**2025 Church Council Planning Day**

First UMC Arlington

January 18, 2025

**Members Present:**

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| Michelle Clark | CJ Reddig | Loni Fancher | Chris Olson | Julie Ryan | Luke Morton | Betsy Spencer | Macy Craft |
| Shawn Dickler | Holly Maxwell | Cathy Carruth | Cathy Olson | Scott Russell | Rich Crosier | Edward Castillo | MadisonBoboltz |
| Chris Hayes | Molly Hayes | Sean Hale | Tim Graves | Kris Landrith | John Knapp | Jo Anna Cardoza | Johnnie Sue Bucek |
| Heather Hanson | Edward Castillo | Joanna Cardoza | Rob Franz | Chris Hayes | John Knapp | Molly Hayes | Loni Fancher |

1. Welcome & Introductions (Holly M.) Holly talked about how we are going to be sharing our stories this year in the church
   1. Opening Prayer (Madison B.) Madison reiterated that we will be telling our stories. She also talked about the importance of the decisions and plans that we make in Church Council
2. Common Ground Challenge (Holly M.) Welcome to new committee members and went around the room and had everyone introduce themselves. Each table talked about what they have in common.
3. Overview of Leadership Structure/Purpose of Committees (Chris H.) Chris talked about how committees were redesigned about 10 years ago by the UMC so that they focused more on setting vision and collaborating work together. All of our committee decisions affect other committees. Think about how our committees help us to get to our vision as a church, and to use our facilities to love God and love people. Our job is to help people stay focused as a church on what our goal as a church is.
4. 2024 Recap – Celebrating Our Story
   1. Worship Ministries (Sean H.) We moved the great hall service to 8:45am. It was successful in giving us a little extra time between services. We decided to include more adults in the orchestra. This is providing more mentorship to the students. Music budget is about half of what it was in the past. The church has been fundraising and has been able to cover that gap in funds. Did the music showcase and bake sales. Did the spring showcase that allowed the choir members to talk about their stories and share with each other.
   2. Congregational Care (Betsy S. for Kay L.) Care team visitor group has grown so that Kay does not have to do each visit. Updates have been made to the prayer list to make that more efficient. Weekly studies ran on Tuesdays so that stories could be shared. Tuesday studies will continue in 2025. Fellowship at First will continue as well.
   3. Family Ministries
      1. Special Needs (Betsy S. for Kay L.) 9 First Fridays with 17 new volunteers. It has been really good, and we have had enough people to clear the wait list.
      2. Children (Macy S.) Over 350 kids and volunteers at summer camp. Consistent 2024 attendance of 40ish kids each week. Started asking adult classes volunteer. Added fun activities to do on Sundays to tie into the season and tell the story of the church. Started working to have younger faces in worship so that the nursery kids can attend Kids Church. in 2025 doing family movie nights to tie into sermons. All summer camp curriculum will be written by church staff to tell our story. Fundraising for Glen Lake. All camp and other fees are paid by the families.
      3. Youth (Loni F.) In Sunday School they have been working on how the bible is one big story. They are at Christ’s birth. Always need new volunteers on Sunday nights. Have extended youth group to 730 to allow 30 minutes of together prayer time with all the groups. Allows for unity and collectiveness. Were intentional about finding serving mission trips. Served with the Indians in OK and will continue to partner with them for mission trips. Cookie Walk continues to be a successful fundraiser. Bringing back spaghetti supper this year.
      4. Adults (Madison B.) Adults are harder to be intentional with, so we are working to great a more united sense within the adults, kids and other classes. Started weekly communications within the group notes. Hopefully everyone will use those to know what is going on in the church so that they can all be united. In 2025 Madison will start a quarterly newsletter to be able to expand and be more detailed than the weekly notes. Want all classes to look at how they can support the mission of the church. Want all classes to write a description of their class. Invitations for classes to cross paths more often. Young adults group has really grown within the Wesley Foundation. At least half of those that attend are involved with FUMC. Hope to continue to grow that ministry and help them through the change of their leadership. Continuing staff lead studies, Away We Go, ASJ, United Women in Faith, Pickle Ball, etc.
   4. Community Connections (Molly H.) Not a lot of overlap between groups so trying to bring those together. School partnerships continue to grow strong. There is an intentional pause on Kids Hope program. Homeless ministry has continued to grow. It’s incredible to see the need for food and community. We have 27 volunteers who come regularly to Cloud Covered Streets. The city of Arlington asked us to build a neighborhood committee here around the church. This first meeting will be held next week at FUMC. A neighbor needed milk last week and knew that FUMC was a place he could call for help.
   5. PPR (Rob). We said goodbye to Ramiro, Mary, Roger and Michelle in 2024. We welcomed Heather as well. Worked on lots of clergy paperwork. Working on Madison’s ordination and the further leadership of Macy and Loni. Congregation provided more than 5 times the needed amount for staff appreciation luncheon. Decided to use the surplus for staff Christmas gifts. All in all, our church gave over $3600 in appreciation of our clergy and staff.

(Break)

1. Finance & Budget Discussion – Helping Tell Our Story (Chris H./Heather H.)
   1. 2024 Year-End Report. When we met in early December, we needed a large amount of money to cover expenses. We were able to cover those. 2024 revenue was about what every other year has been. The church was extra generous in December.
   2. 2025 Stewardship Campaign Update & Budget Considerations Budget - This year is based on historical giving rather than pledges. We have budgeted a surplus budget rather than a deficit budget this year. We also based the budget on 2024 actual expenses so that we could budget more efficiently. We discussed options for overcoming the decline in summer giving; including asking for additional funds in April or May. Chris Olson moved to accept the 2025 budget. John Knapp seconds motion. Motion was accepted.

(Break)

1. A Game of Storytelling (Chris H.) Chris H. gave everyone cards with a topic on them. We discussed our topic with a partner to practice storytelling. Sharing and listening to stories helps us learn and helps us grow. Stories connect us. We find we have shared experiences. Sharing stories helps us connect to God, our story and our world. We discussed the reasons why story telling matters. We watched a video titled “Why Storytelling is Important.”
2. Church Council Role in Telling Our Story (Chris H./Holly M.)
   1. What are we currently doing? All ministries in 2025 will either work on focusing on telling the story of the Bible or telling our stories to each other. When we read scripture let’s think about how does that verse or passage fit into our story.
   2. How can we as a Church Council help our congregation tell their story? Each table made a list of ways we can help the congregation tell stories and enjoy community with each other.
   3. How can we make a greater impact? We need to invest the time one on one with others in the congregation. Get out of our comfort zone and talk with/share with those we don’t know.
   4. How will we do it? Build relationships with those we volunteer with. That way we can feel more comfortable sharing stories.
   5. How will we know we are making an impact? We will have more interaction with people we would not normally share with.
   6. Church Council meetings – what will that look like in 2025? Holly M. passed out a survey asking for meeting feedback, and a listing of lay leader, church council and congregational conversations meetings for 2025
3. Other Business
   1. Election of Trustee Chair (Chris H./Holly M.) Chris O. nominated Rich Crosier as Trustee chair. Edward C. seconded the motion.
4. Communion & Benediction (Molly H.)