

Grace United Methodist Church  
201 Isle Royale Street  
Houghton, MI. 49931

Simplified Accountable Leadership Team (“SALT”) meeting

July 10, 2023

Attendance: Heather Myers, Mary Lou Vinson, Bob Richards, , Jacob Manchester, Reverend Eric Falker, Peter Larsen, Rae Vaught (Chris Walls planned absence)

Pastor Eric opened the meeting with prayer at 7:05, and then Heather offered a short meditation on Matthew 6 and 1 Kings 17, including the account of Elijah and the widow of Zarephath. As we seek to lead the ministries and administration of the church, she encouraged us to remember the promises God has made to provide for us when we seek Him first.

Following the meditation, we transitioned to the topic of best practices for board governance including conflict resolution. Eric shared that a tool to employ when negative feelings try to take over as conflict arises. It was recommended that we consider what keeps us grounded to avoid losing control to negative emotions. He went on to introduce the concept of the Matthew 18 methods for conflict resolution. Working through intentional steps to resolve disputes, and having a boundary as a backstop in case the conflict endures.

Some recent micro conflicts within our church family were introduced as a point of discussion, including concerns about some of the pews being roped off and the potential to close the balcony during worship. It was offered and accepted that we could try a suggesting approach, rather than a restriction approach, to encourage folks to sit closer together during worship. Following discussion, there was consensus that we will take the ropes down and that the balcony will remain open for the time being.

On the topic of building community during worship, Bob reminisced about past positive experiences with a time for “Passing the Peace” during worship. Eric is open to trying something like that and will consider how best to describe that and incorporate it into our typical order of worship.

Mary Lou shared an update from the VBS team in her role as liaison. No major needs were noted, the possibility of providing supper for volunteers prior to the evening start was discussed and encouraged if someone was willing to lead the effort.

Following the VBS update, we had another discussion about the details of when and how we would vote on matters before the group, vs. approving motions by consensus. Pros and cons of a voice vote vs. balloting were noted, with consensus building towards taking simple ballots when a vote is needed due to lack of consensus. Furthering this discussion a bit, the question of what constitutes a quorum for board action was raised. Unfortunately, my notes do not

clearly capture the consensus, perhaps this wasn't fully resolved. There seemed to be consensus that it would be wise to have *some* minimum number of the SALT members in order to vote on certain matters, while allowing flexibility for a smaller group to respond to urgent needs that arise in between regular meetings. It was noted that our intended flexibility in allowing consensus building and perhaps even voting by members participating remotely could likely mitigate the challenges of meeting a quorum for applicable voting/approval matters. I'll leave it to the group to clarify this point at a future meeting.

Maintenance needs at the parsonage were also discussed, including repairs to the garage door and a quote to replace multiple windows in the house that showing damage and potentially leading to issues with mold and/or mildew. The question of the potential need for a 2<sup>nd</sup> quote was brought forward. As a longtime trustee, I shared that our practice has been to pursue multiple quotes, and at times we've had to accept a single quote when others could not be acquired in a timely manner. The garage repairs have been done, and we decided to seek a 2<sup>nd</sup> quote for the window replacement.

Rae was named liaison to church secretary Vicki Bradsberry.

Mary Lou closed us with prayer at 8:31

Respectfully submitted,  
Jacob Manchester