



Mission - Love God and Neighbor, Build Community - - No Limits

Church Council Meeting
Meeting Date: Tuesday April 23, 2024 – 7:00-8:45
Meeting Place: In Person, Wesley Hall

Opening Prayer for the United Methodist Church Worldwide General Conference that starts today, April 23rd- Dick Eisenbarth

Who do we know at General Conference. Let's be in prayer for all of the General Conference participants.

Charge Conference:

10 Minutes

Charge Conference called to order at 7:07PM.

- Recommendation of Emily Lorenzen as a candidate for Ordained Ministry
- Charge Conference call to order- Pastor Britt
- Introduction of Emily Lorenzen to the Council- Mike Overton

One minor adjustment to charge conference – approving salary for new associate pastor, Kevin Griffin. The compensation will be exactly the same as Pastor Jeff's.

Question: Do we know what the number is? We can't vote on it without knowing the number.

The actual compensation hasn't been published in the meetings in the recent past. He will have the total package.

Not sure it will make a difference if the numbers stay the same.

Kevin Griffin's compensation was approved.

Call to ministry for Emily Lorenzen.

Mike: I was thinking about all the people who have gone through this same process. Emily has met with Missy and Britt and expressed interest in being a chaplain. She has gone with Britt on hospital visits. Then she met with SPR and answers a series of questions and SPR decided if she should move on in the process, then charge conference would approve/deny. Doug McClain, Dan Search, Mike Groos, Steve Painter, David Jackson, Aaron Shoemaker, Daniel Weikert, Grace Rogers have all gone through the process. Mike had her in confirmation class and she is an interesting person that has been a member of the church.

Emily: Grew up in a traditional southern Christian family. My mother told me one day I'll make a good wife and mother. Went to a very conservative non-denominational church where the same message was backed up. I wanted to be more than my teachings and thought I was wrong and a bad Christian for having these thoughts. When I was 12, my

mom switched us to a smaller Methodist Church. I felt like a different person that was able to ask questions about the Bible and pray in a way that worked for me, but I felt a call to do more. I started attending on Wednesday nights and youth trips. While at Warren Willis Summer Camp, I felt like that was where I was needed. I prayed and that that this call was a call to teach so I became a teacher. I talked to my pastor at the time about my call and she set me up with the children's ministry. I loved my time with the children's ministry.

While I was in college, I spent time with Campus To City Wesley and learned about God's grace for me and others. Had two friends going through the discernment process and I felt like I could relate to stories they shared with me. After college, started teaching 2nd grade and I felt lost and scared and started to question if this was the right job for me. On the way to see Jesus Christ Superstar I shared my feelings with my friend. I decided to teach another year but felt my heart wasn't in the right place. I decided to talk to the pastors at my church. After our discussions, I felt called to be a chaplain. I felt at peace listening to others during a hard point in their life.

Britt: The questions asked by SPR are historical questions that John Wesley asked the first circuit riders and preachers. Are their gifts evident in their life? Do they know God as a loving God? SPR decided unanimously for Emily to move forward.

Question: Can you describe what your issues with the church were?

Emily: When I was very young I was raised to be a wife/mother and I didn't want that life and felt I was being called to do more. Where I was at that time as a woman, I couldn't express those feelings.

Jack Downey: We trust SPR and the pastors and she has been part of the church and the leadership of the church is endorsing you so I would vote yes.

Mike: Emily has been at this church for a long time and she has stayed when others have left and a lot of the staff and youth know her.

- Council vote on our recommendation of Emily as a candidate for Ordained Ministry

Please fill out your written ballot.

Emily received our recommendation as a candidate for Ordained Ministry. She will be meeting in May with the District Committee.

- Adjourn the Charge Conference- Pastor Britt
Charge Conference adjourned 7:28PM

Council Meeting call to order- Dick Eisenbarth

- Approval of the Council Meeting notes January 30, 2024,
Council Meeting notes of 1/30/24 were approved.

