

Belmont United Methodist Church
Administrative Board Meeting and Charge Conference
via Zoom December 13, 2020

Welcome – Jennifer Bagwell, Administrative Board Chair

Opening Prayer — Deron Johnson

Approval of September 27 Administrative Board Minutes

Amend monthly apportionment amount to \$14.6K per month

Charge Conference Opening — Paul Purdue, Senior Pastor presiding

Financial Report — John Pearce, Chair of the Finance Committee

2020 Report

We are looking good for the end of the year.

Expenses:

- We are saving on our expenses, which are down about \$130K. These savings are predominantly in the staff and ministry areas. Administration of properties is also down.
- Apportionments are right on track.
- Good that we are down, because our revenue will likely be down about the same amount as we are with expenses. Loose offering is substantially down for obvious reasons, and we did not have our Gifts that Change the World campaign.

Several variables to finish the year:

- We need Belmonters to finish their pledge commitments. We need about \$120K in December, which would be a small December for Belmont.
- We also had some end of the year generous gifts we weren't expecting.
- Optimistic that we will end up with a small surplus (somewhere between \$0 and \$50K) on our budget of about \$1.6M.

Weekday School

- WDS has finished November with about a \$50k loss (YTD). Financial situation is much better than we expected back in the Spring.
- Two things that have helped compensate for the loss in revenue:
 - Prior years surplus and grants (around \$50K + \$135K worth of grants). Thanks to Bobbi, Mark, Rachel, Nancy and some others who worked very hard on securing these grants.
 - Broken even for last 2 months and probably will in December and into next year.
- Given the circumstances, we're doing very well. Bobbi Worthington, our director, has done a tremendous job. Rachel Parker and her committee have done great work. A lot of credit goes to Mark Hagewood. Nancy Northington has helped a lot with the WDS financials.

PPP Loan

- This is still an open item for 2020. We still owe \$326K to Wilson's Bank and Trust. None of the information shared so far includes this income. As of today, this is still a liability.

- With Rick Keuler and Deron Johnson's help, Mark and John applied for forgiveness of the loan on Nov. 19. Wilson BT notified us that they thought our application was sufficient and complete, and they were forwarding in on to the SBA. SBA has 90 days to approve those, but experience has been that the applications are being approved much more quickly than that.

Other items

- Debt service on our building is on track.
- Rental property is on track.
- Trust Fund spent a lot this year to help with the building, but they are doing OK despite the tough year for earning.

Looking ahead to 2021

- WDS seems to be breaking even and gaining a couple of students every month. We should be on track to do OK next year.
- We have had requests for \$60K increase in expenses versus 2020. Hope that we don't immediately begin spending "full throttle" and continue to realize some savings as we move through COVID.
- We expect revenue to still be challenging.
 - Loose offerings collections will still be a problem until we are back meeting in the building.
 - We have lost some large pledges. We are in a season for next decade or so, where significant gifts are from folks that are getting older, and we will continue to see the impact of this.
- Pledges:
 - As of Thursday: We have about \$1.2M of pledges received.
 - We have 21 new pledges totaling \$27K; we've lost 6 pledges that we know of for about \$60K; and also had some decent increases throughout the year. We still haven't heard from about 66 people who have pledged in the past. If we hear back from them and they pledge the same as last year, and we don't have any more losses, we'll be at about \$1,350,000 in pledges, which is consistent with last year.
- Bottom line: our pledges are about flat, expenses are up, and other revenue is down. The result is that we'll probably have about \$100K shortfall for that we'll need to deal with.
- Good news: We \$326K of a PPP loan that we expect to not have to repay. We also expect that we will continue to see some expense savings into the new year. So think we'll be able to compensate for the shortfall in revenue we expect.
- What can you do?
 - Open statement email and make sure you've completed gift to the extent you are able.
 - Make a gift to our Christmas Miracle Offering.
 - If you haven't responded to your 2021 pledge, please do that.
 - Help us continue to help us control expenses.

Compensation / Parsonage allowances – Jeanie Rutland, Chair of Staff Parish Relations Committee

- Appreciation of the creativity and commitment of the staff and clergy and all that they do. In 2020, that has been exhibited 10-fold as they have had to figure out new ways to do things.
- Our clergy have the ability to designate a portion of their compensation toward housing for tax purposes.

