

Grace United Methodist Church
Simplified Accountable Leadership Team Meeting
February 5th, 2024, 7pm

Present: Pastor Eric, Zach DeYoung, Rae Vaught, Chris Walls, Pete Larsen, Bob Richards, Jake Manchester. Mary Lou Vinson was sick. Lezley Heldt was unavailable to attend.

Pastor Eric called the meeting to order in prayer at 7:01 p.m. Spiritual Formation provided by Pastor Eric from Acts 3.

Old Business

1. Reviewed January minutes. Bob noted that the discussion around the ministry shares payment reflected a good way of working through issues and speaking up when necessary.
2. Elected a new SALT chair and vote on Trustee Chair for legal purposes. Chris is willing to serve as chair for the remainder of the year. Chris was unanimously approved as chair for the remainder of calendar year 2024 by consensus. Pastor Eric confirmed that Chris would also be listed as trustees chair formally.
3. Update on the 2025 Pine Ridge, South Dakota mission trip: Zach noted that it is their off-season right now but they will be responsive--just with a little bit of lead time.
 - a. From P.R.: Team member limit of 14 per week, registration starts in August and a significant deposit would be required at that point. The minimum age is 12 (at the time of the event). Zach noted that we couldn't do two teams of 14, unless we went at a "low-volume" time. August is a low-volume time if we wanted to consider registering two teams.
 - b. Zach will announce the mission on Feb. 11 to the church, and those with interest will have an initial meeting on March 3rd (subject to change based on Zach's travel schedule) after worship/choir practice. Goals will be to gauge interest and set dates.
4. Update on protection policy and training. – Rae and Eric have finished editing the policy. The updated document was sent out by email to the SALT. Training sessions will need to be planned. Rae noted that a couple of changes were made highlighted in yellow. There was a brief discussion about the state of the nursery. How are we going to handle the need to have two in the nursery? We may need to engage some known volunteers until the training sessions are completed. Our post-training plan is to schedule a second unpaid person to work each week with the regular nursery worker. Rae and Eric are willing to do the training sessions. Eric suggested March 10 as a possible training date.

Bob asked about bullying and if we should be calling it “reporting” when the state doesn’t require it or wouldn’t know what to do with it. It is more of an issue to be dealt with, rather than a “report” to be made. Also, it is subjective. Jake suggested that rather than notifying the pastor, that any bullying incident should be reported to the SALT. Zach seconded this suggestion. The SALT agreed by consensus.

Jake asked about the “sleeping accommodations” section and wondered why it was there. There was also a question about gender and what, if anything, we need to do to address any gender question issues. Another question is whether there is a significant enough difference with overnight activities than daytime activities. Zach moved, and by consensus we agreed, that we were ok leaving it as-is pending any further feedback. We can always revisit this and improve it later on.

Bob also asked about the “negligent treatment” section and making sure the use of the term was clear, as that term did not appear to be used elsewhere. The training can help to clarify “negligent” and “neglect” and also who needs to report.

5. Update on leadership team covenant. Pastor Eric said that additional work is needed on this and we should discuss this in March.

New Business

1. Confirmed Zach DeYoung as new MI Annual Conference Lay Representative. Zach is willing. Typically the church pays for hotel and food. Zach indicated that wouldn’t be necessary. Approved by consensus. To be clear, Eric noted that this would be through 2026, as church terms are 3 years. Zach can step down early if desired.
2. Discussion on creating a nominations team. Eric wonders if we need one? There is concern that if we are self-nominating that it looks insular. Chris indicated that he feels that it would be helpful to have one. Bob thought it would be helpful as well. Jake was unsure if it is needed now that we are down to just the SALT. Jake suggested that we could solicit nominations for the SALT. Zach suggested that we chew on it for a bit and revisit in March. By consensus, we decided to revisit in March.
3. Lent schedule and worship services
 - a. “The Chosen” Bible study – Tuesdays, 7pm, Feb. 6th-March 26th
 - b. Ash Wednesday 2/14 – Walk-in devotion and prayer, 9am to 7pm
 - c. Maundy Thursday 3/28 – 7pm at Grace UMC. (also 10am at Painesdale)
 - d. Good Friday, 3/29 – Cross Walk at 5:30pm from Grace to First; Service at Hancock 7pm.
 - e. Easter Sunday 3/31 – Breakfast at 8:30-9:30am. Service at 10am. Jeff & LaRae are going to help with breakfast.

4. Thoughts on Potlucks or mission dinners? Zach and Eric indicated that there would probably be one or more for the Pine Ridge team. Zach also indicated that the youth group might want to do one to raise money for the youth room.
5. Scheduling a Zoom meeting with Gary Step from UMF Michigan – March 11th, 7:30pm. Eric wondered if we want to do that at the same time as the next SALT meeting. Consensus was to try to do it during the next SALT meeting. Bob suggested that we have a new investment report available for the next meeting.
6. Other items. Eric mentioned that he will be talking with Painesdale about their worship times. It is getting hard to find speakers so thinking with them about service times might help.
7. Rae suggested that we discuss the Mission Possible book next time. Chapters 1-2.

We took prayer requests and praises. Closing prayer by Chris Walls at 8:24 pm.

– Next meeting is March 11th, 2024

Submitted by Pete Larsen.