

**Leadership Board Meeting Minutes**  
**First United Methodist Church of Los Alamos, NM**  
**September 26, 2023**

**In Attendance:** Don Casperson, Linda Collier, Valerie Collins, Lynn Kluegel, Carol Mead, Nathaniel Morgan, Rev. John Nash, Paromeeta Nag, Phillip Ortega, Julie Risch, Kathy Siebe, Camille Wescott.

**Absent:** Kim Granzow

**Opening Prayer** - Kathy Siebe

**1. Spiritual Formation; Equipping Leadership**

- a. Spiritual Disciplines people are working on were shared by several people.

**2. Engagement with congregation**

- a. Skate program
  - i. There's been no Skating Program for the last 3 years.
  - ii. Currently Los Alamos County is using all of the skates for a skating program at the ice rink.
  - iii. Don C. currently has no plan to start a new skating program.
  - iv. The soda machine is being used regularly so there's about \$300 in profits.
- b. Opportunity Expo.
  - i. Two in-person Opportunity Expos were held.
    - 1. Mada Jones volunteered to chair the 75th anniversary committee.
    - 2. Other people shared ideas without making a commitment to work on the goals.
  - ii. There was one online Expo.
    - 1. Only one person attended and had difficulty signing in.
  - iii. Phillip will write up information from the Expos.
- c. Church Charge Conference for FUMC-LA is October 28, 11:00 a.m.
  - i. The UMC-White Rock minister asked if the date can be changed as we were going to do a combined charge conference with UMC-White Rock.
    - 1. Due to Pastor John attending a retreat, leading charge conferences for other churches and his vacation in October and November, the date will not be changed.
    - 2. FUMC – LA and WR UMC will do their charge conference separately
  - ii. A local restaurant will be chosen where those attending may have lunch together after the charge conference with everyone responsible for his/her own meal.
- d. Bishop Robert Schnase's email indicated Rev. Ross Whiteaker will be the superintendent of the Albuquerque District so he will be our new District Superintendent starting Nov. 1, 2023.
  - i. There is no news on Mr. Randall or who will be provost.
- e. Nominations Committee
  - i. Pastor John asked Leadership Board members to indicate whether they are going to continue serving on the board in 2024.
  - ii. The Nominations team will meet Sunday, October 1, after church to discuss filling any vacancies.

**3. Approval of minutes**

- a. **Motion:** Camille moved and Julie seconded that the minutes be approved as written. Motion passed.

**4. Review Financial report**

- a. Expenses – Income Comparisons:
  - i. July 2023 expenses were \$1374 more than income.
  - ii. August 2023 expenses were \$13,031 more than income.
  - iii. Income in 2023 for August is \$12,301 less than in July.

- iv. The annual 2023 income is \$27,232 less compared to the same time in 2022 as of the August financial report.
  - 1. Paromeeta will evaluate the differences and effects on the balance.
- b. Bookkeeping is up to date as of August 2023.
  - i. Giving statements will be prepared this week and will go out next week.
- c. Parsonage Funds
  - i. Line 200406 – Parsonage Fund The balance is not up to date as a new dryer was recently purchased and the cost has not been subtracted yet.
  - ii. Line 570105 – Parsonage Repairs & Utilities is used only for the parsonage.
    - 1. There is nothing at the parsonage that requires immediate attention but several items will need to be addressed in the future.
- d. There appears to be 2 accounts with LANL set up with automatic deposit.
  - i. Deposits from LANL for \$17,000 were recently made so is not shown in the financial report.
  - ii. It appears that we have not received payments on one of the accounts which could be as high as \$20,000.
  - iii. More research is being done. Paromeeta will be discussing the situation with LANL.
- e. Special funds such as worship, youth, maintenance, etc. shows the budgeted balance decrease when the money has been used.
  - i. Example: when sprinklers were put in for \$14,000 the financial report appears to show there was over spending but the money was already budgeted thus not spent over what was available.
- f. The Contingency Fund consists of money from line items that was not spent by the end of the year.
- g. Endowment Fund
  - i. Endowment team: Sheila Molony – chairperson, Tom Ricketts, Dennis Gill.
  - ii. Ex officio members: Pastor John, Lynn Kluegel, Kim Granzow.
  - iii. The purpose of the Endowment Fund is to accumulate enough money through donations and earned interest that the interest produced is eventually sufficient to be used for special projects.
  - iv. The Endowment fund is currently held by the TMF in a revolving loan fund.
    - 1. TMF also holds the church mortgage.
    - 2. The team is working on an investment policy in order to receive a better rate of interest.
      - a. If the endowment fund is removed from TMF the church could still apply for another loan if needed.
  - v. The Endowment team is working on the required reports for the Charge Conference.
  - vi. **Motion 1** made by the Endowment Committee: Use the \$12,245 currently under account 200001 – Due to Capital Campaign and send it to Texas Methodist Foundation (TMF) for debt relief (on the mortgage). Motion passed.
    - 1. Account 200001 – Due to Capital Campaign was for past work on the roof.
      - a. The account still has \$12,245 after the roof was paid for.
      - b. There are no expected major expenditures for the HVAC system, roof or sprinkler system expected in the next 5 years.
      - c. Using this money toward the mortgage would bring the balance of the Capital Campaign to zero.
    - 2. As of July 2023 the mortgage has \$215,000 left to be paid over the next 6 years
      - a. The mortgage has a variable interest rate.
      - b. The church does not get a tax advantage by paying off the mortgage slowly.
      - c. We pay around \$36,000 a year on the mortgage.
    - 3. A Capital Campaign is being considered as part of the Stewardship Campaign this fall.

