

Chapel Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

March 11, 2024 at 1:pm. Minutes taken by Maria Peagler,
Secretary

In attendance:

- Mark Newton, Chair
- Randy Wiersma, Vice Chair
- Maria Peagler, Secretary
- Ruth Slim
- Larry Smith
- Charles Cates
- Pat Collins
- Jean James
- Beverly Zimmerman
- Becky Truitt
- Sue Ceravolo
- Tommy Green, Interim Pastor
- David Apple, Associate Pastor
- Todd Stephens, Operations/Technology Manager
- Valerie Abner, Business Manager
- Chapel members present, including but not limited to Pam Hopper, Jerry Capps, Fran Farias, John Willoughby, Chuck Gordon

Mark Newton opened with prayer.

Prayer Requests

Jeannette Crawford cancer screening came back “not good;” Ron Ceravolo’s doctor think he has kidney stones; John Slim is healing; Gary Cherry looking at surgery for prostate cancer; Miles is doing well, thank you for prayers; Pat Collins’ friend having procedure tomorrow. Sue Hamill looking at surgery this week; lift up Dick Hammill for what he’s going through.

Devotional by Sue Ceravolo

Sue offered the monthly devotion from the *Puritan Book of Prayer*.
“When the storms of life are raging, Jesus stands with me.”

Mark shared a devotion from the *Upper Room* about sharing our common love of the Lord.

ACTION ITEMS

February 2024 minutes approved: Charles Cates put forward motion to approve; Beverly Zimmermann seconded. Board unanimously approved.

Financial Report

- Valerie Abner shared that all financials through February will be presented to the Finance Committee next week.
- January contributions were well above what was expected.

- USPS is experiencing SIGNIFICANT delays and will potentially cause problems for February contributions.

State of the Church Technology Update

- Mark recommends Todd presenting this once per year to the Board.
- Please see attached slide deck file for Todd's presentation (Church Technology 2024.pptx).
- Beverly said some pastors use an app or Artificial Intelligence (AI) for a Morning Moment or some type of daily devotion.
- Todd recommended we have Committees listed on the website. It will be a dynamic/organic process as to how much information we include depending upon how much people use the website and mobile app.
- Todd would like to present a presentation on AI at the April meeting.
- Todd built a mobile version of the same website for the mobile app: it's basically a mobile version of the same website, not a separate website.
- Mark mentioned technology will never replace the

face-to-face relationships (speaking of mobile check in) at the chapel. The website serves as a reference tool: look on the website for committee, special event information, etc.

- Maria will add Todd to the distribution list for BOT Meeting Minutes so he can add them to the website.
- Mark mentioned prayer requests on the website/mobile app are great for members learning about prayer requests.
- Pat is concerned people aren't being greeted as visitors or new members at the chapel. Charles said we used to recognize people if they were visiting or new. Would be a great thing to incorporate into our services again.

Communications Committee

- Mark talked to Judy about the committee and she is going on vacation soon.
- Charles was super impressed with Judy at the Men's Golf Tournament meeting: she ran with the communications needed.

Visionary Committee

- Mark emphasized the importance of communications between the Visionary Committee and BOT.

- Pam Hopper offered to share minutes of the meeting with us (she is Secretary).
- Todd said currently there is no way to get to the Visionary Committee (VC) page on the website since we removed it from Home page. Maria and Jean recommended putting the special purpose VC under the Committees page.

Search Committee including Website Update

- Mark said there is much improvement needed in the Sunday meetings where he answers questions. One of the biggest challenges members had was “they didn’t know about things.” Many of those “things” were issues that were years old, so Mark wants to emphasize the importance of communications.
- Larry Smith wants to talk about the Search committee, making a motion to reinstate the Search Committee.
- Larry talked to Harry and Milton, and Harry said the conversation relayed to the Board was inaccurate. Mark and Randy both replied that was not correct.
- Beverly said the meeting between Harry and Milton was not communicated to the Search committee.
- Pat said she felt badly that we didn’t hear both sides of that conversation.

- Mark: Anytime someone applies for a job it's about employment (regarding whether this discussion should be in Executive Session). Mark and Larry discussed.
- Sue said we can't put our decision back in the box. When she voted, her thought process was, "the Search Committee would be relieved, and in doing that they would be protected." She also regretted she didn't have more time to make the decision.
- Becky asked if Milton was already a candidate. Yes, he was. Harry met with Milton before. He went and met with him without the Search Committee. Our Chapel reputation is something we have to think about from other pastors. We don't have a good one right now.
- Maria said that the Milton/Harry conversation was not the only reason for our vote/decision.
- Mark read the letter to Harry and he agreed with it. He wanted to protect Harry, and he knew we were going to take a beating. He met with Ted Sprague on Friday who said, "*the board wanted to control the Search Committee.*" That's the LAST thing we want. That's why Mark wanted to meet with people after Sunday.
- Mark recognized Chuck Gordon as a former Board Chair and he asked to hear from him. He wanted to speak to the

motion as a previous Board Chair twice. Live by the bylaws. If you don't live by the bylaws you go off track. Bylaws call for a Search Committee (should be independent of the Board - although that is not in the bylaws), so he recommends reconstituting a Search Committee, not having the Board decide on the new Chaplain. It gives the impression that we are not operating correctly. Larry's motion was to reconstitute the same Search Committee. The Mens' Fellowship would say "follow the bylaws."

- Mark agreed we cannot emphasize the bylaws enough. They have been improved by previous boards and the congregations.
- Larry revised his motion to create a new Search Committee. Charles seconded it.
- Ruth Slim said we as a Board need to vote on the existing motion. Larry withdrew the previous motion and created a new motion to create a new Search Committee.

John Willoughby question: committees as addressed in 7.2 of bylaws concerning the Senior Chaplain. But 6.2 says the Board approves the the Search Committee. He doesn't think we have the power to disband the the Search Committee.

Pam Hopper question: does the Search Committee set the qualifications for a Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor Profile, available on the website, devised from the website and a poll

taken of the congregation. That was brought to the board and voted on, according to Beverly.

Maria Peagler put forward a motion to table the vote until we have our Executive Session discussion. No second of the motion.

Sue question: if we agree to form a new Search Committee, then can previous members serve? We will discuss in Executive Session.

Motion approved unanimously.

Beverly brought up Section 4.2 of the bylaws which does give Board members the authority to disband committees.

Larry Smith made another motion: make previous Search Committee members eligible for the new committee. Becky seconded.

Becky said we need to act like Christ Jesus and our thoughts are all different. Let's be more respectful of the Search Committee members. Becky recommended having a meeting with the Search Committee.

Pam Hopper question: did the previous board have a multi-denominational representation? Differing opinions, but Beverly said that as a member of the Search Committee it WAS NOT multi-denominational.

Board voted in favor of making previous Search Committee members eligible for the new committee, with Beverly Zimmerman opposed (since she felt we didn't need a motion for that. It's a given.)

Endowment Committee Request for Funds

- Larry Applewhite of Endowment Committee shared that Bill Gibson started a scholarship for Pickens County High School students. For one student who was eligible, the dad was widowed and said no to the student. Bill had a talk with the father. Today that student is a doctor. We really help give to the community.
- 2024 scholarship budget \$44K; had over 60 applicants
- Ham Gadd said we could apply for \$15K from Endowment; 2024 awards will take into consideration this \$15K increase
- Expenses include a guest speaker: Mark Cahill this year speaking on the three biggest days of your life.
- Another expense: reception of dessert with a few flowers. Larry asked for more money this year.
- Mark recommended asking Sunday Schools for donations to the scholarship fund.
- Board members can call Larry with questions. Mark thanked

him for his service.

- The approval process for releasing the funds has to go through Endowment, then Financial Committee, then to the Board.

Pastor Reports

- David Apple: wrote a report made available to Trustees. Chapel events need to be covered for room space before allocating space for POA or outside groups. We may need to have the Board decide on if we need fees for outside groups.
- Jean pointed out our Facilities Usage fees in bylaws have not been updated since 2012.
- All for-profit groups are prevented from booking Chapel space for their events.
- There was a POA event last year moved into Cousins Hall due to weather. Sold coffee in a kiosk which is prevented by the bylaws.
- Allen Moffett is planning on replacing the current head of the Properties Committee (who is moving).
- Pat had a question about use of our space: that Wellness Collaborative is allowed to use our space. They had a speaker who is an atheist. That is not proper use of our

space. She is not doing it for profit. It could be a rumor. David will look into it, is not aware of that.

- Tommy Green: Tommy shared rumors he has heard about himself after the news of Search Committee being disbanded:
 - *We're so glad you're going to be our new Senior Pastor*
 - *Tommy had bought property on Cox mountain*
 - *Ushers said we are certainly going to miss you. We understand you've turned in your notice. You're only going to be here one more week.*

- Tommy told them all the rumors are not true. Tommy wanted us to hear this from HIS mouth: he has been here 18 months. David Thompson asked him if he was tired of us, as his initial commitment was 6 months, then 9 months. Tommy assured him he was not tired of Big Canoe Chapel. The Search Committee process is not about him, us, or anyone else. This is Kingdom work, this is God's chapel. Tommy wants whatever the Lord wants. He has not invested 18 months of his life to see this thrown away. Some of his colleagues chide him that he failed at retirement. As we move forward, with whatever the Search Committee moves forward, know that rumors are not true, and he is here for as long as God calls him.

- Pat said we need to make, "something redemptive from this."

- Tommy said to trust the Holy Spirit to work in wondrous and

mysterious ways.

- Beverly said thank you for leading us in times when we aren't easy to lead.
- Tommy has stayed with us through extremely tough times - Mark.

Discussion Items

- May 20th board meeting - Mark will not be here. May 28th, Tuesday, will be alternative date at 1pm.
- Head Usher position open. Dick Girdler is not able to serve. If we know someone, please let us know. Seals Burdell has been serving in the interim, but he wants to go to his Sunday School.
- Jean said Dick would like to retain part of the position: two services are too much for him.
- Ruth said Sandra Gadd does recruiting for ushers and actively looking for a replacement. Jean may have a couple of names. Mark said it would be nice to recognize her.
- Communion Sign Up: passed around the sign up sheet.
- Call to Worship Update: doesn't want to advertise, but it's an opportunity to talk about resources we have and volunteers

for important committees. This chapel depends on volunteers.

- Events at the Chapel: promote the events:
 - Milton Perry Fri/Sat for Men's Fellowship Retreat
 - Spring Fling started by Christian Education Committee to bring everyone together as outreach for the Chapel. It's family oriented, but a great outreach. April 27 10-2. Will need volunteers and contributions. Tommy was there last year and it was wonderful.
 - Jubilee dinners are going extremely well. Pat recommended sitting at a table with people you don't know.

Jean made motion to adjourn; Pat Collins seconded; unanimously approved.