

Hilltop United Methodist Church
Administrative Council Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 19, 2017, 6:30 pm

Present: Kelly McCuaig, Shannon McCuaig, Stacy Vanderwerf, Paulette Booker, Paulette Adams, Jeff Adams, Don Putzier, Margaret Beaty, Holly Aasen, Karin Gavin, Kerry Rausch, Judy Argetsinger, Ashley Swoboda, Michelle Behsman.

The meeting was called to order by Jeff Adams. Jeff opened the meeting by asking each who were present to recall how they first knew God and that God was with them. He then called on us to consider those in our world who do not have such an experience to share and how it is our call to invite people to know Jesus. He reminded us of the mission of the United Methodist Church, to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. All joined in the Apostle's Creed.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from the meeting of September 21, 2017 were available for review. A motion was made by Kerry Rausch to approve the minutes as presented. Paulette Booker seconded. The motion carried.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Kelly shared an inspiration from his week away backpacking in Colorado. He observed that there were a large number of hikers on the trail to Mt. Windom and that they engaged in conversation with all whom they encountered. Kelly marveled at the congenial company they found along the trail and theorized that because they were all on the same path they were able to overcome differences as they sought a common goal. He compared this to the work of the church and asked what it might look like if we at Hilltop were all on the same path.

Kelly then shared information about the invitation extended to Hilltop to take part in the Missional Church Consultation Initiative (MCCI). In a brief overview of MCCI he explained that this program is designed to help unify the church in a common goal by interviewing members/leadership and identifying strengths. The first step is a breakthrough prayer workshop, followed by teaching workshops and then interviews. Following an assessment and recommendation by MCCI, the church would then vote whether to accept the recommended prescriptions. If the church accepts the recommendations then MCCI would provide coaching and guidance in implementing the prescriptions. Kelly then asked Ad Council members who were in attendance at the informational meeting to share their impressions of this program. Following is a synthesis of the statements shared by council members.

MCCI is a process of empowering the church to be leaders and the prescriptions are based on the hopes and dreams verbalized by our members and leadership. The process involves the entire membership and sparks a culture movement, helping us start a new life. MCCI would provide training for both Pastor Kelly and an implementation team from Hilltop. MCCI has been used effectively in the West Ohio Conference and is heavily supported by Bishop Ough. The invitation is not extended to all churches and some churches have asked to be involved but were denied. Hilltop was invited not because we asked, but because we fit the profile and were recommended by Bishop Ough and the cabinet. We were not invited because we are already in the process of change, but rather because we exemplify the gospel imperatives to grow in our love of God and neighbor, reach new people, and heal a broken world.

There were several who expressed concern with the additional work required of Pastor Kelly. It was noted that

there is a financial commitment of \$3000 to MCCI. Hilltop is growing and has implemented key recommended practices – do we need this additional help considering the time and financial commitment involved? Kelly spoke to the concerns of adding more to his schedule and said that he would have more time available in the spring as ordination requirements would be complete by January and Clergy Leadership Academy would end in May. He did feel that a positive of the MCCI process would be the opportunity for all to have a voice and a vote. There was concern for entering into a process that may require additional change when we are still reconciling differences in changes made to worship. It was noted that the process will not necessarily prescribe change – they might recommend that we continue to do what we are doing or perhaps fine tune an area of ministry. Having an outside consultation might be healthier and having feedback would be beneficial.

After discussion, Jeff Adams entertained a motion to sign the covenant to participate in the MCCI process. Paulette Booker moved and Stacy Vanderwerf seconded. The motion carried.

Upward: Paulette Booker reported that the team has been working on artistic illustrations for services through the end of the year. She said the first meeting of the worship support team met and a second meeting for those interested will meet on Sat. Nov. 4th from 12:00-2:00 pm.

Inward (Nominations): Stacy Vanderwerf said that Connect Academy is GREAT! There was brief discussion about the Academy conflicting with choir - some choir members wished to attend and hoped that it could be moved to another night. Stacy responded that a pre-survey revealed that Wednesday evening was the best choice for most who would be apt to sign up for this opportunity. Having 40 individuals sign up reinforced this scheduling decision. Stacy also mentioned that she would be working on leadership nominations for the coming year.

Finance Report: Kerry Rausch presented the September finance report – expenses were \$45,397.22 and income was \$25,657.80 with an ending checking balance of \$47,316.27. Less \$32,321.67 in designated funds, we have a working general fund balance of \$14,994.60. Kerry said that she will begin working with Pastor Kelly to put together the 2018 budget. While adhering to a “live by faith, not scarcity” ideology, she still believes that we can be more realistic in our budgeting which can be accomplished by having the 2018 pledges prior to finalizing our budget. Stacy Vanderwerf moved to accept the finance report and Paulette Adams seconded. Motion carried.

Kids Connection: Pastor Kelly announced that Kids Connection would launch this Sunday (Oct. 22nd) and Robin Staloch, our new Children’s & Nursery Ministry Coordinator would have the nursery staffed in three weeks.

Youth and Campus: Ashley Swoboda reported that she had received positive feedback about youth group. She gave a brief overview of how their time is spent Wednesday evenings and explained that they were not just playing games but exploring ways to encounter Jesus. She was also excited to report that in the first weeks of college night there was an average of 22 students in attendance. They are exploring the class meeting model and focusing on being in community with one another. The students have also expressed an interest in mentoring high school students. Ashley sees that location can be a barrier to attendance and envisions a campus presence and/or a meeting space near campus next fall.

Parish Nurse: Judy Argetsinger said that the Red Cross collected 27 units of blood at the recent drive. There was brief discussion about how we can better promote the next bloodmobile visit and aim for a higher goal of units donated.

Technology: Don said that the audio upgrades would be complete by Advent.

New Business: Judy Argetsinger read a letter of response to the letter/request presented to Ad Council at the September meeting regarding the format of the first worship service. There was discussion about plans for a reconciliation service, which could be lead by DS Susan Nienaber. Kelly said that MCCI may help us address this issue and he tasked the pastoral staff with seeking the appropriate next step.

Paulette Booker reported that we had received a grant award of \$3000 from the Minnesota Conference Higher Education Ministry for our campus ministry. Paulette also gave an overview of the Investing in Congregations grant application which will support *Next Generation Ministries*, which focuses on making disciples of our Hilltop youth, from infant to college age. We are requesting funds of \$26,000 to support the salaries for our Associate Pastor of Youth & Campus Ministries and Children's & Nursery Ministry Coordinator. Judy Argetsinger moved to sign and submit the grant application and Kerry Rausch seconded. The motion carried.

Adjournment/Next Meeting: Jeff closed the meeting with prayer. The next Council meeting will be held on Thursday, November 16, 2017. The Annual Church Conference will be Saturday, November 18th at First UMC in Redwood Falls from 1:00-3:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Behsman