

FAIRHOPE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
BOARD OF STEWARDS

REGULAR MEETING
DECEMBER 12, 2019

A regular meeting of the Board of Stewards of Fairhope United Methodist Church was held on December 12, 2019 in Wesley Hall. Gene Lammers opened the meeting at 6:00 PM with a devotion from Matthew 11.

PRESENT

Twenty-two members were present, along with five staff members and one guest: Michael Casallo, Rebekah Chambless, Jane Dolan, Anne Dorman, Shawn Drummond, Mary Finger, Doug Garner, Emily Garner, Wanda Harris, Ginny Hollis, Linda James, Diana Justis, Jack Justis, Chad Kirtland, Gene Lammers, Christa Myrick, Johnny Northcutt, Steve Pearson, Amy Smith, Linda Smith, Steve Sowell, Chuck Wilson, Michelle Graham, Darren McClellan, Ann Pearson, Jamie Waldhour, Jeff White, and Jackie Trueblood.

ABSENT

Thirty-two members were absent, along with five staff members: Patt Branyon, Bealle Dawson, Brandi Fulford, Chuck Huguley, Scott Koser, Mary Helen Marks, Bill Munson, Ari Ojanpera, Brenda Robinson, Pam Turner, Tom Tyler, Ontonio Christie, Tom Hood, Jennifer Myrick, Laura Parker, and Rachael Waldhour had excused absences. Agee Adams, Rebecca Bell, Davis Brock, Ed Colvin, Colby Cooper, Jeremy Friedman, Mary Hodgkins, Ann Jones, Fred Jordan, Susan Koenig, Michele Manasco, Mark Mathias, Heather Middleton, Terri Myrick, Wendy Pierce, Katie Robertson, Alicia Searcy, Leah Sowell, Amber Sparks, Kay Speir, and Lee Turner were absent without excuse.

MINUTES

The minutes of the September 26, 2019 meeting were approved online prior to this meeting.

CHILDREN'S
MINISTRY

Michelle Graham reported on Breakfast at the Manger, which brings in a lot of families from outside the church and gives us an opportunity to reach out to them. There will be an Epiphany dinner and service on January 8. Our church currently hosts Zach's camp for children with special needs, and Michelle wants to expand our special needs ministry, to include quarterly respite nights for parents. Children's Ministry is involved in programs meant to nurture a servant heart in the children, including the Tough Pups cancer support ministry, preparing Blessing bags to give to the homeless, and bringing food for the food pantry.

Upcoming plans include the Blue Lake winter retreat, Vacation Bible School, and the Wonderfully Made class.

CARING MINISTRIES

Ann Pearson reported on several Caring Ministry programs, including Tough Pups (for children ages 5-12 with cancer), Angel Tree, the knit and crochet group, the durable medical loan closet, and Stephen Ministry. An evaluation of the programs determined that we should be more visible, intentional, and specific about Prayer Ministry. Ann reviewed our current Prayer Ministry programs, and talked about adding a program for one-on-one prayer, and establishing one member of each small group as a liaison to the Prayer Team. If you would like to place a prayer request with the prayer email chain, you can contact Mary Lucas at marylucas501@gmail.com. Ann closed her remarks with a prayer.

FINANCE

Jeff White reviewed the October financial statements, copies of which are on file with these minutes. We are substantially outperforming our budget. If December is as robust as expected, we should end the year on a strong note. Next year's budget has 295 pledges totaling \$1,623,000. This is 68% of budgeted spending for next year, and our goal is 71%.

TRUSTEES

Jeff White spoke about a proposed new ten-year roofing contract that would cover maintenance and leak repairs for all the church's roofing, as well as replacing the sanctuary roof. Planning is underway to accommodate wheelchair users in the sanctuary, but the specific layout has not been determined. Jeff also spoke about lighting upgrades inside and outside the sanctuary. More handicapped spaces at the CLC are planned.

ENDOWMENT

Doug Garner spoke about the work of the Endowment Team. He explained that it is separate from the operating budget, but supports it. He quoted Ecclesiastes 3:11, and spoke about the Endowment as stewardship's brush with eternity. Our endowment has only \$4,500 in it, while some churches our size have endowments in the millions. Providing for the endowment in one's will is a powerful witness.

SENIOR PASTOR

Darren McClellan spoke about the diverse gifts among the pastors and the staff. The pastors spent some time reflecting on their vision for the coming year. They will be communicating more with the congregation on the themes of discovery, discernment, and a spirituality of engagement.

Darren will be hosting a series of listening sessions on January 12th, 13th and 26th, and February 2nd, 16th and 17th. Each session will have up to twenty participants. Darren will go over the Methodist's Church's history on the issue of homosexuality, then discuss the proposals under consideration by the General Conference and how they may affect us at the local church level. Then he will ask the participants about their feelings and hopes in light of this, and listen to their responses. No decisions will be reached – the goal is to help understand and process the congregation's feelings about the changes that may be coming.

WRITTEN REPORTS

Written reports were also submitted for the following areas: Staff-Parish Relations, Caring Ministries, Children's Ministries, and Missions.

ADJOURNMENT

After a closing prayer from Steve Pearson, the meeting was adjourned at 7:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

T. Shawn Drummond
Recording Secretary