

Leadership Board (LB) Minutes for January 9, 2025, Meeting

Attending (all via Zoom due to church closure policy): Pastor Melissa, Joana Arthur, Charles Dankwah, Matt Dodds, Virginia Newman, Sandy Ross, Leila Hamilton and Dana Kauffman. Peggy Owusu-Ansah was excused. Dan Dickinson, Financial Treasurer but not a member of the Board, joined briefly at the start of the meeting

Secretary: Dana Kauffman

Opening Prayer/Spiritual Formation – Pastor Melissa provided a reflection on snow and offered a prayer.

Leadership Equipping – Nothing formal. Dana noted that Bruce Bartolain had helped him prepare for meeting.

Treasurer's Report – Dan reviewed his December 2024 report and answered questions.

Pastor's Report – Pastor Melissa provided highlights, including her success with Pastor Michelle from Kingstowne Communion in securing a UMC District Office grant to fund expanding the joint Love Your Neighbor Cooperative. The Pastor also noted a request from the Finance Team for the LB to change its meeting schedule to the third Thursday, due to delays in receiving financial reports from our bank. After discussion, LB unanimously approved the shift, with a delayed, 7:30pm, start for any meetings that conflict with Pheonix Rising gatherings.

Team Review - All God's Children (AGC) Preschool – Director Jessica Copes provided an update, highlighting the following:

- Water in preschool area tested lead-free
- Enrollment is down since Covid
- To increase enrollment, Jessica has: placed an outside banner; placed site on Google Maps; arranged promotion through Nalls Produce and My Gym; taken advertising course through NOVA CC; tasked assistant, with marketing background, to assist in marketing; is re-certifying herself as a teacher; and is developing a virtual, on-line tour of preschool
- Almost all area preschool providers have similar enrollment issues. As AGC is part of FUMC, they have no "cash reserve" to fall back on when enrollment is low – unlike private providers
- Registration opens next week for returning students and mid-Feb for new ones, Will increase enrollment fee by \$25

- Noted that many of the children are from military families – driving some of the turnover
- Has emphasized that AGC is not a daycare operation but a true preschool
- Considering a 3 to 7% increase in tuition (3% is average, 7% would bring tuition in line with competitors). Will be running level of increase by a representative group of parents. Instituted a 7% increase last year

Mission Engagement/Strategic Planning – Year-long Stewardship – Dana briefly noted that he and several church members participated in a 11/7/24 Zoom session hosted by a District financial official on creating a year-round stewardship ministry. Shared highlights and Pastor Melissa provided additional notes on the opportunity. Dana shared a sample membership approach and asked who might be interested. Dana will coordinate with Pastor on outreach for possible members.

Review of Information Reports – With a motion from Charles and a second from Virginia, the Board unanimously approved the LB Minutes for December 2024. With a motion from Charles and a second from Matt, the Board unanimously approved the December 2024 Treasurer’s Report.

Action Items

- A. **Elect Trustee Chair and Register Trustees** - With a motion from Charles and a second from Matt, the Board unanimously moved a slate with Dana to serve as Trustee Chair and three other LB members to also be registered as Trustees with Fairfax County (the three being Charles, Matt and Sandy).
- B. **Approve Leadership Board Covenant** – Board had no questions on document and are prepared to sign when we meet again in person.
- C. **Apportionment Update to Congregation** – Dana noted that we are current.
- D. **Discuss Grant Status** – Dana and Pastor Melissa provided members with an update on the early efforts to apply for a District-provided Infrastructure Grant. Intent is to be able to retire a bank loan, the majority of which was secured to pay for flood mitigation and associated drain work, and to also seek funds to replace flooring damaged by this previous flooding.
- E. **Work Group Updates for Policy Development**
 - a. Financial Policy – Dana noted that policy has been updated
 - b. Building Use/Trustee and Building Management Policy – Charles shared that it is essentially done – Charles said he and Matt need to review draft with Jess Posey (Team Lead for Building Management Team - BMT). Dana suggested that they set the next LB meeting as their target date for presenting all or a portion of the policies, as they are already scheduled to provide a general update then.
 - c. Revised Staff Handbook and Administrative Policies – Dana and Pastor shared that these are the last to be updated, as many sections tie to other

church policies. Bruce has agreed to provide some assistance in moving these to closure for approval by LB.

- F. Set dates: Town Halls; Planning Retreat** – After discussion, it was agreed to hold a Town Hall on January 26th. The focus would be to brief the congregation on the Franconia-Kingstowne Love Your Neighbor Cooperative Grant and seek their input and hopeful approval of the Infrastructure Grant. As for the retreat, it was decided not to pursue an overnight venue (Camp Highroads) but rather to seek accommodations for a single day gathering. A key topic identified for discussion was Year-long Stewardship – possibly arranging for a speaker. The date will be May 3rd and, unfortunately, Leila shared that she will not be able to participate.

Communication – Leadership Installation – January 26th was selected as the date. The Pastor invited LB members to attend both or either service. **February Meeting** – Will be February 20th and the Team Review will be a presentation from the Building Management Team

Executive Session – There was not a closed session.

Closing Prayer – Dana delivered the closing prayer.