

Leadership Board Meeting Minutes  
First United Methodist Church, Los Alamos, NM  
January 23, 2024

**In Attendance:** Jason Benkoski, Don Casperson, Linda Collier, Kim Granzow, Lynn Kluegel, Carol Mead, Rev. John Nash, Phillip Ortega, Julie Risch, Kathy Siebe, Camille Wescott.

**Absent:** Valerie Collins, Paromeeta Nag,

**Opening Prayer** – Kim

**1. Spiritual Disciplines**

- A. Pastor John noted that the new year offers an opportunity to choose a new spiritual discipline to study.
- B. Another option would be to choose a Lenten study since Lent starts early this year, February 14, 2024.
- C. Several people mentioned what they plan to work on.

**2. Finances**

A. Review Financial Report for January 2024

- 1. Total Revenues: \$67,993.74      approximately \$9,000 more than Jan. 2023
- 2. Total Expenses: \$38,928.11      approximately \$1,000 less than Jan. 2023
- 3. Line 40005 Missions and Local Outreach has not been closed out as it has not been processed. Consequently the 2023 books have not been closed out.
- 4. Line 57021 Indebtedness (mortgage) doesn't yet reflect the \$18,000 extra paid this fall toward the mortgage.
- 5. Accounts with no activity were zeroed out and no longer show on the balance sheet.
- 6. The Contingency fund was removed and any funds left from budgeted projects are listed under Line 300200 Retained Earnings
- 7. Page 3, YTD Actual (This Year) – Net Operating Total and Page 4, Fund Principal Excess Cash Received are the same amount.

B. The 2024 budget will be available at the February 2024 meeting.

C. IRS

- 1. IRs claims that during COVID, FUMC didn't pay 2022, 3rd quarter payroll taxes. The claim we owe the tax amount plus penalties.
- 2. IRS claims that other payments were made late and some were not made due to insufficient money in bank.
  - i. The payroll and taxes are regularly paid the same day by the FUMC bookkeeper.
- 3. At one point someone invented a new EIN # and attached the church's name and address.
  - i. The EIN number needs to be voided by an IRS agent.
- 4. Ruth Tribou, an accountant in Albuquerque, will be contacted to straighten out these problems.

**3. Approval of minutes – Motion:** Lynn moved and Camille second to accept the minutes as written. Motion **passed**.

**4. New Security System**

A. The security system is password protected.

- 1. Phillip (FUMC staff), Leigha and Jen (Ark director and assistant director) have access to the password.

B. Cameras

- 1. The 2<sup>nd</sup> week of January, Phillip and Rafael ran cables and installed cameras to all the classrooms, central education rooms, and placed 2 cameras in the halls.
- 2. The ceilings in the education area are clear of impediments so, there were few problems.
- 3. Cameras and cables will be installed in the other areas of the church the last week in February
  - i. This area may be more difficult as ceilings are not as empty.

C. The library and mid-high/Mission Kids rooms are the drop points.

- 1. All the cables start in these 2 rooms which each contain P.O.E. switches. (Power over Ethernet)

2. Each switch takes the signal (carried through Ethernet cables) from up to 16 cameras and packs them into 1 signal. Then it sends the new signals to the main station in the ark office which unpacks the signals back to the original 16 signals. It also sends electricity to the cameras, so the cameras don't have to be plugged into an outlet.
- D. The monitor is in the Ark office.
1. Twenty one days of recordings are potentially available but the amount of memory continues to shrink the more motion that is detected at which point a tag is added which takes up storage space.
  2. The pictures are clear.
  3. There is an option for 12 camera views on the screen at one time.
    - i. The view changes every 10 seconds.
  4. The security camera system is not connected to the internet.
    - i. Consequently, parents are unable to watch their children on the internet.
    - ii. The legality of parents watching a class from the monitor has not been researched.
  5. A policy needs to be written on how to handle parent requests or complaints about certain days.
    - i. Currently if parents have a concern, they may inform the staff who will view the section of concern to check for problems, download and store the section if necessary.
    - ii. Parents may contact their lawyer who may subpoena the required section of video.
  6. The parents support the increase in security and none have complained about the cameras.
  7. The state ECECD inspector who does random site inspections liked the security set-up and cameras.
- E. Doors took longer to connect to the system due to a problem obtaining parts and weather conditions.
1. 1/22/24 connections to the front door were installed.
  2. The morning of 1/23/24, use of the front door locks and security system with key fobs went live.
  3. The west doors of the main hall and education hall are not yet programmed to work with fobs so keys are used to open and lock them.
  4. Fellowship hall doors are not connected.
  5. The eventual plan is to not lock doors with a key.
- F. Procedures for entering the church:
1. During regularly occurring events such as worship, scout meeting, choir practice etc. the doors will be unlocked.
  2. Doors will unlock automatically on Sundays, at 8:00 a.m. and relock at 11:30 a.m.
  3. During the other days and after hours the doors will be locked.
  4. To open the door: tap the fob on the middle box on the right of the front door post, hear a click, open the door.
  5. To use the handicap door opener: tap the fob on the middle box on the right of the front door post, hear a click, push the handicap door opener, the door will open automatically.
  6. People without a fob: look on the top box, press the right lower button, someone in the office will check on the person and release the lock if appropriate for the door to be opened.
- G. Procedures for leaving the church:
1. Press the green exit button on the left side of the door, push the door open.
  2. Press the handicap door opener, the door will open automatically.
  3. If the fire alarm goes off, the door will open.
- H. Education for the congregation includes:
1. Wednesday, 1/24/24
    - i. Special email message describing how to use the key fob from Pastor John.
    - ii. Special email video of Pastor John demonstrating how to enter and leave the church under the new security system.
    - iii. Midweek News article about using the new key fob and green button.
    - iv. There is a sign on the door and adjacent window with directions on how to operate the system.
  2. Sunday, 1/28/24
    - i. The Sunday Bulletin will have information.
    - ii. Pastor John will comment during church announcements.

