

Governance Council Meeting November 12, 2014 Minutes

Present: Jeanine Derr (Moderator), Doug Gaddis (Moderator-Elect), David Bennett, Paul Leistra, Amy McKee, Nancy Pielemeier, Sara Smith

Ex Officio: Rev. Tim Tutt (Senior Minister), Lisa Choate (Clerk)

Absent: Gary Walbridge

The meeting was held in the Westmoreland Library and started at 7:30 pm.

Spiritual Practice: Governance Council members discussed gun violence and prayed for some of the victims.

The **Agenda** was approved by unanimous consent.

Consent calendar

Motion 14 GC-40: To approve the minutes of the October 2014 meeting as amended.

Motion: David Bennett Second: Sarah Smith Vote: All in favor

The following motion was passed via email among Governance Council members and is being recorded here in keeping with the Resolution passed at Governance Council Meeting 2.9.13

Motion 14 GC-41: To approve appointment of the following members of Westmoreland to the Sanctuary Task Force: Paul Leistra, George Christo, Jeff Eagan, Marge Harvey, Chris Sale, Jesse Hackes. Tim Tutt and Alexis Kassim will be ex officio members.

Motion: Jeanine Derr, Second: Gary Walbridge, Vote: All in favor

Motion 14 GC-42: Approval of new members, dismissed members, and withdrawn members as indicated in membership report.

Changes in Membership

Joined		
	Benjamin Fritz	Oct. 26 Letter of transfer Trinitarian Cong. Church, Concord, MA
	Jennifer Fritz	Oct. 26 Reaffirmation of Faith
	Jill Johnson	Oct. 26 Letter of transfer Palisades Community Church DC
	Ann Roddy	Oct. 26 Letter of transfer Palisades Community Church DC
Transferred out		
	Emily Musil Church	Westwood UMC, Los Angeles, CA

Motion: David Bennett Second: Sarah Vote: All in favor

Information topics:

Security Issues. The church has added security cameras and locks on Westmoreland entrances. The goal is to provide security for the Children’s Center and the building itself in light of a few recent security issues.

Update on the Search for a Children’s Choir Director. As Brian Frye departs, we are planning a celebration of his time at Westmoreland as well as beginning the search for his replacement. Alexis and BCE have prepared a job description for this position, but Alexis pointed out that the position is embedded in Alejandro’s music department budget. The consensus after discussion was that in this and future similar situations, the Governance Council will approve a search committee. The committee will decide on an appointee, and the contract will be reviewed by the Personnel committee. The hiring letter will come from the Moderator, but the GC does not have to approve the individual

Update on Cleaning Services. Sarah Smith has been in touch with Farid and Martell. Farid and Martell both feel that the situation is developing fairly well. Martell is called on by individuals for specific tasks, because he is so well known among staff and church members, so occasionally he has difficulty performing all his responsibilities. Sarah suggested expanding the hours of some of the others on the cleaning staff so that Martell can continue to provide personalized service to the staff on request. We also discussed Farid’s responsibilities and how he has become the day-to-day property manager at Westmoreland. The budget for 2015 might include some expanded costs for cleaning services.

Reports

Staff Reports

Pastor’s Report.

Tim thanked the GC members for the Tables of Thanksgiving event. The imam who spoke was very appreciative and particularly liked the opportunity to speak to the children. Our church choir participated in the fall of the Berlin Wall celebration which was a very powerful event. Some Westmoreland members also attended this event at a sister church. Tim distributed a calendar of upcoming events. This coming Sunday is Stewardship pledge day. The Middle East Committee has an excellent speaker coming next Sunday. Advent is also coming up soon. Other events include the “Just Play” documentary, the Palestinian Craft Fair, wreathmaking on Dec 7, and 10,000 Villages on Dec 14. Tim also asked for help for “The Imaginary City” event, including financial gifts, ushers, reception support, publicity, and hosting for Ramzi.

Alexis indicated that there are no large issues on her agenda. The youth group has shown good participation, and 27 people have RSVPed for laser tag. Numbers in Sunday school seem to be increasing.

Clerk of the Rolls

Current Membership

Active Members	397	Includes out of area, unable to attend, “seldom seen”
Associate Members	11	Retain primary membership elsewhere
Inactive Members	100	
Children & Youth (not confirmed)	71	In member households
Children & Youth (not confirmed)	12	Non-member & Guest households

Active Non-Members	44	Will not join
Friends	2	Unlikely to join

Attendance: 3-year comparison

Average weekly	Adults	Children/Youth	Total
October 2014	139	17	156
October 2013	146	21	167
October 2012	115	26	141

Guest Tracking

New in 'current month'	New since January	Returned at least once:	Ongoing guests (2+ visits)
Adults: 9	Adults: 57	Adults: 29 (51%)	Adults: 17
Children: 1	Children: 14	Children: 10 (71%)	Children: 7
Total: 10	Total: 71	Total: 39 (55%)	Total: 24

Treasurer. Mike Weber sent a report by email to GC members. We are over budget in a few areas, and there are a few small errors that need to be corrected, but generally everything is on track.

