

GOVERNANCE IN ACTION

Monthly Executive Summary | September 2024

The following are highlights from the 9/09/2024 Governing Board (GB) meeting:

- **Call to order/devotional – Mr. Quinn**

Members Attending: Jim Quinn (Chair), Wendy Featherstone (Vice-Chair), Jonathan Carroll-Nellenbach, Cory Tylenda (Secretary), Christy Leshner, Jonathan Carroll-Nellenbach, Tim Mahan (Treasurer), Ike Jordan, Michelle Bogue-Trost, Sr. Minister. Beth Wilkens – Ex officio, and by invitation for portions of the meeting David Strong, Church Administrator
Absent: Ike Jordan

- **Review/Approve Consent Agenda – Mr. Tylenda**

- Review/Approval of Minutes of August 12, 2024, Governing Board Meeting
- Review of Minutes of August 12, 2024, Charge Conference
- Review/Approval of Property Stewardship Committee's (PSC's) July 10th, 2024, Minutes
- Review of PSC's Report on the Columbarium Project Sept. 3, 2024
- Financial Report Commentary through June 30, 2024 (John Ormsbee)

(Notes/Reports of Finance Committee Meetings of July 22 and 29 are not yet approved.)(PPRC meets on September 16, so minutes will be approved by GB in October.)

- **Increasing Engagement and Connection – Barbara Eltinge and All**

Ms. Eltinge attended the GB meeting to share her thoughts, concerns and hopes for AFUMC and its future. Ms. Eltinge noted we will continue to be a vital church and now is the right time to review our future. She further noted that many changes have occurred due to the pandemic, new patterns in church attendance, finances, and others. She had a printed document with her full observations and recommendations she will provide to the Dream Team and the GB. A discussion ensued.

- **Discussion of the 2024 Annual Giving Campaign – Pastor Michelle and David Strong**

It was noted our budget and communication processes this year are a little different with the goals of being clear, transparent, and participatory. We are empowering and commissioning leaders of worship areas to have a part in budget process. We are creating two versions of the budget, a dream budget, and a restricted budget. The dream budget will require \$400k of additional giving. The restricted budget will require approximately 7 percent in cuts. Both of these budgets will be presented to the leaders on 9/10/24. With the rearranging on how we show the COC budget and expenses we have to be cognizant of how we fund the fundamental worship activities. People give to things because something has moved their hearts. How do we help people connect spirit with stewardship?

Mr. Mahan asked as we work toward the Town Hall and process, how we are going to present this? How do we convey what this is, where we are, and next steps? How do we propose to do that for the Congregation? The plan is to present the budget and process at the October Town Hall Meeting.

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- **Adoption of enhanced Reconciling Statement – Cory Tylenda**

Mr. Tylenda noted that a new reconciling statement has been created and asked for Governing Board approval. This version has been vetted by Mike Mullin, other staff, and Cory Tylenda.

Approved new reconciling statement:

We at Asbury First celebrate God's gift of diversity and value the wholeness made possible in community, a wholeness equally shared and shepherded by all. We welcome and affirm people of every gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation, who are also of every age, race, ethnicity, physical and mental ability, level of education, and family structure, and of every economic, immigration, marital, and social status, and everything beyond and between. We acknowledge that we live in a world of profound social, economic, and political inequities. As followers of Jesus, we commit to ministering with the marginalized and to resisting evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves.

At Asbury First, we celebrate LGBTQIA+ persons as good expressions of God's diverse creation and we advocate for the affirmation of all God's children in the Church and the world.

In The United Methodist Church, we now celebrate the opportunity for full participation of all LGBTQIA+ people throughout the life and leadership of the Church.

- **Discussion of Adopting a Covenant of Conciliation – Pastor Michelle and All**

Covenants of Conciliation are agreed-upon guidelines or rules to engage in conversations, in this case, about the work of Asbury First. These help ensure that people from all different walks of life will have effective communications in teams. If our Church wants to broaden its membership, we have to embrace and welcome everyone's contributions. Pastor Michelle brought the proposed communication guidelines on cards. The plan is to hold training opportunities for leaders in the church and socialize these guidelines.

Respectful Communication Guidelines:

R = take Responsibility for what you say and feel without blaming others.

E = use Empathetic listening.

S = be Sensitive to differences in communication styles.

P = Ponder what you hear and feel before you speak.

E = Examine your own assumptions and perceptions.

C = keep Confidentiality

T = Trust ambiguity. We are not here to debate right or wrong.

GB Approved adoption of Covenant of Conciliation (respectful communication guidelines).

- **Nominations Committee Plans for 2025 – Pastor Michelle**

At its upcoming meetings the Nominations Committee will take the results from Connection Sunday, 9/8/24 and review them. Each ministry area presented opportunities for volunteers to work on teams, committees. Pastor Michelle is working to create a process for volunteer management.

- **Senior Pastor's Report – Rev. Dr. Bogue-Trost**

Financial Wellness, Continued Momentum – Membership growth is hard to determine until after a new season.

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We have had four scheduled new members classes this year.

Online engagement – Pastor Michelle received an email from a person who asked, “What is available for me to do to be a member of the church and involved?” Pastor Michelle noted that this is a very good question and is reviewing how we incorporate online members into our activities and classes and ensure effective engagement. What does that mean for us as a church?

Community Outreach - How do we obtain more volunteers? There is a lot of hope that people will sign up. Dining for Outreach will take place, and publicity will start soon.

Dream Team Workshop is September 14th to create goals, after all the analysis and data collection. How can we highlight the work of the people who are engaged in ministry here? So many people are involved behind the scenes. How do we celebrate and thank our volunteers? Pondering a place for Justice Ministries here at AFUMC.

- **New Business – All**

- **Meeting Minutes Template – Cory Tylenda**

Mr. Tylenda noted that some meeting minutes on the website appear not to include the basic information for any team meeting. Some of that information is Committee name, date, meeting time, members of committee and who is present. Mr. Tylenda will share the meeting minutes template again.

Pastor Michelle mentioned this would be a great topic to include in leadership training.

- **Amendment of the Housing Exclusion – Beth Wilkins**

As required annually, the Governing Board approved the pastors' Housing Exclusions for 2024. This does not change their salary, it simply designates, for tax purposes, how much of their salary will be designated for housing. Pastor Michelle has requested to have her Housing exclusion changed for 2024. \$15k will be allocated back to the salary component.

Motion approved: To amend the pastor's Housing Exclusion for 2024 for

Rev. Dr. Michelle Bogue-Trost from \$40,000 to \$25,000, with an effective date of January 1, 2024.

- **Closing Prayer – Pastor Michelle**

Meeting Adjourned at 7:00pm

Next Meeting: Wednesday, October 9, 2024 at 5 pm

Upcoming Town Hall Meetings: after the 11 am service on:

October 20, 2024

December 8, 2024 (the Church Conference if Bishop Burgos approves)

January 19, 2025

Next Devotions: Beth Wilkins

Respectfully submitted, Cory Tylenda

End of Report