5 Minutes



- Committee Reports: The committee reports were sent prior to the meeting for reading and reference. If there are any questions we will review them at this time. 15 Minutes

Generosity

There will be a presentation from the Florida Foundation about legacy planning, giving to the church through shares, etc. on May 15th.

Board of Trustees

We talked during the last meeting about the security committee and needing people to volunteer for that. We are going to be applying for a grant application up to \$150,000 so we have to identify things to spend that money on. Fencing around Learning Ladders, security cameras, etc. David and Trustees could use some guidance.

Finance

Meeting notes were from March 19th because they met last week. Britt will talk a little more about that during quarterly review.

Staff Parish- Mike Overton to provide a briefing.

3 updates: hiring a summer camp director, position filled. Rachel Archuleta. Currently living in Texas, moving here May 6th. Rich Clark on interview team with Angie and Paula.

We put an ad in the Weekly Update for a human resources person for 5-10 hours a week, helping with payroll, PTO, back up to Andrea on contributions. There has been a void in keeping up the records with pensions, hourly employees, etc. Staff Parish missed this area when going through the hiring process with Yvonne. \$16-\$18 range.

Announcement Sunday and Pastor Jeff has been appointed to Saegertown UMC in the Erie-Meadville District of the Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference. Jeff's last Sunday at Mandarin will be 11:00am May 26th and last Sunday at Longleaf will be June 2nd. A celebration will be on June 2nd – details to be announced. New pastor is Kevin Griffin. Kevin's first Sunday will be July 7th.

- 150 Year Celebration Task group 20 Minutes
 - Setting of the date of celebration – November 17th

Janson: With the approval of the Church Council, the MUMC 150th Anniversary Committee along with the church staff have selected November 17th as the 150th celebration. The anniversary will be celebrated in worship and after worship with a meal and festivities. Ward Clayton, our church historian, has been working on a timeline of our history that will be shared. A banner is being sewn commemorating MUMC's 150th anniversary and it will be displayed at the Florida annual conference in June and then at the MUMC campus. And we aren't stopping there, the committee has lots of wonderful ideas and suggestions – they are meeting tomorrow afternoon at 3:00pm to continue planning. We will need lots of volunteers to make our plans happen. We will be soliciting your help.

- Gifting to the church

Jim: Generosity Committee thought that to go along with the 150th celebration – what do you bring with you to an anniversary celebration? What if people made a donation of \$1 a year for 150 years or multiples of that. Taking that special gift to pay off a part of the mortgage that we have for the property that we have today so the ministries will have additional resources to use. We have a new ministry about to start so we can ask the church for this gift so we have more resources for future ministries. Recommendation: Mandarin agree that we can have a program that would raise resources that could be made to pay off earlier (hopefully) on the mortgage principal.

Dick – I think that’s a great idea. I don’t think we have to have a vote, but maybe a consensus. Any other ideas to add to this possibility?

Question: Are we going to start promoting that now? Yes, we didn’t want to mention anything until we have approval.

Question: Will someone from this group follow up with Generosity and have them put together a program. Generosity will take the ball and run with it.

Question: And they will present it to the congregation? Yes.

Question: Is there a target established? As much as we can get. I think we need to establish a practical target. Maybe a stretch goal of \$100,000 or \$150,000. The mortgage is \$1,449,000. If you look at what the monthly mortgage is in principal you can look at how many months you can pay off.

Question: Isn’t that the time you are going to be looking for pledges? Doesn’t that have to be separated? The Generosity Committee has been working on this but had to wait until it was presented to Church Council before announcing it to the congregation. This will be a gift, not your pledge. Generosity is fundamentally a spiritual issue, not a financial one. I would encourage the committee to go to church leaders and ask them for their donation now and when we announce to the congregation we can say we have “this much” already. We can use the story of the rice and the camel, \$1 per person per year, the next year double that, the next year double that.

Do we have a consensus? We’ll say it’s unanimous.

