

## Governance Council Meeting March 11, 2015 Minutes

**Present:** Doug Gaddis (Moderator), Peggy Alfonso (Moderator-Elect), David Bennett, Leon Goodson , Paul Leistra, Jan Lilja, Amy McKee, George Singleton, Gary Walbridge

**Ex Officio:** Rev. Tim Tutt (Senior Minister), Rev. Alexis Kassim (Minister for Youth, Adults), Lisa Choate (Clerk)

**Absent:** None

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

**Spiritual Practice:** GC members discussed religious music favorites.

Approval/Amendment of Agenda

### Consent calendar

Resolutions Approving Minutes of the February 2015 meeting as amended.

**Motion 15-GC-17:** *To approve the February 2015 minutes as amended.*

**Motion: 15-GC-18:** *Marianne Phelps shall be appointed temporary representative to the Central Atlantic Conference, substituting for Will Irwin at the June 2015 annual meeting of the Central Atlantic Conference.*

Membership Resolution

**Motion 15 GC-19:** *To approve new members, dismissed members and withdrawn members as indicated in the membership report. The only change in membership was Margaret (Peg) Harvey, who died on February 15, 2015.*

*All motions were approved by consent.*

*Motion: George Singleton Second: David Bennett Vote: All consent*

### Information Topics

**Congregation member death.** Peg Harvey died in February. Westmoreland was asked to be the executor of her will, but declined that task and gave it to a relative. Janet Moyer has contributed a lot of time to Peg's affairs including helping dispose of the estate, and church staff attended the funeral.

**Alejandro's departure.** Alejandro is supposed to be in place at his new appointment on August 1. The plan is for him to continue on the Westmoreland staff until June 30. Peggy, Tim, and Doug will meet on to begin building a plan to address the needs.

**Westmoreland Windows responsibilities.** We shared a list of meeting dates to finalize assignments for the rest of the year.

**Congregational meeting April 12 9 am.** GC members were asked to plan to attend this meeting. Four Congregational meetings are designated in the Westmoreland constitution.

## Reports

### Staff reports

**Treasurer.** A full Treasurer's report was circulated by email. Leon reported that everything is good in the accounts, but he wanted to bring one important item to GC attention. Rich Smith, former pastor, is retiring and on May 4 will pay off his remaining loan to Westmoreland, according to a notification he sent to Mike Weber and Leon. They are reviewing all the documents, and in accordance with the terms of the note, when Rich pays down to \$21,000, the rest of the loan will be forgiven. His repayment to the church will amount to approximately \$51,000. Any lien the church holds on his house needs to be released.

Gary asked whether electronic giving is going well. Leon indicated that it is. It appears not to be changing the profile of giving, and there are about the same number of people who give stock, write checks, etc.

Peggy pointed out that the donation page is unclear whether the donor is giving a one-time gift or an annual amount. Doug stated the need to modernize the systems on an on-going basis.

Doug reminded GC members that according to the Constitution, the Treasurer or his regular designee is supposed to attend all GC meetings. Leon indicated that he and Mike would come up with an approach. David Bennett asked about donations made to the church and who stores information about any restrictions attached to them. Leon indicated that he and Mike are aware of those. Doug stated that GC members need to better understand those restricted funds. Jan Lilja asked if we could get a monthly balance on the reserves.

**Pastor Tim Tutt.** Clearly in the Big News department is Alejandro's resignation. Tim asked that we celebrate with Grace and Alejandro as this is an amazing experience for them. This is also a grieving process for us as a congregation, including the regular stages of that process: sadness, denial/loneliness, anger, loneliness, and acceptance. The search process needs to begin in a thorough, purposeful, transparent way. The immediate goal is to find someone for the position on an interim or perhaps permanent basis by mid-July. Alejandro's last day will likely be in late June or early July, since he and Grace need to be in New York by early August. We also need to consider a purse, how to celebrate his time at Westmoreland, and possibly a farewell concert or performance. The current music at Westmoreland is tremendous, meaningful, and appreciated. Music (along with mission) is a key element of what attracts people to Westmoreland. It does not appear that we need to dramatically re-think our music life at this point in time, and we will find someone to keep us doing what we are doing. Things will of course be different because s/he will have his/her own style.

