**Minutes from Buford First UMC Church Board Meeting on January 21, 2024**

Board Member Attendees: Pat Stanley, Sue Morris, Lenna Applebee, Leigh Ouimet, Billy Cochran, Don Trawick, Jim Failmezger, Scott Leazer, Chris Simonson, Reverend Jim Buckman, Donnie McQuaig, and Ken Stewart.

Meeting minutes – 01/21/2024

In the Word: Chris Simonson opened with scripture: **Matthew 22.34-40, Matthew 28.19-20, Matthew 6.34**

**Business and Organization**

First order of business to elect Board Chair. Chris Simonson has been nominated and elected unanimously.

Scott Leazer nominated to serve as Vice Chair and elected unanimously.

Board Secretary needed. Ken Stewart to fill in for this meeting with nominating committee to seek a person outside of current board members.

Buford FUMC utilizing One Church Board structure in place of several separate committees. We adopted this structure for streamlining decision making process and as a response to challenges of finding enough volunteers to fill needed committee positions. One Church Board serves to combine the roles of Finance, Trustees, and SPRC which we are required to have by the United Methodist Book of Discipline.

The purpose of the Church Board is to oversee the business of the church including supporting the Pastor and Staff, and to set the Vision of the Church – Short – Medium – and Long term vision.

**From the Pastor and Staff**

Each board meeting, we have a report from Pastor Jim.

Review: 2 long term staff members have retired – Suzanne Clegg (30yrs) and Cindy LaTouf (27yrs).

Roy Foster has been hired as the Church Office Manager and is on-boarding now. Roy has worked on church staff in the Lutheran Church previously and worked as a project manager for ADP. Cindy L. is working with Roy to familiarize with BFUMC.

Average attendance in ’23 was 297 with 58 online. Added 17 new members. A decrease of 52 overall members (12 deaths, 2 transferred out, 38 withdrew).

Many of the withdrawals are a result of staff efforts to go through old membership rolls and reaching out to inactive members still on the membership roll but had since moved or transferred to another church some time ago. This number is expected to grow as we continue to go through the inactive members list. A good exercise to connect with members and make connections with church members.

Church Staff: Staff has planned out calendar for 2024 with events and an effort to meet goals and increase of outreach to the community.

2024 is BFUMC’s 40th year of Pre-school.

We need to increase volunteers to continue growing ministry opportunities (such as the Upwards programs – very successful but very much in need of a more volunteers in addition to staff members.

Staff is also working to help members discover spiritual gifts and how to use them.

Each Staff member has a goal to have 3-5 contacts/ month to build connections to help members get plugged in to the ministries and life of the Church. Expenses for this will be reimbursed.

**Financial Summary:**

Financial results: finished ’23 with $696,233 in General Fund. $233,055 in Building Fund. $65,000 in Restricted Fund for Specified Ministries. $460,158 in Checking Account. Checking acct is OK and is a carryover from a couple of years.

2024 Budget is $768,170 - this is down from $814k budget in 2023. We will also pick up approx. $80k due to federal Employee Retention credit.

Questions back to Financial Discussion: Deanna Page will attend February board meeting to discuss financial reports. Board will receive monthly financial reports. We have an outside auditor.

**Discussion: Strategic Planning for 2024**

Board had a strategic planning meeting in ’23. We will have again in the middle of 2024. Our goals set out in ’23 planning meeting will be our focus in all meetings this year.

Meeting calendar: move February meeting to 02/04 (conflict with 02/11 – Chili cookoff).

We will not meet every month. No board meetings in May, July, August, or December. Board will have planning retreat in July/ August.

Volunteers needed for Spiritual Formation at the beginning of each meeting. Let Chris know.

Attendance to Board meetings is expected. Please let Chris know ahead of time if you must miss.

Board will approve minutes by email. Goal is to approve and publish meeting minutes withing 1 week.

Staff is doing a great job with communicating what is going on in the life of the church. Board needs to be up to date and champion/ promote Church activities.

**Previous Board Items:**

Building Maintenance/Trustee Task Force - board will vote on building issues. The Board will establish a process for approving major purchases and other non-budgeted expenses – these need to be specified as to what is a ‘major purchase’.

Reserve Study – a subcontracted service to provide a report detailing Short/Medium/Long Term building and property maintenance needs and capital spending needs to better help manage the finance and budget processes. Josh Page requested three quotes and received two quotes, with the third company declining to bid. The Board will evaluate at an upcoming meeting.

Question: Are we continuing with “Silo Liaison” roles and responsibilities for ministry areas? No, we will not have these in 2024.

**Regular Board Meeting Concluded.**

Pastor Jim closed meeting in prayer.