

Leadership Group Minutes

November 5, 2024, 7:00pm @ AMC

Present: Sara Morris (chair), Tom Kauffman, Cheryl Shreiner, Trevor Daughterty, Ben Sywulka, Anna McVay, Anna Yoder Schlabach, Moriah Hurst, Karl Shelly, Scott Coulter (taking minutes).

Not present: John Blosser, Maeve Smucker (administrative assistant)

Opening

1. Opening- Trevor led us in a time of silence and then opened with a prayer by Michael Leunig.
2. October 1, 2024 LG Minutes -Sara ([Attachment](#))

a. Minutes approved by consensus, with update to 6a

Discussion/Action

3. Staff Contracted Hours Update- Sara

- a. Karl has accumulated many work hours (due to serving on the search committee, working as part of a two-person team in summer 2024, etc.). Sara and Karl met this past Sunday to discuss this.
- b. The elders don't want or expect pastors to put in more hours than we're contracted for. If there is a pattern, or if pastors are over hours a couple months in a row, elders want to check in with the pastoral team about this.

c. The elders have agreed: We move Karl to .4 FTE as he requested beginning in October 2024. In January the elders will look at Karl's total 2024 hours, and evaluate how any additional compensation will be determined based on actual worked hours for the year.

- d. The elders and PT will work at supporting Karl in figuring out how to keep his hours down. This may mean he preaches less, that he says "no" to more things he's asked to do. Karl identified a tension between supporting the rest of the team and wanting to keep his hours down.
- e. Clarifying questions: *–Do other pastors have this problem?* Anna and Scott have found we're able to keep our hours within our contracted time. *–How do we remind the congregation appropriately about Karl's reduced hours or the team's being part time?*
- f. Related: Bethany Swope is willing to continue offering support through the end of the calendar year, about 5 hours a week. This extends her part time staff role beyond November, but reducing the hours she was putting in compared to past months. That feels good to Moriah as well.

4. Safe Church Committee Formation ([Attachment](#))- Scott, Moriah, Sara

- a. Submitted List of Names (Attachment)
 - i. Appropriate size of the standing committee? 4 or 5 (4 plus a pastor).

- ii. This group will need to do significant policy work and education of the congregation. A slightly larger group (5+pastor) may be good for a policy start-up group.
- iii. Moriah will serve as the pastor on the committee for the first couple of years at least, but not necessarily forever.

iv. Scott C will reach out to the 5 people on our list and ask them to be on the committee

b. Current Safe Church Conversation + Updates - Pastoral Team, Tom

- i. Confidential discussion of a sensitive pastoral care issue. Sara recused herself from participating in the conversation but was present as a listener.

5. Pastors' Reporting

- LG reiterated that elders want the pastoral team to say if they need more resources to tend to pastoral responsibilities.

6. School Support- Ben

- After receiving feedback from some members of the congregation, Ben spent some time checking in with participants of the Education Aid Advisory Group to get a sense of their level of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the design of the process.
- Some members of the team who have moral objections to the current student aid policy feel it is unfair that the consensus process favors the status quo.
- We have learned there are some in the congregation who choose not to give to the AMC General Fund because of their opposition to the student aid policy.
- The workshop method Ben had initially designed for the team won't work. This is heavier work than originally expected.
- LG discussed how to give the team working on this more support.

- LG supports having a pastor join the team for their next meeting.

- There are some options on the table, such as: (1) *Create a volunteer fund to support student aid so the aid isn't in the general fund*, or (2) *spending more time exploring our theology of education as a congregation*. But given the frustration with the status quo of part of the congregation, LG suggests that the Advisory Group focus its energy on brainstorming interim solutions that we can implement in the short-term while we work on a longer term process.

7. ART (Advocacy and Repair Team) 2025 Budget Request/Finance Question (Sara)

- a. ART is requesting a \$5,000 Line Item in the Congregation's Spending Plan for education, speakers etc.
- b. Finance Committee is hesitant to add this big of a line item for distribution by committee, asks if there should be an ongoing annual commitment to the Coalition under "Other Ministries" in the spending plan, and suggests speaker fees come from "Honoraria" line in the spending plan.

- c. LG agreed that more specifics would be needed on how ART would plan to spend the funds before this could be added to the Spending Plan. **Sara Morris will follow up with ART to ask for a more detailed proposal.**
- d. Question: What was the congregation's financial commitment to the Coalition to Dismantle the Doctrine of Discovery? Was there a specific dollar amount committed? Answer: The October 2022 proposal approved by the congregation included a commitment to "Work together to put restitution/repair funds in your budget each year" and to donate to the work of the Coalition. There was no specific amount. Our understanding is that the money from the 2% Fund that goes to Reparations is the primary way we meet this commitment as a member congregation of the Coalition. (See: [Oct 2022 Cong Meeting Handouts](#); [Oct 2022 Cong Meeting Minutes](#))

8. Next Congregational Meeting Agenda- Sara and Scott

- a. LG decided there would not be a congregational meeting in November.

Information/Reporting

~~Tabled: 8. EV Charging Station + Funding of Solar Project – Scott + Finance Committee~~

~~Tabled: 9. Church Retreat Report (Attachment) – Scott + Church Retreat Committee~~

Closing

9. Prayer for the Congregation- Anna

Executive Session

Next Leadership Group Meeting: December 3, 2024 @ 7pm

Minutes submitted by Scott Coulter

Future Agenda

- Leadership Group Self-Evaluation (follow up from PCR Recommendations)
- Goals from Apr 23 LG Retreat: (1.Fostering internal community, 2. Involving the congregation in decision making, 3.Supporting the outside community)
- Recommendations from Pastor-Congregation Review:
 - *Vision for the next 3-5 years
 - *Review LG role and structure - more needs to be done here, in terms of LG self-evaluation
- Review Hospitality Goals
- Spring Retreat
- School Support
- LGBTQ+ Reparations
- Dismantling Patriarchy (ongoing work, follow up from 2022 Oct retreat)
- Impacts/Influences of COVID
- Fostering Emotional Connection
- Evaluate Members Needs/ "Emergency Funds" Policy (Dec LG meeting?)

-Welcome Statement