First UMC Arlington

Church Council Agenda

June 24, 2025 – 6 pm

**Members Present:**

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| Holly Maxwell | Michelle Clark | Rob Franz | Cathy Carruth |
| Shawn Dickler | Betsi Goode | Jo Anna Cardoza | Kay Lancaster |
| Chris Olson | Cathy Olson | Madison Boboltz | Heather Hanson |
| Scott Russell | Betsy Eudy | CJ Reddig | Tim Graves |
| David Lessner | Julie Ryan | Betsy Spencer | Taylor Jackson |
| Philip Rhodes | John Knapp | Rich Crosier | Sean Hale |
| Johnnie Sue Bucek | Edward Castillo | Max Baker | Sandy Baker |
| Nancy Russell | Jim Russell | Gail Longell | Becky Steimle |
| Cindy Sharp | Gary Sharp | Chris Houston | Joe Houston |
| Sharla Martin | Susanna Johnson | Peggy Masters | Brian Spencer |

1. Welcome and Opening Prayer

* Meeting was called to order at 6:03 pm by Holly Maxwell
* Holly introduced Rev. David Lessner
* Rev. Kay Lancaster led us in the opening prayer

1. Financial Audit Update

* **Presenter: Rev. Philip Rhodes, District Superintendent**
* An independent financial audit consultant (Pam Finney, a UMC financial consultant) is currently reviewing the church’s internal control policies.
* Preliminary findings indicate no improper or suspicious activity. The review of QuickBooks is ongoing; while there are no specific issues, there may be some adjustments needed in how funds are reported.
* A final letter with recommendations is expected by **July 15**.
* Heather Hanson, Finance Admin, added that Finney recommends separating the counting and recording of money to ensure transparency and creating a process for the approval of invoices.
* **Question/Comment from Peggy Masters**: Glad to know that going forward there will be an approval process for paying invoices, because she comes from a corporate background and is used to there being a process for invoices received.

1. Committee Reports
   1. Finance Report

* **Presenter: CJ Redding, Finance Chair**
* The finance committee has spoken to several Sunday School classes in recent months.
* Financials are currently stable with cash flow between $225-$250K.
* Focus areas (in area of importance)

1. Meeting payroll
2. Covering our operational expenses
3. Rebuilding financial reserves so we don’t face a cash crunch again
4. Restoring the designated funds that were used for operations in the last year.

* Breaking ground on the playground project is on hold due to limited available discretionary funds. The reason the Finance Committee can’t authorize that and why we’re still on a zero-budget mentality is the money that was given in April was largely funds that were pulled forward from the end of the year.
* Summer giving is down, but this is expected.
* Working on the fall stewardship campaign. Optimism expressed for increased giving with new pastoral leadership.
* Minor relaxation in the zero-budget spending policy, specifically for Shawn Dickler’s building-related purchases.
* Finance meetings are open to all and will continue to be published on the church calendar. The next meeting is July 8 at 4 pm.
* **Questions from Jo Anna Cardoza**: Are there efforts to apply for grants?
  + **Response**: No, volunteers are welcome to help pursue grant opportunities.
  1. Pastor-Parish Relations (PPR) Report
* **Presenter: Rob Franz, PPR Chair**
* Celebrated Rev. Madison Boboltz’s ordination at Annual Conference. Reception planned for Sunday, June 29 at 10 am in the Parlor. Reminder that both services are in the Sanctuary for Testament Homecoming Concert.
* Rev. David Lessner’s welcome reception is July 6 at 10 am in the Great Hall, hosted by the Lamplighters. Both services are in the Sanctuary.
* David is scheduling meetings with Sunday School classes and small groups.
* **Michelle Clark**: the survey sent out by PPR/David received 128 responses to help Rev. David understand the congregation; many offered to meet with him one-on-one.
* **Question from Susanna Johnson**: I saw that Laureen Kuizon is the contemporary worship leader, what does that mean?
  + **Response from Sean Hale**: She now leads the band and worship for the contemporary service. Greg Haugen still leads Testament Choir.
  1. Trustees Report
* **Presenter: Rich Crosier, Trustee Chair**
* Chick-Fil-A declined office space lease opportunity.
* Concerns raised over noise from neighboring used car lot affecting children at STEAM camp. Exploring new signage indicating that area is private property, pending compliance with city/downtown regulations.

