

Welcoming: Anne Weinberg, Admin Council Chair. Spoke with passion on Admin Council expectations, the way the zoom retreat would be handled, where questions were to be directed and how the breakout sessions would work.

Opening Prayer: Adam Kelchner.

Committee Chairs

Trustees – John Szabo	Finance – Cal Cobb	Children’s Ministry – Amanda Morgan
SPRC – Marci White	Admin – Anne Weinberg/Jay Carnes	Endowment – Leonard McGugin
Outreach – Bethany Graham	Lay Leadership Development -Mary Ann Szabo/Elizabeth Oliphant	

Committee Chair Reports:

Trustees Committee:

1. John Szabo shared updates regarding overall building and grounds. Spoke at length about Covid-19.
2. Shared details on the county health data and the metrics used to determine the level of in house and in person worship and activities that can take place.
3. New concerns for the trustees committee will be how to open back up as, hopefully, infection rates drop, and vaccinations become more widely utilized.
4. Encouraged retreat attendees that trustees would be looking at this season to make needed changes.

Finance Committee:

1. Finance team was encouraged by the start of 2020 with a projected 4K surplus in revenue. This was prior to Covid and gathering restrictions. The finances of the church were being well run prior to quarantines and lockdowns.
2. Finance Committee oversaw a swift and insightful Covid expense reduction. In total over 90K in expenses were eliminated.
3. For 2020 thanks to expense reductions and generous church member giving the budget was balanced.
 - a. Not only was the budget balanced member giving has led to a 70K surplus. Which will be split 50K to trustee’s maintenance reserve and 20K to next year’s general fund to stave off any operating deficits in the next year.
 - b. Cal Cobb informed the church that funds are wisely invested.

Programing Updates – Adam Kelchner:

1. CHRIST UMC members have been feeling the losses of both people and community.

2. CHRIST UMC members have expressed feelings of angst over changes to the church during the Covid season: church size, financial concerns, and concerns over staff.
3. Our church did find positives:
 - a. Our church can adapt, and people stayed. Our future is bright.
 - b. The welcoming statement was finalized.
 - c. Right sized staffing, and the church financials are strong.
 - d. We have a new member.
4. Adam feels the emotions of our congregation.
5. Questions linger about what will be different after Covid.

Breakout Groups: Jay Carnes, Admin. Council Vice Chair shared how the group discussions would commence in the breakout rooms. Two questions were to be discussed after brief introductions.

Question 1: What is the best lesson you have learned from a group/team/club experience that you can use at church?

Question 2: Where do you see opportunities and/or concerns for our church as we move forward in ministry between now and fall 2021?

Breakout Groups Notes

Shanelle Rauh's Group:

Lessons learned:

1. Transparency
2. Don't judge based on current year. Give things a shot, knowing they will go back to normal
3. Communicating; hang in there. Share thoughts
4. Enthusiasm; vision around what we our goal is
5. Allow dignity of their own experience. Remember we don't know what it's like to have the experience others have.
6. Art of listening.
7. Noticing people; helps build relationships; everyone is going to be in a different place when we come back. Intentionality for connecting
8. Remembering the core value; remembering it's not just "my way", but it's about the bigger picture or the team; diversity of voice

Opportunities/Concerns:

Opportunity: While we have been online with church, we are reaching more people because of the online service and what that has offered. Reaching those that have never felt emotionally or spiritually safe being in a church building. The question is how do we keep reaching those when we can be back together.

Important to not leave our older church members. Keep up with the online services after we are back to still include those who may not be comfortable returning.

Focus on the seniors and how to get them back.

Concern: can't assume we can pick up right where we left off.

What does this look like with masks and sitting still with non-typical neuro; and how do we include them and are they feeling.

Re-engage children & youth to feel included.

Paul Bonner's Group:

Question 1:

Gary Minor – everyone's got a good idea.

Jeff Ready – assume good intent. Everyone's giving of their time...

Cindy Watson – open and full communication; to follow up that communication. It's always good to be in groups where the leadership is strong.

Rebecca Fiechtl – the best groups she's been a part of are ones that almost over communicate. The follow up helps. Organization... being prepared really helps. When people feel valued they want to add more.

John Szabo – there's not an issue with disagreeing. We should do it and learn from the good that comes out of it. Disagreement is not bad; it leads to something greater.

MaryAnn - along with listening, building relationships is important. Listening is much more productive when we know one another.

Ouida – a cooperative attitude is great! It has to be a group effort. We can't leave everything to the staff; we have to take part in the church. And let people know you care about them.

Question 2:

Julie – just getting people back into the routine of being at church, physically.

Gary – going to church is a habit; not going is a habit too. The good thing is that we've picked up 6 people in our SS class that have moved from our church. I hope Labor Day is a huge holiday where we might not have to social distance.

- Let's take care of old folks
- And let's reach out to the folks in a two-mile radius.
- There are probably 6 assisted living facilities within in a Mile loop.
- Residents will have spent a year and a half in their facilities and need to reconnect.
- Let's plan now in how we are going to get back in these places... people are going to need us.

