

**Ministry Council Meeting Minutes
September 27, 2021**

Attending: Rev. Estee Valendy, Rev. Jason Valendy, Judy Belter, Melanie Grice, Bob Whetson, Mike Miller, Keith Bierley, Julie Sizemore, Sara Howard

Guest: Elizabeth Bass (Ministry Council Chair Shadow)

Agenda:

1. Opening preparation to do God's work	Jason/Estee	10 minutes
2. Meeting opening and announcements	Judy	10 minutes
3. Renewal Leave	Estee	10 minutes
4. Update on Church Conference	Jason	5 minutes
5. Lay Leadership Team update	Jason	5 minutes
6. 2022 SPR Budgeting report Annual Pastoral Review Process	Keith	10 minutes
7. Thinking on Restructuring	Dave (Judy)	10 minutes
8. Annual Church Survey	Judy	20 minutes
9. Meeting close and next steps	Judy	5 minutes

Judy called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

Jason read a passage from Exodus 16. He reflected on what the Israelites carried with them to remind them who they are and whose they are. We all carry tokens, either physical objects or stories, which are important to us, that remind us of something else. He invited the group to reflect and share.

Judy announced that Elizabeth Bass has accepted the role of Ministry Council Chair beginning in January 2022. Judy asked that the other members of Ministry Council introduce themselves and share whether they would continue in their roles beyond the end of the year.

Judy reviewed the team covenant.

Renewal Leave

Estee will submit a typed version since she has lost her voice. She wanted to share her experience and expressed her gratitude for the time away. (Appendix A)

Update on Church Conference

The District Superintendent has approved the meeting to be held at November 7 at 10am in the Sanctuary. At the end of the meeting, the church will vote to recommend all the documents to the charge conference. Estee and Jason have been given permission to run the church conference without the D.S. in attendance. Jason and Melanie have already distributed documents to be completed by November 1.

Jason suggested moving the October 24 Ministry Council meeting to November 1 in order to have time to gather documents and review them.

Lay Leadership Team Update

Rod Everhart and Angela Miller are compiling the nominations, both written and digital. They will meet and begin putting together lists of candidates.

The Lay Leadership Team went through a primer of training before rolling it out to be used in other areas of the church. Staff also went through training facilitated by Lay Leadership to develop a team covenant.

SPR Budgeting

Keith reported that SPR has begun the budgeting process. Various members of SPR have met with directors and executive directors to discover their needs. There are about 24 people on staff in addition to Building Blocks teachers and nursery workers. Technically there is no budget for personnel until January 2022, but there are multiple steps before then.

Per conference guidelines, each church is required to evaluate each pastor annually. Each pastor is required to self-evaluate and SPR is required to do an additional evaluation. Both evaluations are submitted to the conference office before the end of the calendar year. Lauren's has already been completed and SPR plans to complete Jason's and Estee's over the next couple of months.

SPR plans to evaluate health insurance options, including how much is paid by employees, before the end of the year as part of the budgeting process.

Restructuring

Judy said the purpose of a laity council on ministries would be to create a means and process for the Lay Leader to carry out the role responsibility of connecting the congregation to church leadership, and connecting ministry staff to congregation and church leaders. The intent is to link ministry staff with laity in partnership that empowers staff and leverages their expertise in realizing our mission of "making disciples of Jesus Christ for transformation of the world." A major advantage of creating a council on ministries would be to focus both councils, (current Ministry Council which would become the Church Council) and the new council on ministries, on clearly defined duties and responsibilities. See the attachment for a list of duties and more detail on the objectives. (Appendix B)

She invited Ministry Council members to share possible pitfalls that we need to watch out for if we were to implement restructuring. Concerns were voiced that staff may feel “checked up on” or that the new council is somehow providing “oversight.” A discussion on the many ways this transition needs to be approached to mitigate such fears included 1) openness as to the purpose of the new ministry council, 2) frank discussions on what the new council will be responsible for, and importantly what they will not be doing, 3) participation from all ministries in the design of the implementation with flexibility around each ministry's needs - one size does not fit all, and 4) encouragement for all ministry units to have respectful conversations on how to work together to understand and appreciate the needs of all in order to collaborate for overall effectiveness.

Annual Church Survey

Judy said annual evaluation of all ministries and administration is one of the major responsibilities of the current ministry council, and will continue to be of the future church council if the proposed change is adopted. The church-wide survey done this year was a one time initiative to gauge feelings around coming out of COVID restrictions. The attached proposed objectives for constructing a standard instrument are to establish benchmarks and evaluate yearly. (Appendix C)

She asked for Ministry Council members to review the objectives before our next meeting. She also asked for each person to come up with a sample question related to the particular area each of us represents on Ministry Council. We are particularly looking for successes and ways to build on those successes.

Closed with Ministry Council Prayer at 7:56pm.

