



**Leadership Board
Meeting Minutes
May 15, 2023
7-9pm**

Location: DSM Room

Board Members Present: Brittaney Lucas, Kristy Harrison, Lori Sedlak, Veronica Runyan, Jill Easterling, Garrick Barnett, Susan Boddy, Ben Murray, and Dale Gold

Board Members Absent: None

Others Present: Margaret Brandt

Pastors Present: Tom Parkinson, Bud Fickley

Call to Order and Approval of Minutes: Brittaney Lucas called the meeting to order and offered a prayer. Meeting minutes from March 20, 2023, were approved. Motion made by Dale Gold and seconded by Garrick Barnett. Motion carried, with unanimous consent. Notes from April 14, 2023, a special strategy session, were reviewed. Motion to approve was made by Lori Sedlak and seconded by Dale Gold. Motion carried, with unanimous consent.

Report of the Senior Pastor:

Pastor Tom discussed how pleased he was with the initiatives we have been able to get off the ground the first couple months of the year.

Ministry Highlights:

- The Children's and Youth Ministry Lock in was a huge success. They packed 10,000 meals for Rise Against Hunger.
- Easter week was also a success. The music ministry presented their cantata, the children's choir presented a musical, and the student ministry hosted a pancake breakfast on Psalm Sunday. We also held special services on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday. The total attendance for Easter Sunday worship was 702, the highest of any Sunday since the pandemic started.

- The Dutilh Sermon Podcast launched on April 18th, and now has more than 35 subscribers.
- The Spring food drive provided 25 local families in need with food boxes. The in-kind donations value of items collected was \$5,000.
- Two small groups were formed after Easter. Both groups are short term meeting for six weeks. One is divorce care group for women and the other is a group discussing “The Chosen” TV series.
- Nine new members joined in April.
- Graceful & Grateful hosted a guest speaker from VOICe and is figuring out ways to work with them.

Attendance Report

- Worship attendance has continued to trend upward toward pre-pandemic attendance levels.
- For the first four months of this year our online attendance is 12% of the total, which means more people are attending in person.

Area Reports:

Financial Update: Garrick updated the Leadership Board on the church’s financials.

- After a strong April, year-to-date are up almost 5%.
- In late 2022, the church received approximately \$55,000 as an Employee Retention Credit (ERC) from the IRS. We have been holding this money to ensure IRS does not claw back any of the money. Ben Murray investigated the ERC program, and it was determined that the funds are now safely available for church use. The board discussed using the fund to pay down the mortgage and/or placing them in the capital reserve fund. Garrick Barnett will do some additional analysis and a decision will be made at the next meeting.

Personnel Report: The board convened in closed session to receive an update on a personnel matter.

Property Report: Jill Easterling provided an update on a variety of projects being completed at the church.

- Seven dying trees have been removed from the parking lot and around the grounds.
- The gas bill in 2023 is running higher than expected. Beth Freiss is investigating.
- Beth Freiss and Jill Easterling are meeting with Harry Hoover to learn more about our HVAC system.
- Jill and Beth met and prioritized items that need to be completed which include: window replacement in the ed wing, parking lot restriping, power wash and repointing brick, parsonage work, fellowship hall wall design, pew removal in the balcony, acoustical ceiling tiles in greeting area, and memorial garden refresh.

Special Appeal Offering:

TNC Appeal-June 25, 2023: Pastor Tom described that The Nydadire Connection is asking Dutilh Church to help with their “Moon Shot” fundraising campaign to complete the renovation of the sixth and final rural medical clinic. All Pittsburgh District Churches have been asked to participate.

The Board discussed making a special appeal for this project, in conjunction with the 2023 Vacation Bible School. The appeal will be made during worship services on June 25, as part of the VBS kick-off. The contributions can be made in one week, with a deadline of the following Sunday, July 2. All proceeds from the special offering, including VBS donations will be sent to TNC. Brittaney Lucas motioned approval for the TNC special appeal. Kristy Harrison seconded the motion. Motion carried with unanimous consent.

UMC Update: Pastor Tom updated the board on the UMC. Annual Conference is being held on June 14, 2023, where more than 200 local churches from Western PA will complete the final steps of the disaffiliation process.

- *Review of 2024 Connectional Apportionment:* It is suspected that our apportionment will increase in 2024, since church offerings rose in 2022.
- *Review of Conference “Intentional Missional Alignment” Proposal:* The conference is considering legislation that would sort the Annual Conference into three households, based on theological convictions around LGBTQIA ordination and marriage:
 - Traditional- seeking to uphold traditional views of marriage between one man and one woman.
 - Progressive- seeking to change the UMC *Discipline* and permit the practice of same gender weddings and LGBTQIA ordination in the UMC.
 - Blended- seeking to allow people to make contextual decisions about same gender weddings and LGBTQIA decisions.

The board will be attuned to whether or not this proposal is adopted, and if so, what it will mean for Dutilh Church.

Strategic Planning: Pastor Tom presented the Proposed Strategic Objectives that the Leadership Board had worked on in their April meeting. Discussion surrounded prioritizing and clarifying objectives, while also sorting through any objectives that may be missing. These objectives will be discussed more in the next Leadership Board meeting.

Future Meeting Agenda: More discussion about the Strategic Objectives.

Closing and Adjournment:

Pastor Bud offered a closing blessing.

The regular meeting scheduled for July 17 is being rescheduled due to conflicts with vacations.
The next meeting is scheduled for June 19, 2023, at 7pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Boddy
Board Secretary