Clergy housing allowances submitted for approval:

- Paul: \$25,604
 - Heather: \$28,000
 - Kate: \$23,000
 - Darren: \$44,000
- Total: \$120,604**

» **APPROVED**

Local Church Leadership / Nominations — William Cooper, Lay Leader

- Task of the committee is to identify and equip leaders for our ministries.
 - We have 300 individual leadership slots to fill at Belmont.
 - Nominations refinements. To bridge period during COVID, we've asked current leaders to continue in their positions through part of 2021. Almost all have agreed.
 - We will use this extension to adjust our recruitment and enlistment.
 - Spring 2021: Identify leaders to assume duties April 1.
 - Spring 2022: Identify leaders to assume duties September 1.
 - Potential advantages:
 - Resets recruitment schedule. Having to make recruitment decisions at the end of the year when things are winding down and there's a long holiday break, has made ramping up for new leadership in the winter difficult.
 - Allows outgoing chair to prep new incoming chair
 - Provides better flows with ministry flows (as opposed to calendar year). So ministries launching in the Fall would be set with the new chair/members in place in the Spring.
 - Review of slate of candidates for leadership 2021
 - Corrections or updates as distributed:
 - Alexia will co-chair GTF fellowship
 - » Presentation of slate of leaders **APPROVED**
 - We have empowered the lay leadership committee to fill gaps as needed during year, subject to the approval of the Administrative Board.
- » **APPROVED**

Membership rolls

- Members that we have lost contact with. We have a 1st, 2nd and 3rd reading of these names before they are removed from the membership rolls.
- Reading of rolls: Anne will email it to us and let her know if we have info on any of them and how to get in touch with them.
- We have attempted to contact the people on these lists, but they have either not responded or transferred and we never received that information. We do not have a record of them being active in our congregation or have an active way to contact them.
- 3rd reading: This is a larger list of contacts, which is a part of effort to clean up our database.
- Keeping roster up to date is important to help us be effective in ministry and care for the souls in our charge.
- If you have contact info for any of these people and believe they would like to be kept on our rolls, let Mark know. If we remove someone by action of charge conference and then later learn that they still

want to be a part of us, we can re-instate them.

- Question: Are we required to send the list to entire congregation? It used to be a requirement. We'll find a way to send out the list of those on the 3rd reading to the congregation to see if we can get any more information about them.

Renewal of Lay Speaker and Candidates for Ministry — Paul Purdue

- **Candidacy renewals**
 - **Caroline Archer:** She lives in East TN but keeps her membership with us as she is navigating the process.
 - **Linda Furtado:** She also keeps her membership with us as she is going through the candidacy process despite worshipping at Connell with Jefferson.
 - **Alexia Dees:** She was presented last year, but need to renew this.
- » **APPROVED**
 - Bill Haire is a clergy person with NC Conference and continues his affiliation with us.
 - APPROVED
 - **Lay servant: June Batsel**
 - Affirm that as well

Ministry Reports

Children's Ministry Report/Adult Discipleship – Kate Fields, Pastor of Children's Ministry and Discipleship

It has been a challenging year to do children's ministries, but they are going strong and still connected.

- These groups have met virtually: VBS (Compassion Camp), Sunday School, children's choirs, and parent/child music groups.
- We've supported parents by creating a virtual parent hangout that Jeff and Chris have led.
- Lib Caldwell, an expert in faith formation, led a session about formation at home.
- Sent numerous bags for children with various items/activities for faith formation at home.
- Done some drive-throughs so the children could see each other. Were able to hold an outdoor gathering for our 4-6 graders when COVID were cases lower, and working on helping them process their feelings about COVID and not being able to meet in person regularly.
- Working on virtual Xmas pageant for Christmas Eve, which will allow the congregation to see the faces of our children.
- Amy Cooper has done a fantastic job with children's music. She has gone to front porches and taken musical instruments so the kids could play music ("Music on Wheels").
- Paul and Kate were able to present Bibles on porches to our 3rd graders.
- We've tried to create opportunities for connection, which is difficult since many children don't have cell phones and younger children have hard time connecting on Zoom. But we are committed to finding ways to let them know we love them and seeing how they lead our congregation.

Discipleship

Christian formation and education continue to be strong at Belmont UMC even though it has been all virtual.

