



GUM CHURCH

Our vision is to actively live the example of Jesus

Governance Board Meeting Minutes

March 20, 2023 - GUM Library, 7:00 pm

In attendance: Karen Ambs, Doug Barry, Marie McDonald, Lindsey Meredith, Karen Owen, Shaun Skibinski, John Stamm, Karen Strickland, *Sherri Swanson, *Michelle Wood,

Absent: Jon Tuscan

(*non-voting member)

Actions taken by e-mail since our last meeting:

Building Request: On March 22, Pastor Sherri shared by email a building request by a new Girl Scout troop. She brought it to the board in case it raised any questions since it was the decision of the Governance Board (based on a recommendation from our Michigan Conference) to discontinue our relationship with the Boy Scouts due to a large lawsuit.

A majority of Governance Board responded in approval of the building request use.

1. Devotions

Doug (Marie has May covered): Doug shared an essay from "When Did the Gospel Stop Being News?" from the book *Wisdom Notes: Theological Riffs on Live and Living*, by Arthur J. Dewey. Karen A. led the group in an opening prayer.

2. Pastor's Report - Pastor Sherri

- Two funerals
- Mild case of COVID
- Big building updates - \$125K in repairs. Trustees made the decision to repair most essential and will use \$25K of building fund
- Finances started well in January, now a little short for February. We have paid one month of our three months of ministry shares.

- 2 Million less budget for our conference. The conference has cut 10 positions - one of them being the youth ministry person. The children's ministry person has less hours.
- Cornerstone leaving the UMC
- Serving on the District Committee on Ordained Ministry as a Temporary Registrar
- S-PRC is seeking a Young Disciples Ministry Assistant
- Lenten study started rough, now doing well with 12 participants
- New Member class next month
- Good Friday tenebrae service at 7pm (4/7/2023)
- Worship design team met and decided to stay with one service for Easter
- Photo Directory sign ups are going well
- Membership letters sent to 36 inactive members. A few have responded and withdrawn membership. Current membership is 353.
- Easter letters to inactive members
- On a personal note -
 - Pastor Sherri's Father-in-Law recently died and while he died peacefully, still very sad.
 - Son has set a date for wedding the last weekend in August.
 - Recently joined a gym.

3. **Action Item: Rainbow Door Committee Recommendation** (Karen Ambs)

Task force met and notes from the meeting were shared with Governance Board (attached to end of minutes)

Governance Board members commented that the doors look nice against the building, as well as the signage. Checking on the PVC periodically would be good practice.

a. Motion/Vote

MOTION: Shaun made a motion to approve the plan as presented.

SECONDED: Karen Strickland seconded the motion

VOTE: All in favor, none opposed. Motion passed.

b. Next steps and security concerns

Security concerns will be put on the agenda for a future date.

4. **Little Library (Pastor Sherri)**

An outdoor "Little Library" was brought to Pastor Sherri's attention to see if it is something the church would like. Governance Board members discussed that it would have to be placed near the parking lot, not the sidewalk (as many others are). Concerns about how it would stay stocked and who would be in charge were expressed. Some members were indifferent, others felt it may not be the

best offer at this time. Sherri will let the person know that the board does not feel it is something to install at this point in time.

5. Ministry Leader Reports

a. Food Pantry/Food Truck (Karen Ambs)

Karen A. gave an update that there are many families being served. Regularly, 5-6 volunteers.

b. Hand 2 Hand (Karen Ambs)

Report from Joy F.:

The Hand 2 Hand program at Hudsonville High School is structured differently than the traditional backpack program. It is a “pantry” that is housed in a storeroom in the Media Center. Our team of volunteers takes food to the pantry every other week. The food that is provided includes items for breakfast, lunch, snacks, and meal kits for the weekends. There are volunteers at the high school (staff and students) that coordinate the distribution to the identified students. The high school coordinator facilitates and determines which students meet the criteria of food insecure. Some students go to the pantry and get food. Others pick up food supplies at different locations at the school (such as the freshman campus). Some of the food is delivered to the students’ families by the high school counselor. Our team of volunteers consists of 8 adults. Some of the volunteers buy food items, pick up food at the H2H warehouse or the Hungry for Christ in Hamilton, deliver food to the high school, or coordinate the distribution of the available food. The biggest challenge at this time is managing the increasing need for food resources in our community and the increasing price of food on a limited budget.

c. Missions Team (Karen Ambs)

Report from Joy F.:

The Missions Team manages and distributes contributions to a variety of local, national and international organizations. In the past we have made contributions to 14 different programs identified in the Michigan Conference Engageme program. Due to less funds available and higher food prices our focus has shifted to funding our local mission programs. We will continue to have eight Special Sunday collections that support some of the Conference programs. Our ongoing GUMC mission projects are Food Pantry, Hand 2 Hand, and the Feeding America Food Trucks and dinners provided for the families that come to the Food Truck distributions. The Food Pantry has about 15-20 families that participate regularly. Hand

2 Hand provides food for about 45 students at Hudsonville High School who have been identified as food insecure over the weekends. The Food Truck distributes food for 60-70 families 6 times a year and we also provide a dinner for those families on the night of the distribution. The Blessing Boxes that are located in each of the parking lots are monitored and stocked by our Food Pantry. The goal of these boxes is to make food accessible for those who need these resources outside of the days and times that the Food Pantry is open.