Tim also shared a packed calendar with GC members and pointed out the following important dates:

- Wed, March 19, Preaching at Lenten service at Plymouth Congregational Church
- Good Friday, preaching at National Memorial United Methodist Church
- Tue, Apr 21-Wed Apr 29, Co-hosting a delegation of German pastors
- Saturday, April 26, speaking at Institute of Islamic and Turkish Studies, Fairfax

Other items of interest include the Do Not Stand Idly By, anti-gun violence initiative of Action in Montgomery, the Racial Justice Working Group of Potomac Association, and Death-with-Dignity legislation.

**Pastor Alexis Kassim.** Alexis told GC members about the Stop Hunger Now project on May 26. The project is intergenerational and provides dehydrated meals to serve the poor. Westmoreland has committed to packing 10,000 meals, at a cost of 29 cents each. Fundraising will include a Westmoreland Talent Show and kids and youth will sell tickets. Part of BCE's budget will go towards this.

Easter. The Easter Egg hunt will be replaced by a Scavenger hunt to encourage learning about the Easter message. Alexis has created a puzzle and the kids will have to find clues that have to do with the Easter message.

#### **Clerk of the Rolls.**

##### **Current Membership**

Active Members	408	Includes out of area, unable to attend, "seldom seen"
Associate Members	7	Retain primary membership elsewhere
Inactive Members	95	
Children & Youth (not confirmed)	80	Member & active non-member households
Children & Youth Guests (not confirmed)	7	Guest households
Active Non-Members	44	Will not join

#### **Boards, Committees, Representatives**

**Christian Education.** Alexis provided this report. Pat Nelson is the new chair of BCE.

**Deacons.** Brad Case is head of Deacons this year. Greg Perla has been nominated as a Deacon. There is no other news.

**Motion 15 GC-20 :** *Greg Perla shall be appointed to serve on the Deacons for one year until the next election and Personnel committee for a term of two years.*

*Motion: George Singleton    Second: Gary Walbridge    All in favor*

**Membership & Fellowship.** Gary reported that M&F will meet in 2 weeks and Stacy Fannon has been keeping key event notifications going, including Easter plans, etc.

**Social Justice and Action.** Paul reported that the group met on Sunday. They would like to lead a Summer on the Circle class and are trying to raise some funds for a few activities that were not budgeted. They are also assisting with the children's collection project.

**Volunteer Corps.** Jan reported that they are reviewing candidates and have basically selected a group of five finalists and are also identifying alternates. The house does not need repairs at present. The 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary at the end of May seems to be their big event.

**Finance.** Nothing to report.

**Middle East.** George attended the steering committee and the committee meeting. The committee expressed interest in having money that the Middle East Committee collects be tied into the Treasury so that what they do becomes a picture of the overall benevolent giving of the church. Note was made of the great work by Betsy Bennett writing the checks and being a part of it.

**Nominating.** Nothing to report.

**Personnel.** The Personnel committee has mapped out its priorities for the year, including cleaning records, working on the personnel manual, holding a staff brunch, creating hiring check lists, and better defining their role in the church. They are also dealing with insurance issues. Jessica Brown and Jessica Markham have agreed to be on this committee but have not officially been appointed as members of the committee.

**Property.** The committee met with Farid and things will continue to happen.

**Stewardship.** Discussed earlier with the Treasurer.

## Unfinished Business

**Meeting timing.** GC meetings are regularly running to 9:30. Committee reports, when possible, might be circulated in advance to save meeting time.

**Initiative Fund.** Maryn was unable to attend, but provided some thoughts in writing about the fund. We reviewed Maryn's suggestions.