- Within week, most adult Sunday School classes converted to a Zoom format and are robust and well attended. Proud of their mastery of Zoom.
- We had a completely virtual Holy Week.
- Provided multiple opportunities for gathering in small groups via Zoom:
 - Anti-racism book groups

- Pat Ward fiction studies
- Herb Mather led a group and has Advent studies going on.
- We started a dinner church where we go through the Great Thanksgiving liturgy together and eat together.
- AJ Levine taught an all-church SS for three weeks that was attended by more than 200 people.
- Had an Advent around the fire
- Started a LGBT group that meets every 2 weeks and has become a tight-knit community.
- Involvement with Belmont University's Center for Thriving Churches' Project Thrive: Megan Rojas is the leader of that at Belmont and we're doing listening sessions. Trying to figure out what do we do best, what are we known for at Belmont, and why are people at Belmont. We want to identify and enhance those things.

Youth Ministry Report – Darren Wright, Pastor to Young People

Youth ministry at Belmont UMC looks different right now, but it continues to journey with young people as they grow in love of God and neighbor.

- In the Fall, we launched six small groups that are interest-based and gather bi-weekly either on Zoom or socially distanced (11 leaders)
- Our Virtual confirmation class of 15-20 meets weekly led by six shepherds.
- Our 9-12th grade Sunday School meets bi-weekly and is led by Celeste Holt, Charlie Warfield, and Mary Jane Duke. They have done a fantastic job of finding creative ways to engage young people. They have delivered packages weekly with bags/supplies for each Sunday School lesson (every other week).
- Youth group meets every other week on Sunday and continue to meet weekly on Wednesday evenings. These are led primarily by Emma, our youth intern.
- Trying to find as many ways as possible to stay in touch:
 - Porch visits
 - Dropping off care packages during finals
 - Had an outside No-doz lock-in.
- We lots of great adult leadership
- Youth doing all they can. Like all of us, so much of their lives are virtual. We are doing what we can to support them.
- Young adults: The Bagwells and Connie doing fantastic job leading our young adults group.
 - This month they are talking about the Bible and class (Nov: Sexuality; Oct: Politics). Each month they are looking at the Bible and reclaiming Scripture in ways that are meaningful for issues they encounter in their everyday lives.
 - The Bagwells held a couple of Thanksgiving/outdoor fire pits to provide opportunities for those who were not able to be with their families to gather with their Belmont family.
- Youth choir and bells: Youth have shared how much being able to gather together in person, in a safe way has meant to them. The singing ensembles have been going strong, but has been harder because of confidence issues (the small group, singing in masks).

Senior Adults Report — Heather Harriss, Pastor of Congregational Care and Senior Adults (Given by Paul Purdue)

- Encore stepping up and meeting needs. They have contacted members to see what they need, and have offered almost 20 programs on Zoom.
- Congregational Care has volunteered and connected people with needs that they have.
- Looking back at the calendar, so many things that were planned had to be canceled. But it was amazing how we have quickly adapted to the changing world. From our first online worship to our first Zoom

meetings, so many things have altered the way we see the world.

- The death of George Floyd broke our hearts and called us to accountability. So many members of our congregation participated in our “How to Be an Anti-Racist” book groups or one of the UMW groups.
- UMW
 - Celebrated the anniversary of women’s right to vote with an informative and inspiring series.
 - Collected school supplies for over 100 children
 - Outreach and food collection for Open Table.
 - Judy Lewis and Nancy Crutcher facilitated providing groceries for families who are a part of our Edgehill learning center.
- It has been especially bittersweet to remember the members we have lost this year.
- We couldn’t do hospitals and home visits. Unable to gather in times of grief and loss.
- Amazing resilience and way things have gone and the way people have stepped in.

