by Karen Samford

WORSHIP MINISTRY TEAM

Minutes

Sept 15, 2020

1. Opening Prayer John Samford

2. Old Business
 - a. Review/Acceptance of 8/25 Minutes

 - b. Reporting of online usage stats: update on numbers being reported
Gwen will be able to find the statistics on Facebook going forward and **John S. will follow-up with her on the key stats to report regularly.**

 - c. Update from Re-opening Task Force
 - i. Confirming limits to space usage (10 or fewer)
 - ii. Baptism/Confirmation sacraments
Pastor John to follow up with families to find out how they would like to proceed.
 - iii. Consultation with legal counsel and insurance company on liability if anyone contracts COVID-19 as a result of using our facilities.
We will not require waivers for facility use. Gym use could be allowed with appropriate mitigation steps. New requests for gym rental will go to Facilities Team and Leadership Council to make those decisions. **Julie will be contacting our insurance carrier to get some answers on this question about liability.** Need to determine what the protocols will be and ensure they are followed. If any requests for a space that is not already opened for use, then the request will go to Leadership Council.

3. New Business
 - a. Leadership Council Update John Samford
Gym use/rental to be allowed again. Quarterly budget presentation to congregation on Sept 20. Pastor John reports that we're on track with our budget, with income rentals down but pledges higher than expected. Some donations received recently for radio fund. Recent bequest of \$10,700 to the church.

 - b. Request for dedication of new cross in cemetery Pastor John
Sue Buday to contact Pastor John about what they are hoping for. Likely to incorporate a liturgy, prayer, possibly a member of the Cemetery team, for a recorded segment and we'll incorporate into a future service.

- c. Blessing of the Animals
 Oct 4: Gathering pictures; **announcement in 9/20 and 9/27 services**, in Bulletin. Hymns inclusive of all God's creatures. Video segments from kids/families about the importance of animals in their lives. Theme about the importance of all God's creatures. Pictures emailed to David. Discuss details on Tues 9/22 in Creative Planning mtg..
- d. Totenfest (Nov 1, 2020) Pastors, Jennifer
- i. Some way to incorporate a recording from cross dedication?
 - ii. Need pics and dates of birth/death from last 12 months (church members or immediate family members)
 We need to put a call out for photos/info that will be shared. Pastor John to discuss with Gwen about gathering this info. David needs to be able to map names/info with the picture. Privacy issues with including full names. Be sure that contributors are aware that this will be part of a service posted on Facebook and YouTube; "our family gives permission for this to be included in the public video service" or "our family gives permission for this to be included in the bulletin only."
churchoffice@bethlehem-ucc.org DEADLINE WED OCT 21
 - iii. Record in the sanctuary with table full of candles
 Caroline volunteered to help with her mom to set up the table of candles, ring a bell; Pastors to read the names and ring the bell; camera focused on the candles. How much time to allow for reading names and reflecting on the photo. Pastors to read the names. David to make the recording. Caroline to send email to coordinate day/time.
 - iv. Following Communion, encourage people to light a candle in honor of passing of their loved ones
 - v. Reminder to use Planning Center and document estimated times for each segments of the service.
 - vi. Announcements in services leading up to Nov 1: invitation to contribute names/photos to start 4 weeks before deadline; Oct 26 invitation to have a candle available for the Nov 1 service to remember their loved ones.
- e. Holiday celebrations (Thanksgiving & Christmas) Pastors, Jennifer
- i. Sunday prior to Thanksgiving will have a theme of Giving Thanks, traditional hymns
 - ii. Live Nativity: create something new or cancel?
 Kerrytown's Kindfest and Main St Midnight Madness have been cancelled. A2 Youth Chorale will not be having rehearsal either. Decision made to cancel Live Nativity for 2020 and hope to return in 2021.
 - iii. Advent
 Opportunity to enter the sanctuary (by appt/reservation) for meditation with some decoration. Families to record a video lighting the advent

candles with the readings. Encourage everyone else to have an advent wreath at home with easy DIY instructions.

iv. Christmas Eve

f. Creative Worship Planning Update

Jennifer

- i. Possibility of new lectionary source known as “Narrative Lectionary”, accessed on www.workingpreacher.org
- ii. Looking for contributors for birthday videos (Jenny Foster)

g. Radio Fund

Team

- i. Reaching our people who rely on the radio service; how to know who relies on the service?
- ii. John’s item in the Visitor; recorded video to encourage contributions
- iii. Adding notes to website and email blast: “radio service funded by donations...”
- iv. Any other way to help them access the service?