Cindy – I'm concerned about getting some kind of movement with the General Conference decision about LGBTQ issue. This has potential to be

John Szabo – finding a balance to be in ministry with and two the children and families who have different boundaries about coming back and being involved.

Gary – the best way to be ministered too is to minister to others.

Rebecca – she had similar thoughts regarding outreach. When she's been involved in outreach, that's where she made good relationships, especially intergenerational connections. It's going to take time.

It's something we need to do; the outreach.

- She's also concerned about people who are leaving the church. Some folks move; but other people If could find out why, and maybe talk to them.

Gary – are there trends as to why they are leaving? Maybe employ a marketing firm or a third party who can gather more authentic responses.

Steve Middlebrooks' Group:

Question 1:

Shared culture/teamwork importance
Identify needs of members and create safe environment
Recognize limitations/do not over commit and be nonjudgmental
Make sure everyone is heard
Be authentic and transparent
Meet people where they are realizing everyone is not at same place
Good communication skills
Speak truth in love

Question 2:

Expect a significantly changed world, embrace it, explore creative responses
Increase online presence - maybe a campaign to raise money to improve technology- top of the line equipment
Recognize that people will feel different levels of comfort as we anticipate coming together again
Look for new opportunities/ways to be the church together
Continue social justice efforts

Mark Price's Group:

Question 1: What is the best lesson you have learned from a group/team/club experience that you can use at church?

- From the perspective of the hospitality industry: newcomers—any and all—should be made welcome by all—not just some—of the congregation.
- From the McDonald's chain perspective: make it a priority to interest and engage the children and the parents will come along.
- From the Girl Scout organization's perspective: one of our core values should be "to seek challenges and learn from setbacks."
- From a general leadership perspective: show that we value people's time and commitment by striving to make our meetings and moments meaningful.
- From the perspective of volunteer organizations: be intentional about creating and communicating to people the structure of their team's/ministry's work; be prepared for the work; encourage passion for the purpose of the work; show appreciation to all those who do the work.
- From the perspective of the work of editors: for every project on the table, make a point to ask questions for clarity; don't simply assume it.
- In general: in all the work we do with all the people we work with, let's be sure to match people's strengths and gifts with the tasks they are asked to perform.

Question 2: Where do you see opportunities and/or concerns for our church as we move forward in ministry between now and fall 2021?

- We will need to be especially diligent about getting people re-engaged in our congregational life together, being aware that people will re-engage according to their level of comfort, which will be different for everyone.
- We should be intentional and conspicuous about living into our recently published Welcome Statement.
- To what extent people will need help in transitioning back into community life together, socially, psychologically, is a question we should address—we may need to seek out resources to help us with those transitioning challenges.
- We need to create or offer ways to/venues that encourage people to practice having conversations across tribal divides.

AN EXTRA (from Mark)

*FYI—Jan Phelps sent me an article by a friend of hers (Steven Martin, *The Christian Citizen*; if you want to read the whole article [Here is the Link to the article Mark is referring to](#)) I thought it offered some useful insights . . . I've summarized the points and offer them as an addendum to some of our conversations today, and as fodder for conversations later . . .*

Seven Trends to Watch

TREND 1: In-person church attendance will stay below pre-pandemic levels

CHALLENGE: how to provide ministry that effectively takes place in the home.

TREND 2: People will take sides, and it will get worse before it gets better

CHALLENGE: We will need to contend with the necessity of loving, and not “othering,” those with whom we disagree. As Jesus handed bread to his betrayer, so must we be in deep relationship with those who count themselves part of different tribes.

TREND 3: Millennials will still be attracted by authenticity

CHALLENGE: We will need to set aside our pastoral (churchy?) personas and communicate confidence about our own experiences of the divine, sharing our doubts and struggles whenever appropriate, so that we can better connect with those who are looking for the real thing.

TREND 4: Those who produce content daily will move ahead of those who do not

CHALLENGE: we will need to get used to producing more and more content, delivering it the way people want it delivered. Creating on-demand media for platforms like YouTube, podcasts, etc., will need to become part of our work of ministry.

TREND 5: The pandemic event will diminish, but will not be forgotten

CHALLENGE: Just as work and recreation are moving away from particular places (office, gym) and into the home, so will all other aspects of life. The church sanctuary will increasingly become the living room, bedroom, and smart phone.

TREND 6: Vital churches will focus on engagement over attendance

CHALLENGE: We must figure out ways to, essentially, keep people from changing the channel, to find new, nontraditional forms for engaging in congregational life.

TREND 7: The possibilities for sharing faith are unparalleled in history

CHALLENGE: Due to the way communication technology has and continues to revolutionize human life, ministry and the gospel message can be made available 24/7. How do we do that?

