

**Minutes of the MCCDC Board of Directors  
Thursday, April 28, 2016 (Special Meeting)**

**Members Present:** Rev. Dwayne Johnson, Fenicia Ballard, Kathleen Carey, Dave Jenkins, Mark Kornmann, John Merriwether, Knut Panknin

**Guests Present:** Rev. Cathy Alexander, Johanna Hardy (7:53pm), Sandra Ballard (8:13pm)

Rev. Dwayne started the meeting with sharing a song: Jason Nelson's "Shifting the Atmosphere".

**I. Call to Order/Opening Prayer**

Rev. Dwayne called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. He opened the meeting in prayer.

The special meeting was called to continue the regular Board meeting and discuss finances and the framework for congregational communication.

**II. McCann Award**

The Board voted on four candidates nominated to receive the McCann Award. One candidate received a majority of 4 votes on the first ballot.

**III. Finances**

Dave started by saying that the church's financial picture would be worse without the income from usage for the building and that we should not count on that. The money should come as tithes from the congregation and the church should focus on ministry to grow. Kathleen disagreed and said that we cannot exclude any source of revenue. Mark agreed with Kathleen but added that we cannot look at the rental income as isolated from the other issues around attendance, spirituality and giving. We as a Board have been juggling numbers for the past two years and if we continue to do just that, we cannot get to a better place.

Mark also wanted to know why we would hold back tithes to the denomination if we have enough cash in the General Account. As of April 28, the account showed a positive balance of \$13,215. Holding back tithes was the wrong approach and would send a mixed message. John wanted to know when tithes are due and whether there has been any communication with the denomination. Rev. Dwayne clarified that tithes are due in the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> week of the following month and that he had spoken with the denomination's director of operations. MCCDC has met its full obligation to the denomination since September 2015.

Mark also had a question on the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary budget. The stip gift account shows a net positive of \$10,073 and he wanted to know whether that would be enough to cover the costs for the Gala. Rev. Cathy said that the committee looks at each expense item as some items are variable based on contractual obligations and other factors. As of now, there is a shortfall of about \$4,000 but the committee is confident that all expenses can be paid with expected revenue from fundraisers such as the silent auction and final ticket sales.

John gave a general picture of the (financial) situation of the church and recent trends. Attendance and giving have both been lower this year: Average attendance for the combined worship services on Sunday is 147 per week and per capita giving is around \$43. Average expenses are about \$41,600 per month and monthly income is on average \$33,300.

Starting in June, the church will generate income of about \$5,000 per month from both units at 472. The loan payment for the building will start in September and will be about \$2,100 per month. The balloon payment of \$222,000 needs to be factored in as well.

John moved to distribute the income generated from renting out 472 by applying the following formula:

- 15% of the rental income shall go towards a 472-reserve fund, which will also be used to pay the real estate taxes for the building;
- 75% of the rental income shall go towards the mortgage payments for both buildings (472 and 474) as well as repairs for 474;
- 10% of the rental income shall go into a reserve or savings fund for the church for the future.

Dave, Mark, and Kathleen expressed their support for the formula and said that it is fair and lays a good financial foundation for the future. Dave asked how to get congregational input on this, and Rev. Dwayne suggested that the passed motion could be presented to the congregation on May 8<sup>th</sup>.

Fenicia seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

#### IV. **Congregational Engagement**

The following Board members will be present for the congregational listening posts on Sunday, May 8<sup>th</sup>: Rev. Dwayne, Dave, Mark, and Knut and on Wednesday, May 11<sup>th</sup>: Kathleen, Rev. Dwayne, Mark, John, and Knut. The second meeting will be offered as Sunday will be Mother's Day.

The Board discussed the following items for the agenda:

- Financial picture, including current financial snapshot, drivers for expenses, and explanation on where the money has gone (deferred maintenance projects such as barrel roof and caulking, new security system, bathrooms etc. and investments in programs and staff)
- Summary of 472: where we are today, next steps in completion process and mediation with first contractor
- AV system with explanation that no General Fund money was spent and that training was built into purchase

Mark voiced his concern that we might not be ready for the engagement in such a short time. He also said that the spiritual issue has not been addressed yet, and that he wants to hear from Rev. Dwayne. The numbers alone will not resonate with the congregation.

Rev. Dwayne expressed his belief that finances are a spiritual issues. He is looking for things that resonate spiritually with the congregation such as the 45 days of changed lives series, and he is also looking for places of impact and where we are lacking. We have to get our focus back on God and on people. He feels that there is not enough depths and discipleship in his own relationships with the congregation. One idea he is contemplating is a summer growth plan “passport to growth” where people are encouraged to attend at least one program per week outside of worship. Rev. Dwayne also wants to get feedback from congregants who made pledges but have not fulfilled them yet.

Johanna said that she wanted to correct a statement she made in the last special Board meeting. She has gone back to read every Eblast since 2011 and realized that there is a lot going on spiritually in our church. We have 34 ministries and many programs and it is hard to find event space in church these days. She still feels spiritually disconnected but that is not due to a lack of programming. The most impactful spiritual connection for her comes through music and Eclectic Praise is a prime example where congregants came together for fun and a new ministry was born. Johanna also advocated for a revival to add a charismatic side. Another idea would be to change the programming for service every other Sunday or on special Sundays to make services less predictable and keep them exciting. She would also love to see old-fashioned baptism with a pool in the church backyard.

Dave added that he also misses an emotional connection that he would like to get from a more spiritual service. Some of it is structural and due to the ritual of our services. The intellectual connection of the message is not enough for him.

Dwayne said that the revival idea is worth looking at and that our diversity is a challenge when it comes to Sunday services: We have different spiritual types who respond to differently and the challenge is to offer something to everyone at least

every other Sunday. Two formulas that he learned while serving in other churches are still valid: “AIM” – Attract people, Bring them back and Care for them; and “AIMM” – Attract, Include, Mobilize, and Mature. From studying current literature on church growth, he learned that churches that are growing have found a way to innovate. That innovation piece is different for every church and that is where the listening to our congregation is especially important. He also said that we might not be bold enough in some areas and said that we might want to add an older adults mid week choir rehearsal or an expanded dance ministry to build on ministries that have a big impact already. Rev. Dwayne invited the Board to join him in prayer time between 7-8am to pray for him and pray about what could be the key innovation for us.

Fenicia agreed that there are different levels of spirituality in our congregation, and that we need to find ways to get to a higher level. She also advocated for a youth pastor with “southern fire”.

Dave said that we need to set the stage and get the congregation focused for the listening post. We have to make it safe for them to share their views openly, and we need to find a way to get the conversation started. We need to convey that the congregation has to help us identify what troubles them and also have to help us shape a solution. Knut added that a good moderation of the meeting is critical, and that a clear structure and rules for engagement will make sure that more congregants can share their opinion.

John suggested a church fast to center on the spiritual aspect, on our mission and purpose. Fasting could be fasting from food, media consumption or other habits. Scripture and prayer would replace what we are giving up, and we would gain a renewed focus on what God has called us to do. A timeline could be fasting until the anniversary.

Rev. Dwayne suggested a working group meeting to finalize the agenda for the congregational listening post on Tuesday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, at 7 PM. The following congregants plan to attend that meeting: Rev. Cathy Alexander, Johanna Hardy, Rev. Elder Dwayne Johnson and Mark Kornmann.

V. **Adjournment**

Kathleen moved to adjourn at 8:55 p.m. The motion was seconded by Dave and was approved unanimously.