Appendix A

Ministry Council members,

Last night at our meeting I was unable to give a report on my renewal leave as I would have liked, due to my sinus infection and lack of voice! Please accept this email as my written report.

I am extremely grateful for the 8 weeks you allowed me to take renewal leave. It was an even more fruitful time than I expected. I did not begin the leave with a strict plan for what I wanted to accomplish or a fixed way I intended to spend my time. While this was unnatural to me as an ESFJ, it seems that the looser approach allowed the Spirit of God to guide me in a way that God couldn't have if I had held tighter control to the plan I wanted.

As the leave unfolded my daily rhythm of morning prayer expanded. Instead of 20 minutes of prayer and reading, my morning prayer time came to last until noon each day. I read two books slowly, journaling my way through them. These books were *The Deeper Journey* and *Freedom of Simplicity*. In a way, *The Deeper Journey* book continues the work that we did together as a Ministry Council in January using *The Gift of Being Yourself* book by David Benner. If you remember, in that book Benner writes about the false self and the true self and this is the same theme of *The Deeper Journey*. In my morning prayer time, I feel that God revealed more to me about my false self and my attachment to security and self protection. This learning led me to pick up the *Freedom of Simplicity* book which further confronted me on this theme. I feel that as a result of this challenging work God has peeled away some of the layers of myself that I cling to, a change that I hope will result in me being more fully the person and pastor that God calls me to be.

On Sundays during my leave, I went to worship at various churches, visiting colleagues and experiencing other worship settings. I tried my best to attend and simply worship - to not scout for ideas and not compare KUMC to other churches. I attended LifeChurch, the church right around the corner from KUMC. It was refreshing and informative to worship in a tradition that is different from ours. I also worshipped at FUMC Hurst, University UMC, Arborlawn UMC and FUMC Fort Worth. It was a joy to worship as a part of these congregations, to feel the UMC connection and to celebrate the ministry done in Christ's name.

I hope that my renewal leave sets a precedent for other staff members at KUMC to take time to tend to their relationship with God and practice sabbath. A career in ministry is a blessing in so many ways, but one weakness is that those of us who work for the church can allow our church work to take the place of personal time with God. Sometimes a reset is needed and that is what renewal leave provided for me. Thank you for your generosity and your trust in me. I'm humbled and honored to continue serving as your pastor.

Grace and peace,

Estee

Appendix B

DRAFT worksheet Restructure Ministry Council

Current Ministry Council

1. Executive agency of the Charge Conference
2. Envision, Plan, Implement, and annually evaluate the congregation's ministry and mission.
3. All items below:

Proposed restructuring to:

- create a means and process for the Lay Leader to carry out the role responsibility of connecting the congregation to church leadership,
- create a body of laity focused on the ministries that make disciples,
- connect the ministry staff to lay leaders in partnership that empowers staff and leverages their expertise across laity,
- focus each council on clearly defined duties and responsibilities

Restructure to create an additional council, change the name of both councils to better define their purpose, and expand involvement and participation of laity in all ministries.

Church Council Membership as defined by Book of Discipline

1. executive agent of charge conference
2. carry out actions approved by the charge conference
3. administration of the church and daily operations
4. fill vacancies among lay officers between charge conferences
5. evaluate all ministries annually
6. evaluate administration annually
7. create and supervise the strategic plan for an effective congregation
8. ensure decisions made to shape the future based on the cycle of discipleship

Ministry Council Membership defined by lay leaders linked to ministries

1. envision new ministries tied to mission and vision
2. plan and/or replan ministry that drives the mission and fulfills KUMC vision
3. implement ministry with ongoing monitoring against goals
4. work to empower others in their areas of ministry
5. focus on faith, abilities and actions of all who work together for the glory of God
6. carry out the disciple making mission through H.O.P.E. (hospitality, offer Christ, purpose, and engagement)
7. plan and implement programs for nurture, outreach, witness and resources in the church

Appendix C

Church-wide Congregational Survey

Survey Development Worksheet

GOAL: Evaluate all ministries and administration of KUMC

Objectives (proposed):

1. Survey linked to the mission of making disciples of Jesus for transformation of the world and the vision of hearts turning to God and neighbor.
2. Develop a standard instrument to establish measurable benchmarks by repeating the survey of the congregation annually.
3. Use broad categories as indicators of overall health of the church body.
4. Focus on identifying positives and building on success in all ministries and administration.
5. Develop a survey instrument and process that is efficient to administer, complete, compile and report.
6. Keep focus on transparency across all ministries and administration.

Categories to be evaluated (proposed):

Membership vows: 5 statements with 5 point Likert scale responses

“To what extent do you believe the church supports you with your vow of _____”
service, presence, gifts, witness, prayer

Ministries:

Children, youth, adult/connecting, serving, caring, music, worship, stewardship

Administration - laity:

Finance, Staff/Parish Relations, Board of Trustees, Lay Leadership

Administration - staff: