

Congregational Chair Report – August 20, 2017

The leadership team consists of Pastor Marv Friesen, elders Tim Derstine, Gloria Horst Rosenberger, Jim Pierce, Bethany Spicher Schonberg, and congregational chair Karen Rath.

At the May 21, 2017, congregational business meeting:

- There was a vote, and Joel Weidner was chosen as elder and Karen Rath as congregational chair.
- People volunteered for some of the positions that still had openings.
- The congregation affirmed the volunteers for the 2017-18 church year.
- There was a discussion and a vote on the proposed by-laws amendment to change the position of congregational chair elect to assistant congregational chair. Voting was extended for 2 weeks.
- There was a discussion and a vote on 2 motions concerning Camp Hebron. One motion was to end the annual practice of the Camp Hebron retreat and the other was to end the funding for the church retreat in the budget. Voting was extended for 2 weeks.
- There was a brief update and discussion about the pastoral search committee process.

After the 2-week extended voting period, the results were as follows:

- The proposed bylaws amendment to change the position of congregational chair elect to assistant congregational chair passed with a vote of 94% yes and 6% no.
- The motion to end the annual Camp Hebron retreat failed with a vote of 7% yes, 91% no, and 2 % abstain.
- The motion to end the funding of the church retreat from the church budget failed with a vote of 14% yes and 86% no.
- Therefore, the practice of having an annual Camp Hebron retreat will continue, and the retreat will continue to be funded from the church budget.

The leadership team met with Allegheny Conference Minister, Dave Mischler, on May 24, 2017 for advice on forming a pastoral search committee. The leadership team invited a number of people to be on the pastoral search committee to provide demographic balance in addition to those who had volunteered, and announced the formation of a pastoral search committee. The leadership team did this without realizing that the UMC bylaws had guidelines on forming a pastoral search committee, and that this process violated the bylaws in several ways. Once this was pointed out, the leadership team apologized and attempted to remedy the situation with several tries before settling on opening up nominations for the pastoral search committee to the congregation with the opportunity to vote on 9 out of however many nominees at the August 20 congregational business meeting. The people who volunteered are considered to have nominated themselves and the people who were invited by someone on the leadership team are considered to have been nominated by that person. People in the congregation have been given the opportunity to nominate themselves or someone else. All of the nominees will be on a ballot that will be voted on at the August 20 meeting. The nine people who are chosen from that vote will form the pastoral search committee, and a chair of the search committee will be chosen by the congregational chair.

On July 16, 2017, Allegheny Conference Minister Dave Mischler led a discussion called Envisioning the Future of UMC, in which those attending had the opportunity to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of UMC, and what we want to keep and what we want to change as we move forward. A summary of those points was sent to the congregation, as well as a questionnaire with the discussion questions for those who had missed the discussion to be able to provide their input if they wished.

Another Community Café is scheduled for October 8, 2017, in which the congregation will have the opportunity to discuss how we want to move forward as a congregation, with a particular emphasis in what we are looking for in a new pastor. The information that is obtained will be used by the pastoral search committee.

At the leadership team meeting of August 2, 2017, the leadership team welcomed incoming assistant chair Doug Miller and elder Joel Weidner, and thanked outgoing elder Tim Derstine for his service.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Rath, Congregational Chair