- a. A few individuals may be asked if they would be part of a group whose total donation would equal the \$12,245.
  - b. The rest of the congregation would also be asked as a group to match the \$12,245.
  - c. The \$36,735 from these 3 sources could take 1 year off the mortgage opening the possibility of paying the mortgage off by the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2026.
- 4. The Stewardship Campaign will address the increasing financial concerns and support for the church goals.
- vii. **Motion 2** made by the Endowment Committee: Use the \$15,844.53 Currently under account 200300 – Memorial Funds in the following way: \$5,000 transferred to the endowment fund, but to be used for the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration in 2026; \$5,000 to be transferred to the parsonage fund (200406) for parsonage work/improvements; the remainder, \$5,844.53, go to the Texas Methodist foundation for debt relief. Motion passed.
  - 1. Margaret Gibson, who writes the thank you cards for gifts to the Memorial fund, has been consulted and notes that none of the donations have a specific designation.
  - 2. In the future, if necessary, the church may use 5% of the undesignated endowment principle as a one-time distribution for a necessary expense.
  - 3. All future Memorial gifts will go into the Endowment Fund.

## 5. Ark Update

- a. A gastrointestinal illness has been running through the Ark.
  - i. 10-15 children/day are being sent home due to having diarrhea; which is required by state health law.
  - ii. The NM State Health Department visited the Ark because so many children have tested positive for several issues.
    - 1. The NM Health Dept. advised closing the Ark for 2 days to do a deep cleaning and keep ill children away from the healthy ones in order to interrupt the spread of the disease.
      - a. The Ark and Health Department finally agreed to close the Ark for half a day which occurred Tuesday morning, September 26.
      - b. NM Health Dept. has indicated that the Ark should be at the end of the illness cycle fairly soon.
      - c. A deep cleaning was done.
      - d. The ECECD has been supportive of the Ark's procedures.
    - 2. The Health Department sent a gastrointestinal specialist and nurse to meet with parents to answer questions but only 1 parent attended the meeting.
  - iii. Numerous notices have been sent out to parents regarding this outbreak and State Health Department rules.
    - 1. The ultimate message was keep children home when they are sick even though it is inconvenient for parents.
    - 2. Parents are upset that their children are being sent home.
    - 3. Parents are posting negative comments on Facebook.
    - 4. 10 parents claim they were not told about the closure.
- b. FUMC-LA received information that an attorney will file a suit against the Ark and church for a family no longer affiliated with the Ark.
  - i. Pastor John has notified: the NM UMC Conference office, Bishop Robert Schnase, NM UMC Conference legal counsel, and the insurance company.
- c. Ark's original 2022 grant may be used for security.
  - i. Many parents are concerned about security, as is staff working alone before or after normal hours.