- 'Seed Money' or 'Venture Compassion' or 'Great Ideas Fund': a bucket of \$10-20k to be used when an exciting idea surface.
- -We try it for 3-5 years and any recurring program that is the recipient of the money would be analyzed after some period of time to assess if it should be in the budget.
- We would have to take care to keep this from becoming a mini-grants program but still would need to be responsible in considering suggested projects.
- Probably funds shouldn't be spent on the building.
- There might be a part-time position for social action, someone who would organize short and long-term service projects for different age groups – some intergenerational. Or perhaps a theologian-in-residence whose job it would be to offer a lecture series or 'fireside chats'? Or a composer-in-residence?

Doug suggested that we nominate a small committee with the goal of coming back to the GC in April with a working plan. GC members discussed funding and purposes of the fund. All agreed that flexibility and creativity are two of the core concepts as well as empowering the congregation to address issues that they see in the church community. We discussed possible members of a task force and Doug indicated that he would be in touch with them. Gary agreed to be their liaison.

**Sanctuary Task Force.** Paul reported on their Sunday discussion. While they are not prepared to make a formal recommendation, they did decide that they do not want to host a family at Westmoreland. There was interest in partnering with another church (St. Stephens. The plan is embryonic at this point and GC should expect updates at future meeting.

**Building 2020.** David reminded us that the goal of the committee is to think about what the church should look like in five years. They have had six or seven meetings and toured a church in Kensington that put in an elevator, lobby, and tower that is of interest. There are many questions including the kitchen, staff space at the church, the music space, etc. The committee met with two architects including Larry Frank from Bennett, Frank & McCarthy. They ran the project in Kensington and he understands the issues there. The team with the Moderator's approval has asked Larry Frank to prepare a draft contract that we could sign. It would lay forward a step-wise process to help us plan. David indicated that he will be coming to the GC before the end of May about how we will go forward. It would include whether we will do something or not. They will also talk to the congregation and develop a plan for funding needs to be considered. David said that the committee has asked Larry to package this as pieces. There are issues of the Conservatory and the constant use of the building, so any construction will disrupt something. Doug indicates that no action is required at present and the contract that we have negotiated has already been put into the budget.

**Fiscal re-imagining.** Doug indicates that there hasn't been much progress and there's nothing new for this meeting. The Finance committee indicates that they are ready to go and eager to tackle next year's budget by this summer. We would like to involve all the committees and boards to understand any overriding concerns about changing the nominating procedures.

Tim reminded us that the church needs to keep in mind that it can also scale back some of the many projects it has embarked upon. We have a lot going on at this point and might want to make some

choices about what we are going to do. Doug indicated that we need to think about how any changes in fiscal year fits into the constitution and by-laws.

**Martell's workers comp insurance.** We discussed possible gaps in Martell's workers compensation insurance that arise from his relationship with the Conservatory. Tim indicated that he will talk to the Conservatory management and start working through the issue.

### **New Business**

**Next Generation Mission Initiative.** Alexis is applying for this program which is a leadership development for pastors under 25 in the early stages of their ministry. If she is accepted, she will be in it for the next decade. The lengthy application includes a sign of support from the congregation indicating that we know she is doing this and she will have to be away for a couple of weeks each year for events. All agreed to move forward and support this.

**Middle East Committee funding source.** The Social Justice and Action Committee proposed no longer providing funding for the church in Nazareth, as it does not fit their mission. They instead would like to put funding towards something related to the Middle East and allow the Middle East Committee to disperse the funds. Jan asked whether the MEC is ok with this and they are. Tim pointed out that SJ&A can make a recommendation, but this is a budget decision. SJ&A did not propose a motion, so we will get more information. Paul indicated that he would do some research and will request more specific language in April on this situation.

The meeting concluded at 9:50 with a closing prayer read by Alexis.