1. Ministry Area Reports – Strategic Initiative Focus: Telling Our Story
   1. Music

* **Presenter: Sean Hale, Director of Worship**
  + Music Ministry integrates storytelling, including through the Good Friday project featuring music from various areas while telling the story of Jesus’ crucifixion.
  + Choir participation remains steady through summer months.
  + Youth and adult orchestras combined for Good Friday – 10 of 19 participants were from First UMC Arlington.
  + Testament Choir shared their story across Arkansas while on Choir Tour.
  + Ariel Hernandez assists with children’s choir, handbells, and chancel choir.
  + Laureen Kuizon supports contemporary worship planning.
  1. Adult Formation
* **Presenter: Rev. Madison Boboltz, Director of Adult Formation**
  + Preparing next quarterly adult formation newsletter, to include Annual Conference overview, including amendments and resolutions that were discussed and voted on, so that people can see how the ministries of our church as a local congregation are connected to the wider work of the Horizon Texas Conference, and how that’s connected to the wider work of the United Methodist Church.
  + Strategic storytelling initiative is also meant for us to lean into our United Methodist identity, especially following the season of disaffiliation, to remind people in our churches and communities what is unique about us as United Methodists and what we have to offer.
  + Assigned meeting dates to Sunday School classes to meet with Rev. David Lessner.
  + New study starting July 15 (2-3 pm in Room 154) about the art of pilgrimage as a spiritual practice; led by Madison.
  + Awaiting Rev. David’s direction and budget considerations for fall programming.
  + **Professor Pop Up** series will continue in the fall.
  + Recognitions from the UTA Wesley were noted; Zach & Sarah Graves, a few Sunday School classes, and some students who are members of the Wesley and attend church at First UMC Arlington).
  + **Question from Tim Graves**: Is Madison’s connection with the UTA Wesley in an official capacity on behalf of the church or is that something she pursues solely in her personal time?
    - **Response from Madison**: Madison clarified her connection to UTA Wesley and the church – she serves on the board of the Wesley, and while it’s not ‘officially’ in her job description, she does consider it part of her role, because it’s allowed her to build relationships with young adults, which she was tasked with when she first came on staff because we had little to no young adult presence.
  + **Sharla Martin commended Madison’s involvement with students**.
  1. Senior Adult formation
* **Presenter: Rev. Kay Lancaster, Director of Senior Adult Formation**
  + Emphasized how storytelling naturally emerges during Bible studies
  + Encouraged council members to ask others, “What is your story?”
  + **Lunch & Learn** kicked off with a presentation from the Fire Department for senior safety. Next event: August 13, 11 am-1 pm, Safe Driving Tips for Seniors
  + **Away We Go**: Next trip scheduled for September 28. Lunch at the church at 12:15, followed by a matinee showing of ‘You Can’t Take It with You’ at Theater Arlington at 1:30 pm. RSVP online or in the church office.
  + **Special Needs**: VBC on July 13 from 5:30-7:30 pm; most fall First Friday meals are covered. Contact Betsy Spencer to volunteer or bring a meal.
  1. Family/Student Formation
* **Presenter: Betsy Spencer, Director of Family Formation**
  + Glen Lake Camp going well; 5 volunteers from First UMC, 2 serving as leaders. Rev. Philip Rhodes is there this week (June 23-27) with junior high boys. Madison is serving as a dean next week (June 30-July 4).
  + STEAM Camp completed successfully with no budget impact—thanks to all contributors.
  + **Vacation Bible Camp** starts July; **Mission Camp** starts the last week of July/first week of August.
  + Betsy and CJ are managing summer ministry needs within tight budgets.
  + **Shoutout to Scott Russell for outstanding support on Sunday mornings**.
  + **Advocated for continued support of nursery workers, Iffat and Shamima**. If you see them, give them a hug and tell them they’re appreciated.
  + Youth and adults are on Choir Tour, preparing for mission trip to Oklahoma in July.
  + In the off weeks, youth meet for Tuesday night Bible Study & Swim. Scott Gray leads the Bible study.
  + Support needed for Special Needs ministry on **First Friday** with Rev. Kay Lancaster taking a step back for health reasons.

1. Announcements & Upcoming Dates

* **Pastor Madison Ordination Reception**: Sunday, June 29 | 9:45 am | Parlor
* **Pastor David Welcome Reception**: Sunday, July 6 | 9:45 am | Great Hall
* **Pastor Kay Reception**: Sunday, July 6 | 12 pm | Great Hall
* **Congregational Connection**: Sunday, August 31 | 10 am | Great Hall
* **Next Church Council Meeting**: Tuesday, September 30 | 6 pm | Banquet Hall

1. Closing Prayer

* Rev. David Lessner concluded the meeting with a prayer at 6:56 pm.