AMC Congregational Meeting - 11/16

Minutes taken by Wendel Landes

1. Agenda item #1: Leadership groups proposed increases to pastoral team FTE
    a. Tom Kauffman started the meeting by reporting on the leadership group's process and their recommendations related to pastoral staffing.

    b. Background: MCUSA changed the definition for full time pastoral employment from 45 hours to 40. As Assembly moves to adopt this definition, it has affected the number of work hours for Assembly pastors. The pastors have regularly been over their hours as now defined by MCUSA and their FTE.

    c. The pastor of mission earlier requested that his FTE be reduced to 0.4. Under the MCUSA definition, his hours decreased to 16 hours per week. He regularly works several hours above this number. Leadership proposes that the congregation increase his FTE to 0.5 to more closely reflect the hours worked.

    d. The first year review for the pastor of faith formation indicated that the FTE is probably on the low side. It has been difficult to fulfill the elements of the job description given the assigned number of hours. The extra time commitments seem to go beyond the challenges of learning a new position and establishing new work patterns. Under the proposal, the pastor of faith formation hours will increase from 0.6 FTE to 0.75 FTE

    e. The other two staff members will keep their FTE's at 0.6.

    f. The changes will involve changes to the church budget.

    g. There were questions about the rationale for the changes from MCUSA and the general expectation that salaried positions are often required to dedicate more time than the contracted hours.

    h. There were also questions about changes in the job description for the faith formation position. Members who were on the search committee reported that a number of responsibilities were added to this position that may account for difficulty completing job requirements in the given FTE.

    i. Members also raised questions about the to focus more attention on the pledging giving process at church.

    j. John Nafziger made the point that budgeting requirements make it necessary to have made a decision by January 1.

2. Agenda item #2: Health insurance cost: premium increases for 2026; Options for the congregation to ease the impact on our pastors/staff
    a. Anne Hanby presented about the increases for health insurance for next year. We currently use the Corinthian plan through Everence.
    b. The plan has experienced high claims over the past few years. The church's plan is to stay in the Corinthian plan for the upcoming year.
    c. Assembly covers the percentage of the health care cost equivalent to the pastor's FTE.
    d. The premium increase was $400-700 per month for pastor and spouse, family coverage $700-1100 month. This is the total increase, not the increase to employees. Assembly covers the percentage of the health care cost equivalent to the pastor's FTE.
    e. Our current budget covers the increases that the church has committed to pay. It does not cover any additional money the church might provide to offset the new increases faced by pastors, spouses, and families if they are on the plan.
    f. There is a surplus fund in the budget that could be used to help with offsetting the expenses.

3. Agenda item #3: John Nafziger and Anne Hanby discussed pledges to meet the congregation's financial goals for the year in light of the proposed increase to the pastoral FTE.
    a. Pledges so far this year are at $455,839. The goal is for the budget to be covered by 80% pledges.
        i. The aspirational budget is $582,000 and the FTE changes will bring this number to $608,387.
    b. To get closer to the $582,000 number, the budgeting committee suggested several areas of savings. These savings brought the aspirational budget to $564,000 (this includes the increase in the FTE).

4. Agenda item #4: The need to develop more robust human resource policies.
    a. Trevor Daugherty reported on the efforts to build out policies related to HR policies and a basic handbook.
    b. LG is proposing that the church identify outside help with the process. They have identified a grant that can help with paying for the process.
    c. The end goal is to develop a policy handbook that reflects the church's values and mission.
    d. Members asked about MCUSA guidelines or resources. LG reported that there are not many resources for congregations.
    e. LG reported that there is not enough energy to take on the process of developing a set of HR policies.