- Pastor’s / Staff Reports

45 Minutes

- Pastor Jeff- reflection on his time with us and our future

Jeff: I wrote tonight’s talk while I was sitting on my front porch on a 72 degree day with a gentle breeze through the palm trees. I know in 6 months time I won’t be able to do such a thing – possibly anticipating a snowfall for the first time in 11 years. When I arrived in 2013 we spent an entire year preparing for a launch of a new contemporary worship experience. Connection launched in 2014 with nearly 450 that Sunday. We quickly averaged 250 in worship as Mandarin was experiencing growth at that time. UMM became one of the largest units in the US. UMW hosted the largest craft festival



in the Jacksonville area and missional engagement was touching lives all over the world.

The launch of Longleaf in 2019 was an exciting time for both campuses. On Easter Sunday, April 21, 2019, Longleaf launched with over 600 people in worship. We hit our target of 200 people in weekly in worship, new small groups were forming. Missional engagement in the community was felt. Know Grow Go teams were functioning on all cylinders.

We experienced seasons, some seasons experience rapid growth, then some seasons things slow down. Winter came to most churches in 2020. We had to figure out a new way to reach people overnight. We had our glitches, but with the hiring of Philip Logan, he put us on the map with livestreaming. Seasons change, so does the church.

For 3 1/2 years, you, me, the pastoral team and staff endured a long cold winter. Winter brought pain and heartache. Feelings were hurt, rumors were spread, people left, people held back from coming. Myself as a church planter was not able to use my gift of innovation and that winter was a wilderness season when all of us asked God why have you brought us this far to let this happen. We experienced a season of hopelessness. I will honestly say to you, the leadership, I contemplated giving up. Nothing I could say or do was working. In that season of winter we cried out to God, but God never left us. When the winter season came to a close, a new season began to emerge, filled with life. What sprung forth was a new leaner and healthier church. Our vision to love god, love neighbor and building community was built forward. We established that new vision just months after the pandemic. Then we got to live into it fully. Now for the last year, we experienced a new season where life abounds.

At longleaf we have baptisms scheduled for May 5, 12 & 26th. Confirmation is May 19th. Worship attendance is gaining momentum with a rising worship. I can't thank God enough for the spring season God has led us to. Last Sunday Longleaf celebrated 5 years and we have a doozy of a year ahead of us. November 17th I'll wake up and be cheering all of you on from Pennsylvania. I want to thank you for being faithful and remaining faithful to this church. Thank you for believing when some did not believe, thank you for remaining committed to the UMC with your prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness. God is equipping you to do great things. It has been a pleasure serving and leading as one of your pastors.

I see some of our staff here tonight. Please stand up. These are the people you should be proud of. They have poured their hearts into the ministry of this church. I love you all so much and thank God for you tonight. Church Council, support these people, rally around them. They never gave up.

For 16 of the 25 years as a pastor I have served on pastoral teams and this team of Pastor Britt and Pastor Missy are the most loving, kind and special team that I've ever had the honor of working with. They walk with integrity and love. I'm gonna miss sharing daily life with you two. Church Council you are beyond fortunate to have two



wonderful pastors. They are the best. Together with the staff and this gifted team, Britt and Missy and soon Kevin, he is a man of great integrity too, you are going to be able to lead the church in a new season, one that endured much but never let it define you. You let it refine you into the strong, faithful people you are today. It's been my honor to go with you this day to stay the course, love God, love neighbor and building community and never put a limit on what God can do.

- Communication on the quarterly review of our church – Pastor Britt
2 parts – paper based and pictures. Then report based and Pastor Missy will lead us in a discussion of discernment of where we've seen God.

We want to do this each quarter and some of these topics we will return to. Some of these we may decide to measure in a slightly different way. We want to keep some continuity in the format while also having flexibility to share things that come up in a new way.

Ministry Side: Know God's Love, Grow in God's Love and Go in God's Love. We are one church in two locations and it might help us to adopt some of the same language.

