

**BELMONT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD and CHARGE CONFERENCE MINUTES
January 29, 2017**

- I. **Welcome & Introduction: Nancy Northington, Administrative Board Chair**
- Call to order
 - Review duties of Admin Board
 - Minutes approved from November Charge Conference and Admin Board Meeting

II. **Ministry Focus, Room in the Inn: Bart Perkey**

Homeless Ministries at Belmont has three goals:

- Educate Belmont members about homelessness and how they can help;
- Provide overnight shelter for homeless persons during the winter; and
- Provide financial support for programs serving the homeless in Nashville.

During the Room In The Inn 2016-17 winter shelter season:

- Belmont will provide overnight shelter, food, showers, and personal laundry for 12 guests each Friday, November through March, serving more than 250 guests in total.
- 100-150 different Belmont members of all ages will volunteer to prepare and serve food, make lunches, wash clothes, wash linens, serve as overnight hosts, drive the bus, etc.

Homeless Ministry team includes Joan Brasher, Lisa Edge, Todd Edge, Mike Engle, John Kennedy, Bart Perkey, Nelda Schreiber, and Susan Utlely.

III. **Finance Report: John Pearce, Finance Committee Chair**

A. **Review of 2016**

2016 FUNDS

	In-flows	Out-flows
Trust Fund	\$ 639,021	\$ 273,889
Capital Fund	\$ 281,030	\$ 254,278
Operating Budget	\$ 1,456,334	\$ 1,470,431
Week Day School	\$ 800,300	\$ 796,153
Non-Budget	\$ 241,269	\$ 197,088
Rental Property	\$ 117,948	\$ 117,678
TOTALS	\$ 3,535,902	\$ 3,109,517

B. **Operating Fund:**

Expenses

- Properties \$11,791 Over Budget
 - Admin \$10,167 Over Budget
 - Staff \$13,786 Under Budget
 - Program Ministry \$13,912 Under Budget
 - Paid \$199,565 of \$243,888 or 82% of Fair Share of Conference Budget Short by \$44,323
 - Total Expenses \$50,063 under budget
- Total Expenses \$1,470,431**

Revenue

- Pledges Collected \$1,238,737 (\$10,192 under budget; last year over budget by \$59,187)
 - 55 Families Under Paid Pledge by \$72,091
 - Loose Offering \$110,834 (\$29,166 under budget)
 - Gifts that Change The World \$37,958 (\$12,042 under budget)
 - Total Revenue under budget by \$64,163
- Total Revenue: \$1,456,336**

Bottom Line:

- Expenses exceeded revenue by \$14K
 - WDS Surplus \$4,147
 - Extra Giving After 1/1/17 \$9,950
 - Paid only 82% of apportionments (\$44K short). First real miss since 2004.
- Apportionments go to:
- 25% staff healthcare
 - 25% pensions
 - 25% TN Conference programs
 - 25% broader church (pays for programs of the church, salary for general agency staff, administration of UMCOR, etc.)

Consequences of our missing this are real and affect the lives of our staff, members of our congregation, and the ministry of the conference and the broader church.

C. 2017 Budget Proposals

Pledge Campaign

- 304 Pledges: \$1.2M
 - 24 decrease
 - 27 new pledges
 - 19 lost pledges
 - 158 increased pledge
 - 95 same as 2016
- Down by \$14-15K (We had an increase of \$72K going into 2016)

Concerns

- Loose Offering & Pledge Collection
- “Right Size” Operating Budget: trend has been to spend more than we take in
- Transition New Business Manager
- Clean up finance records/policies
- Week Day School Integration
- This Old Building and deferred maintenance
- Re-negotiate SunTrust Debt

2017 Finance Tasks

- Conduct 2018 Operating Budget Campaign
- Re-finance term loan (matures 11/1/2017)
- Initiate “This Old Building Fund”
- 2017 Christmas Miracle Offering
- 2017 Finish Year Strong
- 2017 Pay 100% of Apportionments
- Reconcile 2017 Operating Budget
- Gifts that Change the World: \$50,000 Goal

- Collect Capital Pledges
- Pay SunTrust \$3,000,000 Term Loan
- Trust fund corpus growth
- Website, communication, electronic giving, etc.
- Find ways to reach Gen Y members for financial support
- Expand & improve electronic and alternative giving

IV. Charge Conference: Rev. Garie Taylor

- Call to order for special Charge Conference
- Call for vote on approval of salaries
- Salaries approved unanimously
- Adjourning of Charge Conference