Adam Kelchner's Group:

Question 1:

- Adam worked in a restaurant where the dining experience was completely tailored to the target audience. For example, a suburban parent with 2 kids on the way to or from the movies/soccer practice/mall who had 45 minutes to dine and a total tab of \$50.
 - From the entryway, to timing, to meal size and cost, to the departure all were created with the target audience in mind.
 - What is the group that we have the best chance to reach at CHRIST UMC based on who we are?
- Bryan referenced a text called "A Business and It's Belief."
 - An organization needs a sound set of beliefs and then there needs to be faithful adherence to the set of beliefs.
 - An organization can weather any challenges as long as some things are not compromised if they are that important to the organization.
 - He also pointed out an organization, even in the middle of changing everything about itself, should be able to bring out the best in its people.
- Laura noted that small groups have been a consistent and safe part of her life whether in business, non-profit, or church.
 - Well-functioning small groups are essential.
- Kent recalled a Charge Conference led by former District Superintendent Garie Taylor who asked 'What brings you to Christ UMC and why is it a place of ministry for you?'
 - Kent wants us to remember that in the life of the congregation we are equipping each other for ministry for the other 6 days of the week. How do we minister as individuals?
- Karen noted that openness and a willingness to listen have served her well. Don't form early opinions until something or someone is heard out.
- Temple emphasized that diversity in leadership and decision-making leads to better outcomes.
- Marci noted that there is always a risk that at the higher level of an organization we can forget about the people who are on the ground. We need to remember the congregation on the ground and not let organizational matters overshadow.
- Beth experienced racial diversity on recent Zoom calls so she highlighted the need to listen to one another deeply and well.

Question 2:

- Kent is so pleased with our Welcoming Statement. We can create a differentiation between Brentwood and Franklin First.
 - How can we promote this statement? We also need to be able to fully live into this statement. It's not every church that intends itself to have an inclusive ministry.

- Adam emphasized that visitors are a good sign for the future health of the church. The challenge is that with a return to in-person ministry that there will be several bands based on risk and speed.
 - How do we cultivate a cohesive congregation when we might feel like 3 congregations?
- Bryan asked ‘how do we maintain multi-level ministry (in person, hybrid, and virtual) into the future?’
- Temple is concerned about whether or not folks will come back.
 - The longer-term concern is how are people connected? Does everybody have a group?
- Marci noted how difficult it is to understand the current engagement level. It’s like having blinders on knowing where people are at and if they are engaged.
- Beth reminded us that many older adults don’t feel a need to be back at church right now and might not for some time. Laura also emphasized this.

Tim Stillings’ Group:

Question 1:

- Every person to feel valued. All have strengths.
- Reach consensus then move forward.
- Listen to all viewpoints before making a decision.
- Involve every everyone; make sure all seen and heard
- Assume the best in everyone. All have goal of improving organization.

Question 2:

- Redefine “gathered”
- Missing human contact.
- Uncertainty is hard to plan but the break allowed time to re-evaluate.

Submitted Questions:

1. Will Sunday Services continue to be streamed?
 - a. Yes. How it will be done has not been decided yet. The staff is working through what options will work best options include live broadcast, pre-recorded messages, and Adam comes to your house and preaches to you in your front yard.
2. Anticipated time for General Conference?
 - a. Adam is unsure when or if the 2021 General Conference will take place in person. We will wait further information from the GC organizers.
3. What is the in-person capacity with Trustee’s metrics?
 - a. Current cap for in person worship is 125 and can go up to 175.
 - b.

Closing Prayer: Mark Price

Matt Cox, Administrative Council Secretary

Attendees List:

Anne Weinberg	Steve Middlebrooks	Maryann Szabo
Tom Hanks	Karen Middlebrooks	Mike Higgins
Jay Carnes	Paul Bonner	Gwen Harding
Katie Higgins	Karen Richardson	Sterling Thomas
Mike Deweese	Amy Bonner	Mark Price
Shanelle Rauh	Randy Minor	Mary Anne Beshears
Temple Stevenson	Amanda Morgan	Melissa Hewett
Rebecca Fiechtl	Bryan Richardson	Cal Cobb
Ouida Greer	Julie Ready	Leonard McGugin
Gary Minor	Katie Lizarraga	Jennifer Krahenbill
Damien Corlew	Anne Hook	Barbra Higgins
Adam King	Heather Cavitt	Jeff Ready
Molly King	Bethany Graham	Patrick Allen
Tim Stillings	Kent McNish	Stephanie Zeiger
Laura Robertson	Elizabeth Wanczak	Elecia Beard
Janice Boyko	Marci White	Matt Cox
Cindy Watson	Beth Kitson	
Gilbert Lovell	Ralph Beard	
Jimmy Byrd	Christie Allen	
Elizabeth Oliphant	Jon Pike	

Future Administrative Council meeting dates:

- Tuesday, April 20th, 7 pm – Zoom
- Tuesday, August 24th, 7 pm – zoom/hybrid/in-person TBD
- 4th Quarter – TBD with Charge Conference date is known.