Know God's Love: how we engage community and invite people to be part of things here. Upward basketball had a great season with 330 basketball players and 40 cheerleaders. The gym was full on Saturdays and it was a great season of Upward. In the first quarter we had Lent and Longleaf set up a tent to offer prayer and ashes to the community. This coming Sunday, the team is doing a community festival from 2-4PM. Anyone is welcome to attend that and invite others from the community. If you want to attend and help there are opportunities for that.

Cookout/Campout that Children's Ministry led was fun. This year there were around 100 people at the cookout and games. There were people from Upward and other parts of the community.

Sound of Music, Sandy Webb offered to do this as a community building and fundraiser and it was a great success for those two reasons. Community people came and enjoyed it. The cast had fun and enjoyed it.

First Time Visitors – we have had a process for First Time Visitors where Andrea would send an email and if they check different items of ministry, they would reach out. We are starting to send regular postcards out after they visit for the first time. We are also tracking the visitors and see who comes a second, third or fourth time, like the way we track people who have been gone from worship for multiple weeks.

New member class – 5 joined, a couple more will join later on.

Grow in God's Love – Easter worship and services were a wonderful week of worship. 725 people that participated in the worship services.



10 weeks leading up to Easter, this year compared to last year. This year was 364, last year was 320. You can see the way we measure online attendance has ticked down a little bit, could be transitioning to in person. That's another list – we are maintaining the people who worship online and ways to engage with them.

During Lent, the number of adults participating in Sunday School classes have gone up. The other small groups have remained about the same. There are different conversations about how to engage people in different ways. The Grow Team at Longleaf has put in place new small groups they are forming including a running small group.

Children and Youth Ministry regularly interacts with approximately 85 children, birth to 5th grade, and 60 youth each month. Some we might see 10 times a month, others 2-3 times a month. On Sunday mornings we averaged 12 children age 4 and younger during Lent. That number has really increased for those younger kids. Currently a group of 7 preparing for confirmation that will be on May 19th.

Going in God's Love – these pictures were shown at Mandarin last Sunday by Nieke Oglesby and will be shown at Longleaf this week. Alongside growing on Wednesday night we have the team that does our meals. Some of them even have special chef's hats. Then on Ash Wednesday/Valentine's Day the Simangan Family did that meal as well. There was a group that went down to Branches in January. There has been further interest for the future years. We look forward to that partnership continuing. When we talk about how we are measuring, we want to think about serving and how to measure how we are serving in the community. One thing we might want to think about is how many new people we engage in service. How many do we engage using their gifts in ministry where they had not been serving before?

Back of page, what was shared at finance. Total revenues:\$651,914 Expenses: \$662,131 Net Income – basically \$300 off that plan. Middle column is the first quarter of last year. First 6 months last year was a bad six months for contributions.

Contributions Jan-Mar right at nearly \$300,000 compares to last year \$228,000. This year we did combine the mortgage reduction and church fund. Last year giving to the mortgage reduction for the whole year was about \$10,000 per month, if we added that in would be closer to \$260,000. People have been giving generously and its \$17,000 more than what we had budgeted.

What are the total number of contributing families – 333 so far compared to 317 last year. Total families attending worship – 448 this year compared to 410 last year.

The trend is positive. We are heavily reliant right now on those that are 60+ for our giving. We saw positive trends in that too. Where there were increases in some of the younger age demographics. There is work to do in engaging all ages in the opportunity to give.



Question: The family giving units – are these newer families? What does the 115 families not giving/pledging look like that are attending worship?

How do we encourage those families? Is it a demographic that typically doesn't give? Is it new families?

Some families will give a couple large gifts a year instead of every week/month. Some might give at Christmas instead of all year. And those that we need to invite/encourage to give.

