

Board of Stewards Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 12, 2021

- I. Our meeting opened with a devotional reading by chairperson, Nita Hyatt.
- II. Dave Brodhead led the board through the MWCDC financial reports for the end of year 2020. The daycare closed the year with \$9,483.85 surplus in their income/expense report and \$101,308.71 in restricted funds.
- III. Dave Brodhead reported that the church income/expense without PPP (Payroll Protection Program) adjustment was -\$101,308.71; with PPP counted as income we ended the year at -\$14,857.04. Board members discussed various reasons for the shortfall and concluded that it is time to consider difficult decisions, some of which were to be considered a band-aid approach and others more lasting.
- IV. Further discussion centered on concerns regarding decline in worship attendance. Pastor Bobbie reported that attendance is being recorded for in-person services but it is very difficult, if not impossible, to count how many "attend" online worship. Other issues that have contributed to the attendance decline is frustration and weariness of COVID and the required restrictions. Our traditional and/or older members are self-quarantined and board members reported that our Celebration/younger families are worshipping in person elsewhere. The board acknowledged that it is difficult to judge when it will be safe to open fully.
- V. The Board welcomed Rev. Scott Moore, TAC ordained elder and consultant with Vision Bridge. Rev. Moore presented the ground work on a church vision statement that was started by Lay Leader Tom Scanio and Pastor Bobbie. Tom and Pastor Bobbie had spent the afternoon answering questions about the church and her mission field of Brenham/Washington County. As the questions and answers given were presented, the board discussed them and made further suggestions. The questions included:
 - 1) Why do people need Christ?
 - 2) Why do people need the church?
 - 3) Why do people need FUMC Brenham?
 - 4) What does this church do well?
 - 5) What does the church do poorly?
 - 6) Where have we been?
 - 7) What is one word that describes this church today?
 - 8) Who/What are we today?
 - 9) Who is our neighbor?
 - 10) Where/What/Who is God calling us to be?
 - 11) What are three of our greatest opportunities?
 - 12) Vision:

The proposed vision statement is:

INVITING CHRIST TO GROW AND EMPOWER US AS DISCIPLES WHO, IN TURN, HELP OTHERS TO GROW IN CHRIST.

The vision statement is where we want to go. It will be the laser focus for all our ministries. It is meant to be a statement that is not currently being achieved but is inspirational. It should be fairly short, enduring, and the saying that keeps us focused on our purpose when we stumble.

14) The proposed mission statement (including board suggestions) is three-fold. The mission statement is what we need to do in order to move forward in our vision statement. The points should be no more than four in number, open enough to support the vision statement while narrow enough to direct our resources.

1. Engaging in passionate (emotional, excellent, meaningful) worship. (Worship continues to be the main entry to the church.)
2. Becoming prepared for the work of ministry. (Discussion focused on “work” and “ministry.” What do those words communicate? Is there negative connotation to either or both? And alternative wording may be: “Becoming prepared for the ministry of all Christians”
3. Entering into faith-sharing relationships.

The board members will spend the next two weeks thinking and praying about both statements while considering how our various ministries might be impacted by them.

Being asked about future availability to help the board, Rev. Moore explained that he could help the board create levels of development, including strategies, clarity and measurable goals. Alternatively, he could help the board with ministry alignment which is determining how to allocate resources so that the mission objectives are adequately supported. The board chose to invite Rev. Moore back to help with the latter at this time.

Further discussion of board members reiterated the need to make definitive and difficult decisions for the future of the church. It was agreed that we can no longer “wait and see” what the future holds. Many have become frustrated with new initiatives that get started but are abandoned or ineffective.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, January 25th, 6:00 PM, in person or by Zoom. This is two weeks prior to our regularly scheduled meeting. Our agenda will be to continue the discussion about the vision/mission statements and review the proposal from Vision Bridge.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Bobbie Maltas