

Ministry Council Meeting Minutes

August 3, 2020 at 6:30pm via Zoom conference call

Attending: Judy Belter (chairperson), Rev. Jason Valendy, Rev. Estee Valendy, Melanie Grice (recording secretary), Lou Tiner, Erik Skaarer, David Gerig, Keith Bierley, Toni Bliss, Ellie Skaarer, Jules Plewes, Amanda Stansberger, Polly Soulsby

Guests: Nancy Smith, Kristin Springer, Rey Gonzalez

Judy called the meeting to order at 6:31pm and asked each attendee to introduce themselves and share their role on the committee.

Estee shared her concerns for parents, teachers and administrators in light of the meeting at Keller ISD (KISD) this evening. She opened in prayer.

Financial Report

Amanda shared some information from the last Finance Committee meeting, which covered information through the end of June. Giving was up in June 2020 over June 2019 and income was greater than expenses, both for the month and for the year to date. Some of the income in the first half of the year was from the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). The committee expects the PPP to be fully forgiven, but the loaning bank is not yet accepting forgiveness applications.

New Business

Keith thanked Ellie and Jules for their roles in putting together the staff spotlight articles.

Staff Re-Opening

Keith reminded the group that he previously shared a plan for re-opening for staff. This plan was not carried out due to a spike in COVID cases. The plan is to determine a new opening date when the situation changes. At this time the building is closed until further notice. Staff continue to work at home as much as possible, and in the building as needed.

Children's Ministry Re-Opening

Keith said a team put together many plans for various age groups, but these were mostly put on hold due to the spike in COVID cases. A book drive and other efforts that can be accomplished with social distancing continue to move forward, but most events for children and youth are back on red light status.

Keith also shared that after much discussion, meetings and prayer, the team has determined that Building Blocks (BB) will not offer kindergarten this year. KUMC cannot guarantee that we will stay open, which would be unfair to the families in the program. The plan is to move forward with 3 and 4 year old classes with safety protocols and licensing requirements in place. BB will potentially start on September 8, but that day may change if KISD changes to a later start date at their meeting tonight.

Erik said that he and Amanda met with Nancy and Kristin previously to discuss financial implications. He understood that the financial impact would be larger if BB did not offer kindergarten.

Nancy said that she re-ran the numbers taking into account the shorter timeframe and the financial impact will be smaller than previously reported. With a September 8 start date, BB can still charge for 9 months of tuition, but pay fewer weeks of salary. There would still be a financial burden to the church, but lower than previously shared with the Finance Committee chairs.

Erik asked if it was necessary to make a decision tonight.

Keith said it is important to move forward quickly when more information is available from KISD. He offered his view that BB is an important ministry at KUMC.

Erik said he was more concerned about the procedural issues.

Keith said there are currently 49 students enrolled, but that number may change, which would change the bottom line. It's too early to provide a definite number.

Erik asked about communicating with the congregation and how opening Building Blocks while other ministries are still closed would be perceived.

Jason clarified that BB is willing to use their designated fund to minimize the financial shortfall. He also said that a plan for communicating with the congregation was discussed at the task force's meeting.

Kristin requested a decision as soon as possible after KISD announces their plans. She would like to be able to communicate with enrolled families. They have had time to review the new policies regarding COVID. BB will have very strict protocol and will involve the same set of people every day. This is a very different situation than opening on Sunday mornings for worship and Sunday school.

Estee said she thinks KISD's opening will be delayed until the end of September. She hopes to have a plan in place at least for alternative worship (like Vine and Branches) by then.

Jason said worship requires support from volunteers, which is another aspect that is different from BB, which has paid employees. Nancy is also working with another preschool to potentially share a pool of substitutes. BB would also require liability waivers, another difference from worship. KUMC has strived to be a place to offer ministries that would otherwise not be available, such as the Resource Center, Meals on Wheels and voting. This also applies to BB.

Lou said that when he met with Nancy last week, she was way ahead of him on all the safety issues and ready to meet challenges. He said parents would not leave their children at BB unless they had confidence in Nancy and other staff members. He thinks it is important to decide on opening each ministry individually because circumstances vary.

Judy pointed out that local day cares have remained open and suggested referencing that fact in communications to the congregation. Nancy said that BB follows the same protocols and guidelines as day care centers.

Jason said that if the Ministry Council is willing to support BB re-opening, he is not worried about the congregational reaction.

Judy asked if BB needs anything from the Ministry Council to move forward. Kristin requested a consensus for the plan. Kindergarten families have already been notified that the kindergarten program

will not be offered this year, but she would appreciate support moving forward with the plan for 3 and 4 year old classes.

Melanie said she does not think there needs to be a formal vote to approve a budget change. The proportion of income vs. expenses for BB is changing, but they are not intending to go over the budget for expenses.

Jason asked what the Finance Committee would like to see.

Amanda said she would like to see new budget estimates based on no kindergarten and a revised calendar.

Keith asked if it would be acceptable to give Kristin and Nancy a couple of days to review KISD's decision and work on a revised budget.

Kristin said they have run preliminary numbers and can have the requested information tomorrow. She would like to notify families as soon as possible.