- ii. Bids were high for security measures.
- iii. The initial cost of \$10,200 will come from the Ark grant for door locks, intercom, and 150 key cards (more can be ordered).
- iv. Pastor John and Phillip have determined Phillip could do some of the work.
  - 1. Phillip has mapped out where authorized cameras and wiring would go in the rooms and hallways.
  - 2. Phillip will run the cables.
  - 3. Cameras will be put up in the rooms later.
- d. Ark Board passed a motion to approve Southwest Security to install new locks on the front and back door of the main hall.
  - i. The Ark would cover the entire expense.
  - ii. The locks would be activated by an RFD key card.
  - iii. There would be a camera and intercom at the front door.
    - 1. People who do not have a key card can contact Jen, Ark assistant director, or Julie, FUMC administrator, by intercom and then be buzzed in if appropriate.
  - iv. These doors will be locked during regular business hours, 7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
  - v. People can be given a key card for a certain time period - Ark parents could have a card for 7:30am -5:30 pm
  - vi. A person could have a key card for a specific day and time period for an activity or event.
  - vii. The door locks can be programed to be unlocked during specific hours, such as for scout meetings, music practices, etc.
  - viii. If someone forgets to turn in their card, it can be deactivated.
  - ix. **Motion:** Camille moved and Nathaniel seconded that we accept the Ark Board’s motion to approve and pay Southwest Security to install new locks on the front and back door of the main hall. Motion passed.

## 6. Goal Review; Accountability Conversations

- a. Fall board retreat
  - i. There are no Saturday dates available in November.
  - ii. Tuesday, November 7, 2023 from 6:00 – 7:30 p.m. was chosen as the retreat meeting time.
  - iii. The topics for discussion will be:
    - 1. Church goals and who wants to be involved with the various goals.
    - 2. Opportunity Expo results and comments
    - 3. Introduction of new Leadership Board members.

## 7. Discussion of Reports

- a. Lynn requested that everyone read the reports prior to the meeting then let her know ahead of time what extra information needs to be discussed so she can plan for an appropriate amount of time during the meeting.
- b. Disaffiliation of churches in the NM Conference
  - i. 7 more churches have chosen to disaffiliate.
  - ii. 1 other church is voting tonight.
  - iii. 2 more churches are voting in October.
  - iv. The bishop will call a special annual conference meeting to vote on the plan to disaffiliate the 10-11 churches requesting this.

## 8. Communications to Congregation

- a. Lynn will work with Julie on articles for the Midweek Newsletters.
- b. There will be a thank you to the Endowment team for the money they found in the budget that was not being used and for their effort in planning how it will be spent or invested to begin the endowment fund.

**Closing Prayer** – Lynn Kluegel brought a copy of Dag Hammerskjold’s prayer that was used in church which we said together.

**Reports Due:** Thursday, October 19, 2023, 5:00 p.m.

**Next Meeting:** Tuesday, October 24, 2023, 6:00 p.m.

**Leadership Board as SPRC  
September 26, 2023**

This meeting is for review of the recommendations for the pastor’s yearly salary and benefits for 2024.

1. Salary:
  - a. Pastor John’s current salary of \$81,689.30/year will stay the same in 2024.
    - i. If the church wants to change Pastor John’s salary a separate meeting will be required.
2. Benefits:
  - a. Pastor John receives 4 weeks of vacation/year through the conference but has not always taken all of it.
  - b. The health insurance offered through the church is BC/BS of Illinois.
    - i. In November during the Open Enrollment period the church will become responsible only for Pastor John’s health insurance.
    - ii. This year Linda Nash started working for UNM, which offers health insurance with better coverage. The rest of the Nash family will be covered through the UNM insurance program even though it will cost the family more.
  - c. Pastor John pays for cable connection and was being reimbursed at \$75/month.
    - i. Recommendation is to increase this benefit by \$50/month to \$125/month.
  - d. Reimbursable account is currently \$7,000/year.
    - i. Recommendation is to increase this account by \$1000/year.
3. **Motion:** Nathaniel moved and Linda seconded that a recommendation be made to the Charge Conference to maintain Pastor John’s salary at \$81,689.30; increase the benefit for cable by \$50/month and increase the reimbursable account by \$1000/year (reimbursable total will become \$8000/year) for a total increase in benefits of \$1600/year. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted by Kathy Siebe