## ***Calendar for Governance Council Church Events March 15 – June 14***

### *Sunday, March 15*

9 am, Children's Choir, Youth Group, Chancel Choir, Adult Study

10 am, Worship and Church School – **with Peace panel participants taking part in worship and new members joining**

11am, Coffee Hour

**11:30, Interfaith Peace Panel**

### *Sunday, March 22*

9 am, Children's Choir, Youth Group, Chancel Choir, Adult Study

10 am, Worship and Church School–**featuring dramatic presentation of Mark Twain's "The War Prayer"**

11am, Coffee Hour – **with special youth fundraiser coffee hour for Stop Hunger Now**

**11:30 – Forum about Action in Montgomery (anti-gun violence, after school care & affordable housing)**

### *Sunday, March 29 – Palm Sunday*

9 am, Children's Choir, Youth Group, Chancel Choir, Adult Study

10 am, Worship and Church School – **mission moment about Café Justo, mission moment about Easter Offering**

11am, Coffee Hour

**11:30 am, Forum about Café Justo**

**11:30 am, Get Acquainted Lunch for New/Prospective Members**

### **Maundy Thursday, April 2**

**7 pm, Meal**

**8 pm, Service**

### **Good Friday, April 3**

### **Holy Saturday, April 4**

**The Potomac Association service planned for this day has been postponed**

### *Sunday, April 5 – Easter*

**7 am, Sunrise Service**

**8 am, Breakfast hosted by deacons**

9 am, Children's Choir, Youth Group, Chancel Choir, Adult Study

10 am, Worship and Church School

11am, Coffee Hour

### *Sunday, April 12*

9 am, Children's Choir, Youth Group, NO Chancel Choir, No Adult Study

**9 am, Congregational Conversation – all-church meeting**

10 am, Worship and Church School – **new members joining in worship**

11am, Coffee Hour

**5 pm, Potomac Association Youth event (high school) at Westmoreland***Sunday, April 19***Westmoreland Video filming – Jane and Carter Oakley making welcome video for website, will be filming on that day**

9 am, Children's Choir, Youth Group, Chancel Choir, Adult Study

10 am, Worship and Church School – guest preacher, Josh Thomas, Executive Director, Kids4Peace

11am, Coffee Hour

*Sunday, April 26***Westmoreland video filming, part 2**

9 am, Children's Choir, Youth Group, Chancel Choir, Adult Study

10 am, Worship and Church School

11am, Coffee Hour

**11:30, Stop Hunger Now meal packaging – Westmoreland to make 10,000 meals to feed hungry people***Sunday, May 3*

9 am, Children's Choir, Youth Group, Chancel Choir, Adult Study

10 am, Worship and Church School

11am, Coffee Hour

*Sunday, May 10 – Mother's Day*

9 am, Children's Choir, Youth Group, Chancel Choir, Adult Study

10 am, Worship and Church School

11am, Coffee Hour

*Sunday, May 17 – Graduation Sunday*

9 am, Children's Choir, Youth Group, Chancel Choir, Adult Study

10 am, Worship and Church School

11am, Coffee Hour

*Sunday, May 24 – Memorial Day Weekend*

9 am, Children's Choir, Youth Group, Chancel Choir, Adult Study

10 am, Worship and Church School

11am, Coffee Hour

*Sunday, May 31 – Volunteer Corps 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Weekend*

9 am, Children's Choir, Youth Group, Chancel Choir, Adult Study

10 am, Worship and Church School

11am, Coffee Hour

*Saturday, June 6***7 pm, Choir concert, Brahms' "Requiem"***Sunday, June 7 – Last Sunday of "regular" year*

9 am, Children's Choir, Youth Group, Chancel Choir, Adult Study

10 am, Worship and Church School  
11am, Coffee Hour

*Sunday, June 14 – **Summer on the Circle Begins, modified schedule***

10 am, Worship and Church School  
10:45, Summer on the Circle classes for all ages