Music Ministry — Gayle Sullivan, Director of Music Ministries, and Amy Cooper, Director of Children’s Music

- This has been a challenging year that required lots of adjustments, but has also been rewarding.
- Music ministry has continued to play an active part of our virtual worship services.
- Music ministries used to have a mission statement that stated that “music ministry supports the greater mission of the church by offering opportunities for service, witness, education, outreach and nurture.” In that way, the music ministry offers these opportunities as a faith practice or sabbath practice — taking the time to put away the work of the week to focus on God.
- As safely as possible, we’ve continued our faith practice during this time. We’ve kept people connected and kept a time of the week for people to participate in an ensemble or Zoom meeting.
- As research developed, it was encouraging to know that it was safe to gather for 30 minutes with masks, space, and ventilation. We offered the option to participate in small groups. Over all age groups (children, youth, adults), we’ve had about 165 people participating either virtually or in person in music ministry.
- Amazing to see the importance of the ministry is to so many. And gratifying to see what people are willing to do — to drive in from Brentwood or farther to participate in a 30-minute practice.
- Amy and her entire team of teachers has done a remarkable job in reaching out to children for whom gathering in person is not safe. They have found really creative ways to get children to participate virtually. In fact, Amy was invited to be part of a [video about children’s music ministry during COVID](#) produced by UMCOM. She was interviewed by Lila Marigza, who is the daughter of member Mary Helen Marigza.
- Carillon ringers participated in a piece for a video being offered by Timothy’s Gift prison ministries. This video will be shared as part of worship on December 27.
- Feast of Lights offering: We had 13 recording sessions to record our ensembles, readers, candlelighting. It will be presented on 12/20 at 6pm

Ministry Council — Tate Keuler

- Council has created a smaller group that has been meeting monthly to figure out how to organize the council to be more effectively organized.
- Trying to discern what the goal of the council is, and it has been easier to do this in a smaller group.

Congregational Report/Membership — Paul Purdue

- So thankful to the tech team (Marty McClaren, Mike Graves, Cindy Caldwell, Henrys, Jimmy Bowland, Bruce Williams). Glad to have Michael Castellaw Vaughn with us now.
- So thankful for the ministry of Jennifer, Jeff, Mark and Angie who have stepped up — along with Gayle —

as the regathering team. Helped us reflect on ministry and have made hard, but good, decisions. Appreciative of their spirit, cooperation and dedication.

- WDS: So grateful for the team and Rachel Parker. We have made such progress in having a true partnership with them.
- GTF: They have really struggled with technological issues. Bill Lovell and others have been in touch with them, but it has been a tough season. We had planned communion regathering, but had to postpone because of CV19 cases spiking. So happy to see a new GTF committee that will be led by members of the congregation.
- Privilege to be the pastor of a church full of such amazing leaders and loving people. I have grown as a pastor and person here. I long to see everyone in person. Thanks for all you are doing in this season of waiting and longing.

Close the Charge Conference — Paul Purdue

- Thanks for projecting to pay 100% of apportionments. Great to see us reaching out to raise money for Malawi for an adult literacy program.

Other business

Columbarium Update

- A donor has graciously stepped forward to fund the indoor Columbarium.
- Committee also wants to do one outside since the indoor one will not be very large. However, the outdoor one will require more fundraising plus we are currently using this outdoor space to meet, which will likely continue through the Summer/early Fall.

Additional Committee updates

Homeplace (Richard Fulk)

- Received notice from Belmont University that they will be needing property that Homeplace is built on.
- We've been at that location for 14 years and have had a successful and fulfilling partnership with Belmont University. They have not only provided the residence, but faculty members on the board, student and faculty volunteers.
- The lease agreement was always with the understanding that one day, they would be moving down Acklen with new construction.
- That day has come and they have asked us to return the property in June of 2021.
- The Board has already begun working on a new model and plan for the care of Jennifer. With the passing of Jessie and Ruby, the model we've been using for 32 years, is no longer sustainable.
- With more than six months notification, we feel confident that we have the time, resources, and knowledge to develop a new model. So it is not an unsettling bit of news; it's timely. We think we have resources in place to be able to develop this new model.
- Will keep the Admin board informed of the plans and how we continue our lifelong commitment to the ladies of Homeplace and this ministry.

Closing — Jennifer Bagwell

- If anyone is not receiving information for Administrative Board, please let Jennifer know. Email Jennifer or Anne Hoback to make sure you are set up in Realm to receive this information.
- So appreciate the good decisions and patience as we continue to navigate this time.

Benediction — Paul Purdue

- Several additions to the building have been made. So grateful to Steve and the properties committee for their work. The new boiler has been installed. Thanks for properties and Steve.
- So grateful for all the things each of you do to make Belmont what it is and should be.