- iii. Julie will sign out key fobs after worship service.
- iv. During Programming night there will be an announcement.
- v. Information will be placed on the Programming night email, church website and Facebook page.
- 3. The Leadership Board members can help educate the congregation mostly by word of mouth. If we hear anything that needs clarification we are to speak up.
  - i. Stop myths, rumors, and gossip quickly.
  - ii. Walk people through the procedures.
  - iii. Educate how this system enhances access to the church compared to when a key was required.
- 4. Pastor John will talk with anyone with comments, concerns, or questions.

I. Key Fobs

- 1. Fobs can be attached to a key chain.
- 2. They have a chip like in a credit card so batteries are not required.
- 3. The only identifier on the fob is a number.
  - i. Julie records the number along with the name of the person to whom it is issued.
- 4. Fobs are available to church and Ark staff, members of the congregation, Ark parents.
  - i. Julie is distributing fobs Sunday after worship, 1/28/24.
    - 1. People may also pick one from her at the office.
    - 2. A family may share a fob or individuals may have their own.
- 5. There is a time stamp on the fobs which is usually set to work from 7:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. but the time can be adjusted as needed.
- 6. If a fob is lost it can be removed from circulation through its number; if later found it can be programmed again.
- 7. Staff can see that the doors are locked using the website.

J. Benefits of the new security system:

- 1. It provides greater safety and control of the building as we now have more expensive equipment.
- 2. Members of the congregation have greater access due to flexibility of time settings.
- 3. It will enhance the safety for Julie, Rafael, or anyone who is alone in the building or for groups working in the kitchen or other areas away from the doors where they won't see someone come in.
- 4. If something or someone comes in at odd hours and vandalizes, the monitors can see who was here and what happened.
- 5. The whole security system and all the fobs don't need to be collected and reprogrammed due to a lost key fob.
- 6. The original idea for the security system was Pastor John's. The Ark didn't just decide to put it in.
- 7. The Ark is covering the cost.
- 8. It is another obstacle for intruders to overcome thus giving those in the building a little more time to respond.

K. Potential Problems:

- 1. What happens if the power goes off? This will be researched.
- 2. Will piggybacking entry be allowed?
  - i. This will need additional consideration if there are potential safety issues at the Ark, church or in the community.
- 3. Since this is a new system, other problems may develop and will be addressed as they occur.

**5. Additional Information from Pastor John**

A. Ark

- 1. The last week in December 2023, training included an exercise in which they were led through a discussion of values.
  - i. They discussed the most important values of each individual then worked together to develop a set of values for the Ark.
  - ii. The Ark values are: respect, safety, family, teamwork, fun, play, engagement, patience.
    - 1. These values must be lived out and shared with others.
- 2. Parents like the changes made by the Ark staff.

3. The Ark and church staff received a \$2/hour raise.
  4. The fee/student was increased by 6%.
  5. A parent found out about the changes before it was made public; how is unknown.
- B. Insights into which churches disaffiliated from the United Methodist Church.
1. Those served by an ordained pastor (an Elder) were less likely to disaffiliate.
    - i. Churches with white male clergy, that weren't elders, were more likely to leave.
  2. 20-50% of those that disaffiliated joined the Global Methodist Church.
  3. Comparing the sizes of churches that stayed or left were about the same.
  4. The South Central Jurisdiction contains about 20% of the United Methodist population.
    - i. 27% of the UMC population that disaffiliated came from the South Central Jurisdiction.
- C. NM Conference
1. Bishop Schnase will lead 2 discussion meetings in February that are open to the public:
    - i. Thursday, February 8th at 6:00 pm MST at Central UMC-ABQ.
    - ii. Saturday, February 10th at 10:00 am MST at Western Hills UMC-El Paso.
    - iii. They will cover resolutions and other topics for the General Conference April, 2024 and decisions to be made at the July 2024, Jurisdictional Conference.
- D. Bishops
1. There will be one less Bishop as one is retiring.
  2. Questions for consideration:
    - a. Does the NM Conference want Bishop Schnase to continue as our bishop?
    - b. Does the NM Conference want to join with another conference such as the Texas or Oklahoma Conference?
  3. Pastor John met with Ross Whiteaker, the new District Superintendent for the Albuquerque district, for his annual evaluation.
    - a. The work being done at LA-FUMC for adapting to online streaming and security was praised.
    - b. Rev. Ross was made aware that LA-FUMC would like to be a leader in online streaming and help other churches interested in doing so.
- E. Committees Pastor John serves on:
1. He has been on the NM Conference "Council on Finance and Administration" for 12 years (8 years is normal) but 2024 is his last year. He completes his time on this committee in July, 2024.
  2. He will no longer be on the Los Alamos County Library Board as of 10/01/24.
  3. Pastor John accepted a position on the Albuquerque District committee on the Superintendency which he didn't think would require a significant amount of time.
    - i. Apparently, the new DS has other ideas for this group.
  4. Pastor John was asked to join a LANL board that needs a few community members for community input.
    - i. They meet - 1 to 2 times per year.
    - ii. He will know more about the group after Thursday, 1-25-24, then decide.

## 6. Communications to Congregation

- A. The new Security System is the only issue from this meeting to bring to the congregation's attention.

**Closing Prayer – Carol**

**Next Meeting: Tuesday, February 27, 2024, 6:00 pm.**

**Reports Due by: Thursday, February, 23, 2024.**

Respectfully submitted by Kathy Siebe