During the first quarter we've been on target, on budget for Learning Ladders. At the beginning of the school year we did have some decrease in enrollment with the transitions. That did put some of our classrooms off the ideal ratio, but during the same school year. We knew that during this school year from a financial standpoint that LL wasn't going to be operating as well as it could be. You can see that for the budget the net income of \$75,000 for LL is almost \$20,000 less than what was budgeted and less than what was done last year. But we also see that the current enrollment is 115 children and the current enrollment for August is 115 – matches. Kristie is working with the teachers and staffing plan and can adjust the human resources so they are in a good ratio entering the new school year. We expect that Learning Ladders from a financial perspective and as a ministry building and encouraging children which is significant, but from a financial perspective we expect it to improve for the second half of the year.

Capital review – current amount of mortgage, how long and restricted funds. Trustees and David have begun looking at the list of what are priority maintenance items and working on that list and is helpful giving us an idea of what needs to be worked on and our needs and how do we allocate this. Reviewed at finance and trustees.

Summer Camp – Angie: We hired a summer camp director, Rachel Archuleta. We knew the moment she started talking that Paula and I loved her. She started working remotely April 8th. She had planned activities with her family and has already purchased a house and they will be moving the first week of May and on campus May 6th. I've seen some of the work she's been doing for the curriculum/lessons and age appropriate activities. Working with David and Pastors looking at storage areas helping to get organized with space to use for summer camp and space for Rachel to work in the Family Life Center since the majority of summer camp will be in there. Registrations, the first week VBS always a success. We have 220 registered right now, 115 are staying for the afternoon camp. We did a maximum of 50 at basketball, and max for arts & crafts and the rest are going to a preview for Summer Delta Camp. Between Week 1 and Week 7 we have right at 50 children in a week of camp, some one week, some multiple weeks, which is lower than what we want. How can you help? Social Media. Go to Mandarin Facebook page and share it on your personal page, share it to your friends, share to neighborhood groups. There is an ad in Mandarin newspaper. We submitted flyers to Duval and Saint Johns county schools. Got banners made, didn't turn out like we wanted, moving to 2 different locations when



larger banner arrives. We need more kids. Every few hours I would go in the system we would have a new child registered. Paula reminds me there are people who do not do that and are just now starting to look for summer camp. I am beginning to see that she speaks truthfully and I do feel we will get to a good number. May not get to the 150 we hoped for but we will be hiring based on what we have. Paula, Rachel and I may be doing multiple things, but it's our first summer. We discussed, if our numbers are small this year we will have a great opportunity to see what we are doing right and we can double next year. It would be wonderful if we had 150 kids, but most wonderful is a successful summer camp. Had a lot of applications for people who want to work. Will start going through applications and start figuring out how many we can higher and possibly offer a smaller number of hours to get more people and help it run smoothly and we want to get these college kids in to work as they are the kids that grew up here. I have finished all the classes necessary for my credentials. Paula is 95% done and I have started my director's credentials. My director's credentials could be used at Learning Ladders if something happens to Kristie we would be able to say we do have a director on site. Kristie's MIL passed away and she needed to be away. We did still need somebody that could be reached that is a director. Should have our director's license by the end of this year.

- Community engagement implementation Know-Grow-Go - Pastor Missy
-Interactive table discussion

We've heard a lot of good things about the church growing tonight. Had a conversation with Don Carter and one way to know the church is growing is they are parking on the grass at 11:00. Ministries are thriving here. Stories are important. Let's take a couple minutes to ask each of you at the table using the index cards and think about where you've experienced God in one of the various ministries here at the church in the first quarter. Share with your table. Take 5 minutes.

Wednesday night dinners
Upward Basketball
Youth Band
Summer Camp
Easter Choir
The children singing
Pickleball
Book Club
New partnerships with schools

Thank you all for what you are doing. You are leaders making a difference, impacting our community that surrounds us.

Adjournment – Dick Eisenbarth

- Next Council Meetings July23, September 24th and December 3rd

Prayers of Praises and Concerns and Pastor Jeff – Pastor Missy

Meeting adjourned at 8:56pm