Boards and Committee Liaisons Reports:

Deacons. Nothing to report.

BCE. BCE has submitted its budget request for next year. Alexis and Amy are going to prepare information for the bulletin about the Open Church Policy, which will be submitted to the GC next month.

Outreach Ministries. Nothing to report.

BMF. During this month, BMF organized the Tables of Thanksgiving event.

Finance. George and Trey joined the GC for a discussion about 2015 budgeting. There was a meeting of the Moderator, Treasurer and Finance Committee since the last GC meeting, and similar meetings will probably take place quarterly going forward.

Trey indicated that most committees have provided Finance with their budget requests. For any that have not, they will plug in the same number as this year. Jeanine indicated that an informal discussion is planned for November 23 to let congregants hear about the budget and express any ideas they have. The meeting will also include an update on Stewardship. Other issues for the meeting include the Nominations Committee, which will provide news about who is on the slate of candidates and where there are still holes. Finance committee members will outline their thinking about the budget based on the small conversations and allow members the opportunity to express their ideas further. The information from the conversations earlier this year indicates three specific things that are important to members: the building, outreach, and supporting youth. This is a good chance for congregants to further express their opinions and give input.

Trey also suggested that we might want to raise the possibility of moving the budget process into the fall. After some research, it seems that many churches approve their budgets in November. Stewardship numbers would not be available at that time which would complicate the process, but edits could be made later.

Tim pointed out that an adjustment in the budgeting schedule or financial year would require changing the bylaws which needs to be done in early 2015. Doug pointed out that there are several potential bylaws changes that we can take on after the beginning of the year. Jeanine reminded GC members that the bylaws changes were prepared by Sarah Wilson, but have not been implemented.

The GC and Finance Committee also discussed the accounting software, actuals, and reporting.

Property. A TV monitor has been installed in the Narthex. It shows a loop of announcements.

Nominating. Paul indicated that there had been a table in the social hall to generate nominations. The committee will meet on the upcoming Sunday to do the actual nominating. Overall most of the Boards feel that they are filling up fairly well.

Stewardship. We have 52 pledge units so far and it isn't pledge Sunday yet. Seven or eight are new families have pledged, but did not pledge in 2014. We expect approximately 112 pledge units this year. A Thank You stewardship hour is planned for December 8.

Personnel. Jessica Markham has agreed to be ex officio member of this group and will advise them. Personnel had asked previously whether they could hire an HR specialist to review the draft personnel manual. They plan to take on the role of doing brunches and staff morale work and have requested a budget for that. They have asked whether there will be raises this year. There were also questions about the office hours.

New Business

Building 2020. Many people have offered architectural drawings and ideas for the development of the Westmoreland property over the years. David Bennett made a proposal to put together a team that would propose plan or plans for what the buildings and grounds might look like in the Year 2020. This would be a short-term project with a deadline of May 24, 2015. The request is to authorize up to \$10,000 in the budget for consultancies, so that various options can be explored using specialists in different areas. For example, two areas that would require a specialist opinion are development of a catering kitchen or installation of an elevator. The Building 2020 team would be made of congregation members.

Nancy asked if this would move beyond a visioning process and make recommendations and set priorities. David suggested that the group would outline options and come up with sufficiently specific plans. Then the church would be asked to agree upon the priorities. Nancy and David pointed out that we need to move beyond concepts and make decisions. The suggestion was made that the Building 2020 group would make recommendations to the Governance Council. While approving the changes is a large responsibility for the Governance Council, this might be a way to move ahead efficiently. The GC would present any plan to the congregation.

The following is a motion from the Property Committee for Governance Council consideration, offered October 20, 2014 by David Bennett:

Motion 14 GC-43: *That the Governance Council establish a Building 2020 team with the goal, involving the congregation and staff along the way, to propose to the congregation a picture of the structure and use of our buildings and grounds in the year 2020. Also that the Governance Council authorize up to \$10,000 in the 2015 budget for consultancy services.*

Motion: David Bennett Second: Doug Gaddis All in favor

The further agreement was that the Building 2020 group will produce drawings or graphics and recommendations of sufficient clarity for congregational discussion. The group will present recommendations to the GC no later than May 24 2015 for decision making and budgeting. Jeanine asked that David email GC members about how he envisioned staffing the group.

Paul Leistra offered a short update on the Sanctuary task force update. He also noted that he will send an email after the nominating meeting.

9:20 A closing prayer was offered by Tim.