V. Staff Parish Relations Committee, John Lesesene, Chair

Salaries are 2/3 of our total budget. Here are the reasons why:

Goals:

- Hire best business administrator we could (includes health & pension benefits)
- Associate pastors: We want to work toward paying them MORE than minimum salary
- Critical staff positions not getting what they deserve and want to give them a decent cost of living increase

2017 Updates

- Robert Johnson resigned
- New Business Administrator hired: Susan Fagan. Susan was present for the meeting and introduced to the board.
- Vacant custodian position is on hold

VI. Approval of 2017 Budgets: Nancy Northington, Administrative Board Chair

- All budgets approved unanimously

VII. Listening Group Report, Marcie Smeck Bryant and Jane DuBose, Taskforce Chairs

Tasks of the Listening Group:

Following the development of multiple options for LGBTQ inclusion by a Task Force appointed by the Belmont UMC Administrative Board, a request was made to:

- Reach as many Belmont UMC members as possible to seek discernment around options from Task Force
- Listen to prayers, concerns and hopes regarding LGBTQ inclusion and Belmont's role in the issue
 - Charge was not to advocate for any option, but to listen and record comments
- Organize a discernment process and produce a report as soon as reasonably possible
- Recruit a diverse team of good listeners (chosen based on ability to listen deeply; not on their opinions.) Had a diverse group of 12

Takeaways from Listening Group

- Surprised by the degree of hostility and paranoia from members on both sides of the issue
- We believe churchwide votes on key issues is a good way forward
- Process suggested that same-sex issue is not an issue with youth and young adults. In 20 years, this will not be an issue; it will be accepted. The decision now is how to arrive at this destination with grace, giving those in opposition an opportunity to make peace with the decision or leave the church without wounding it.
- Disappointment about number of people who participated: 212. Many made the decision to not participate.
- The listening phase exposed the broken reality of our common life to the light. Will we ignore it or seek God's guidance as we deal with it?

VIII. A Way Forward for Belmont, Bill Cooper, Lay Leader

In response to the report of the Listening Group Report, leadership created and presented a report recommending a way forward.

The report began with affirming our common values, hopes, and understandings of God's will. Board members read these affirmations aloud following each with the response, "may God bless and guide our congregation."

After discussion, the board endorsed this report, including the full slate of five recommended action items. The action items were as follows:

- 1) Encourage and support intentional actions by Belmont as a united body to actively advocate for change — including petitioning the Commission on a Way Forward, our resident bishop, our Conference delegates to General Conference, and the Southeast Jurisdiction — and keep members informed regarding activity on this subject, proposing solutions or other reasonable means to influence the outcome and achievement of our objective.
- 2) While we recognize that we do not decide who is ordained, we will support the ordination of all persons called and gifted for pastoral ministry regardless of their sexual orientation.
- 3) Support our clergy who individually feel that they are called to perform same sex weddings at locations other than in Belmont facilities.
- 4) Endorse at the administrative board meeting Belmont's affiliation with Reconciling Ministries Network, to be followed by an educational outreach effort and a churchwide yes/no vote to be completed by March 31 if not earlier, on whether the congregation ratifies the endorsement by the board.
- 5) Leave our long-standing and inclusive wedding policy unchanged while we continue to pray as a faith family whether we should (i) publicly proclaim the inclusive nature of our existing wedding policy by joining those that have taken the Altar for All Pledge, (ii) change our wedding policy to conform to the current language of the Discipline to limit use of the sanctuary to just weddings of opposite sex couples, or (iii) discontinue all weddings at Belmont until the Discipline changes.

IX. New Business: Resolution, Louis Jordan

Louis submitted a resolution, "Reconciling Ministries Network Decision Making Process," recommending a process for holding a churchwide vote regarding joining the Reconciling Ministry Network.

After discussion about various practical issues such as timeline, how ballots would be distributed, and what would be the necessary vote margin for ratification, the resolution was amended as follows:

- Deadline for voting process and sharing of results: March 31. This aligns with #4 in A Way Forward for Belmont (above).
- A 2/3 majority of votes received will be required to ratify the board's recommendation to affiliate with Reconciling Ministries Network.

The resolution supports formation of a supervisory committee and a communications committee to facilitate the churchwide voting process and to communicate with members.

The resolution was approved by the board.

The board will also install a steering committee to serve as additional resources in a coordinating role.

Upcoming Meeting Dates

- April 2
- May 21
- July 16
- September 17
- Charge conference (date and location TBD)