GUMC also has collections throughout the year some of these are; Beyond 26, the Walk for Good Food (Access of West Michigan), PRIDE, Diaper Drive, and GVSU student survival kits, etc. These are not specific Mission Team projects but are supported by our church. We make contacts and promote collections for these organizations. For the past 2 years we have collected money for the Love Your Neighbor's Stuff the Bus collection in July. This project provides school supplies for local students.

- d. Kitchen Committee (Jon Tuscan)
Jeri B. did not have much to report. Everything is going well. Not really a "committee". Does not need any help at this time from Governance Board.
 - e. Staff-Parish Relations (Doug Barry)
S-PRC: Young Disciples Ministry Assistant posting and happy to now have a full roster of S-PRC members
 - f. May Meeting Reports-please reach out to gather reports for May meeting
 - i. Children's Ministries (Karen Ambs)
 - ii. Church and Society (Lindsey)
 - iii. Family Camp (Lindsey)
 - iv. Intentional Faith Development (Marie)
 - v. Landscaping Team (Shaun)
 - vi. Prayer Chain (Marie)
 - vii. Prayer Shawl (Karen Strickland)
 - viii. United Women in Faith (Marie)
- 6. Worship:** comments on how the single blended service has been going; plan for when & how decision will be made about fall schedule (one service or two).

The board commented that it is nice to see everyone who may have attended a different service. Good feedback regarding the blended service, and Alex is doing a great job with it.

By the end of June, we have been asked to make a decision for Fall. Discussion about how we should make the decision included the idea to survey the congregation about their preferences and other questions.

Karen A. will put together a Google Doc and Governance Board members will input ideas for the questions to be included in the survey.

7. Vice Chair - update (Karen Ambs)

John Stamm agreed to be Vice Chair:

MOTION: Karen A. made a motion for John to fill the role of Vice Chair

SECONDED: Marie M. seconded the motion

VOTE: All in favor, none opposed. Motion passed.

8. Update on First Nation Acknowledgment Statement (Karen Ambs)

Liz S. and Sarah T. put together a statement. Karen A. recommended one sentence go on website with a hyperlink to the full statement. Will get approval of local tribal leader before moving forward.

9. Other Business

- a. Finance Committee Meeting - Karen needs someone to go in her place. John S. will attend in Karen's place.
- b. Choir robes - Doug?
Lynette does not foresee using them in the future and gave permission to find a seller. Lindsey will check and see if it can be added with listing of festival items.
- c. Update on storage unit/Festival items
Will bring some items to the church to see if people would like to take/keep.

10. Next meeting

May 15, 2023, 7:00 pm

11. Closing prayer

Pastor Sherri closed the group in prayer and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Wood, Governance Board Secretary

Rainbow Door Task Force Report to the Governance Board March 20, 2023

The Rainbow Door Task Force Members:

Sidney Yin

Kevin Cavanaugh

Karen Ambs

Anne Holkeboer

Kim Nagy

Penny Avery

1. We initially met as a group on Jan. 23 via zoom. We all had read the history of the rainbow doors (thanks to Pastor Sherri) and all understood that we had been given the task of making a recommendation of what to do about the doors.
2. The group quickly decided that we wanted to keep the doors permanently, as they have become a symbol of hope and hospitality for many in the community, and the doors were a part of what brought most recent new members to our church.
3. The group also agreed that the placement by the cross was not the best aesthetically, nor is it ideal for the landscaping crew and mowing people. So, we decided to meet a second time at church to determine where the doors should go (we had several ideas).
4. In early February, our group met a second time at the church to look at possible new locations of the doors and decided to move them closer to the building in the short term. Sidney also created a rainbow colored welcome slide to go in the sign rotation (to offset the doors being in a less prominent location).
5. During our second meeting, we came up with a **long-term plan** for the doors:
 - a. The Rainbow Door Task Force will become a working group to secure the door locations, assuming the plan is approved.
 - b. Once approved, Penny Avery will contact "Miss Dig" to be certain we are not going to touch any utility lines, including water. Flags will be placed to mark any utility lines. This is a free service.
 - c. We will make any necessary repairs to the doors and repaint sections, as needed. The working group will take on the responsibility of maintaining/repairs the doors as needed.
 - d. The triangle supports will be removed from the doors.
 - e. PVC pipes will be driven into the ground close to the corner/side walls of the building (two for each door). The spacing on the north and west sides of the building will be measured so they are equal distance from the corners.
 - f. Matching PVC pipes will be secured to the backs of both doors (two on each door) with brackets.
 - g. Metal pipes will be placed inside the PVC pipes in the ground, and the doors will slide over the metal pipes, using the PVC on the doors. This will allow the doors to be put on and off as desired.

- h. This system will allow the doors to have the impression of being up against the brick building (without the doors actually being attached to the building). This will remove the need to mow around the doors or deal with them falling, as the PVC and metal pipe system will prevent any risk of them falling.
6. If this proposal is approved by the Governance Board, we will also seek approval from the Trustees.
7. Security came up as a concern at our first meeting. With increasing anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric in the community, our group wondered if it would be a good idea for the Governance Board to talk about increased security and some updated safety policies. While our church is a beacon of hope to many, it is also an easy target. An example of an updated policy might be that no one should be in the building alone after hours (this was a policy at Sidney's old church). Or that at night, people shouldn't go to their cars alone. I told our group that I would bring this up as a possible future topic of discussion for the Governance Board.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Ambs, member the Rainbow Door Task Force