4. Closing with Lord’s Prayer

Next Meeting: October 20, 2020

MEMBER CARE MEETING 9/23/20

Attendees: Judy Coucouvanis, Jenny Foster, Dindy Haab, Mary Jean Raab, Julie Seitz
Guest: Ron Dechert

New Business:

Update on Reopening the Church

Ron Dechert joined our conference call to share information from the COVID task force about the status of reopening the church. Even though some churches are allowing in person worship, our church leadership decided to continue with virtual worship. The COVID task force has acquired sanitizing equipment and has a plan ready to implement once it is decided that in person worship and activities can resume. Currently, the church office, sanctuary and fellowship hall are open for small gatherings. Small groups (10 or less people) could start meeting at the church. They would need to request permission from the Leadership Council. Ron is currently working on a document to outline the process to request meeting space and it will be published in The October Visitor. Church staff, Ground Cover and UM nurses are currently using space in the building. The church office does not have consistent hours at this time. It is best to contact Julie Rhodes to arrange a visit, when necessary.

Old Business:

Member Care Moment Birthday Announcements

Weekly birthday wishes are being recorded for the service. Jenny, Judy and Carrie and Steve S have recorded the messages. Lily provided some names of other youth are interested in helping to make the videos. Jenny reached out to them but has not received any response yet. Jenny asked if others were interested or if they might recommend someone else to help. Judy agreed to make the video for this week's service. We discussed the order of the names read and Mary Jean suggested we read them alphabetically instead of date order. The group agreed to do that. Mary Jean asked whether birthdates without the birth year, could be added to the church directory. The group also wondered whether last names could be read during the member care moment or if we needed to continue reading names with the last name initial only. Dindy agreed to pose the questions at the next Leadership meeting. *Dindy then reported that Leadership felt that, especially since the Membership Directory is sent to Bethlehem members over the internet, it is in the best interest of safety and security that birthday dates should not be included in the directory. And for the same reason, last names should not be included in the birthday announcement on Sunday. It was discussed that IF permission was obtained for individual members, last names could be included for those members only.*

Care Cards

Sue B. continues to send cards to members at the request of Jenny. If anyone knows of a member in need of a care card, let Jenny know and she will pass the information on to Sue. We discussed several members that we would like to send card to at this time. Jenny will contact Sue to send the cards.

We also identified a few members we felt needed to be contacted due to health concerns or other reasons. Dindy, Mary Jean and Jenny volunteered to make those calls and report back to the group. Judy also suggested that we may want to check in with these members on whether they would like to have a Stephens Minister contact them. Jenny will check with Pastor Kennedy on this idea.

Jenny asked everyone to share names of other members who might like to help with another round of member check-in calls. We would like to target the members who are 55 - 64 years old.

Julie suggested that we start compiling list of members for our mailing of the First Christmas in Heaven letter. Jenny mentioned that the church office is currently compiling list of names for the Totenfest service and we should be able to get the list from the office.

Next meeting October 28, 2020.

Bethlehem United Church of Christ
YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY TEAM MINUTES
September 16, 2020

Phone Meeting: Katie Rowan, Lily Tinker Fortel

Reimagining Youth Group

Lily surveyed the youth to see what types of activities they would feel comfortable with and what meeting time would be best. Based on the four responses that were received, Sunday afternoons was chosen as the meeting time. Youth appear to be comfortable with a mix of zoom and in person format. A tentative plan was set for Oct:

Week 1 - One hour zoom

Week 2 - 15 minute zoom

Week 3 - Virtual game night

Week 4 - Halloween Outing

Some of the youth very much wanted to have some volunteer opportunities. One idea which will be pursued came from Kelsi to have the older youth be pen pals with the younger kids.

We may revisit the schedule once school is well underway and the youth are more settled into their routines.

Submitted by Katie Rowan, Chair