Jason shared the preliminary numbers. After draining BB reserves, they are expecting a deficit of \$7200 if BB starts on September 8 and a deficit of \$4800 if BB starts on September 28.

Judy stated the plan:

1. Find out KISD decision
2. Report to Erik and Amanda
3. Reconvene Ministry Council for vote if needed
4. Communication to congregation

Estee offered to work on the congregation communication, the timing of which will depend on the timing of the school opening. Keith suggested including in the weekly pastor email.

Melanie reiterated the circumstances that require a vote.

Nancy, Kristin, Erik, Amanda and Melanie will meet to determine if a Ministry Council meeting is necessary.

Ellie asked if the vote could be through email, but Judy said that would not be the best method since the turnaround needs to be quick.

Nancy and Kristin left the Zoom meeting.

Lay Leadership Reports

Virtual Leadership Fair

Jason said the Lay Leadership (LL) team is working on a plan to replace the table with sign-up sheets in the Narthex that we offered last year with a way to sign up virtually. This new sign-up would start in September and be available for several weeks.

Lou asked for particular attention to the need for more female members for the Board of Trustees.

Chairperson Transition

LL has a goal to ensure seamless leadership transitions. They developed a plan for chairpersons:

1. Appoint shadow to the chairperson for one year term
2. At the end of the year, the shadow becomes the chairperson
3. The outgoing chair stays on in a mentor role for several months
4. Offer orientation sessions to those starting terms

LL requests endorsement from the Ministry Council to begin appointing shadow chairs. Keith asked about confidentiality issues relating to SPR specifically for outgoing chairs staying involved. Jason said the outgoing chairs would not need to attend meetings. The role would be more about procedures and advice. He will take this feedback to the LL to consider further.

Amanda said she likes the plan and that it would work very well in a co-chair situation. She asked how new chairs would be nominated.

Jason said that this process would vary by committee since their rules vary. Trustees elect their own leadership.

Lou said it would not work for there to be a shadow for Trustees because of the rule that they must elect their own leader. He asked about term limits for chairs. His personal intention is to serve for only one year. He suggested that the chair of Trustees should be in their second year as a Trustee in a three year term. This would allow for the last year to be in an advisory capacity. Lou also asked about the chair role for Ministry Council and suggested a one-year term.

Jason said the main goal of the LL team is to equip chairs. The plan may vary a bit for various committees, but the goal is to have a continuity plan in place.

Keith asked if the LL team has a position on how long chairs should serve.

Jason said there is not much guidance on this matter in the Book of Discipline.

Leadership Development Team

Jason said the LL team has previously dealt with standing committees, but there are lots of leaders at KUMC who are not part of these committees. The LL team considered if there are principles that apply to all of these positions and if foundational training should be available to all leaders. The LL team would like to create a Leadership Development Team, a small group with expertise to create curriculum and training, to be implemented by the LL team.

1. Identify people with expertise in developing leaders
2. Rey Gonzalez has been asked to create a baseline assessment, where we are starting from

The LL team is seeking endorsement of the Ministry Council to give Rey permission to be present at various meeting to observe and create a report.

Rey introduced himself and shared some of his background and experience as a consultant. He is also a Sunday school teacher and usher at KUMC. He said that in the current process, anyone who volunteers becomes a leader. He sees the need for orientation to make sure that volunteers understand the role

they are undertaking. It's important in a non-business situation to be efficient and respect the time of volunteers.

The MC agreed to endorse Rey's observations.

Jason said that Rey may also conduct interviews to complete his assessment.

Youth Council

Ellie reported that the Youth Council has been formed with one representative from each grade, two at-large members and Ellie and Jules. The purpose of the first meeting will be to form youth families for spiritual formation.

Jules said they were inspired by their experience on MC to gather more voices.

Technology Assessment

Toni said a team was formed based on an idea that Polly proposed at the last MC meeting. They wanted to find out if seniors needed help connecting using technological tools. The goal of the team was to connect with seniors and help when needed, and also to offer a resource for seniors to reach out and ask questions if they were concerned about security, scams, etc.

The team sent out 302 surveys with stamped return envelopes. They have had a 40% return rate so far. Of those, 80% indicated that they did not need assistance and 20% requested assistance. Toni has made 30 phone calls to find out specifics. Some needed help setting up Livestream. Some did not connect the name "Keller Media" with the church and thus were not opening Quick News and pastor emails.

Victoria has been following up with people who needed assistance in setting up access to the online directory.

Everyone contacted has expressed appreciation for the follow-up. They all know that the church continues to be active. None is pushing for the church to re-open quickly, but they miss the contact and seeing their friends in person.

Toni suggested creating a large print, black-and-white version of Quick News that would be delivered in person to those who do not use email.

Melanie expressed concerns over asking Carol to create another version of QN. There are many links in QN, so it would not be as easy as just printing what is on the screen.

Judy suggested a buddy system to deliver information so that volunteers would be assigned just a few people to print and deliver for.

Polly said the survey has led to more questions. Lisa Ham, who participated on the technology assessment task force, is excited about following up. Polly suggested inviting her to a future MC meeting to report.

Estee thanked the task force for following up on a need that has become suddenly critical during the pandemic. Judy asked for future plans to be shared with the MC.

Jason closed in prayer at 8:12pm.