

January LB Minutes

- I. Gary opens meeting by laying out his vision for NTUMC and the role of the board in 2016. He likes the “Miked Up” emails and is going to try to emulate that before each month’s LB meeting. Gary thinks the church is facing an interesting year. He laid out a 3 step framework for 2016 that looks as follows:
 - A) Finances – Making ends meet and growing our giving. ED and Treasurer will work on proposals to cut spending to be presented at the February meeting. Need for discussion on whether to launch a budget campaign, and how that campaign will be envisioned, staffed, and executed. We also need to properly shape information to the congregation (if you want to struggle financially, act and sound like you are).
 - B) Attendance and Membership Growth – Gary’s second objective is to make worship and Christian Ed more responsive to present and future members. Perhaps a LB member could partner with Steve and others of his choosing to come up with creative ideas for weekly worship. Also, there is a gap in Christian Ed on Sunday mornings. Reasons for not doing Sunday School the traditional way are valid, but are there possible ways for us to return to having a broad Christian Ed program on Sunday mornings? Congregation may be ready for changes on Sunday morning – or maybe not, but let’s discuss it. Steve is a very valuable asset that can do a lot for us.
 - C) Building on Strengths – Lastly, Gary talked about how he wants to see NTUMC build on our two biggest strengths: a heart for service and an outstanding youth (and children’s) program. Other UMC churches in the area tend towards the older demographic, and we want to continue being multi-generational, which is attractive for younger families. Lastly, are we short on middle-managers? Great pastor and staff, great volunteers, but the staff can’t do it all, and LB has to be more involved to help in the middle.

Gary closes his speech by saying LB is not trying to supplant the MLT. We all need to work together. The Feb meeting will be primarily about finances.

Discussion

John Lohr speaks. He agrees with the principles of Gary’s plan, but in reverse order. Energetic church full of young folk means if we do the third step of Gary’s plan, building on our strengths, then our attendance will grow naturally. Once attendance has grown, finances will take care of themselves. Board has talked ad nauseum about financial problems in the past, but the real problem is filling the seats, which starts with energetic service and outreach and proceeds better giving.

Rick asks about COFM, and it explained that this was the homeless ministry, which Rick knew about.

Mark Matney says we just have too much debt. We have good giving, we just have too much debt to cover. John says our current finances don’t support the building that we are in. We can’t afford ebbs and flows in attendance because of this.

Pam K talks about how the UMC wanted the NTUMC church plant to target a different demographic than the other UMC churches in Williamsburg. She says that we ought to live on our means, and is concerned deeply about the possibility of not tithing to missionaries. Carl says that when a crisis comes, we need to pray and fast. He exhorts us to come to the February meeting fasting and praying.

Karen says we need to focus on building new believers, and therefore tailor church to facilitate people coming to the Lord.

Cameron says that lots of older people are part of Karen's vision, because many of them do not know the Lord either (not just one demographic of people)

Stephanie says to look at what God is doing around us. Where is the enthusiasm in the church? It's in the things that are LOW COST. Cross generational, low cost, strengths and successes are where the focus should be, not so much on finances. People get excited about lives changing, and people's testimonies are about those events, not the budget.

Rick asks how mission work brings people to NTUMC (the woman who testified to Mike's kindness was brought up, as were the people who come to from Pineapple Inn to worship).

John says we have to be aware of the numbers but cautious because we should do certain things even if they don't bring numbers into seats (helping homeless, feeding folk, etc.)

Carl mentions that Craig Marsh services brought everyone together

Gary says that we can turn the agenda upside down, go 3-2-1, but Jeff still has to write checks. Something has to change, and we can't keep running deficits.

John says he hears dire consequences in the discussion, but the numbers say we can stay neutral on the budget and break even this year. Finances not sustainable but can we get past this rough patch and over the ledge.

Gary says cutting staff and salaries is the third rail.

Mike says we ought to focus on congregational information and involvement, maybe have a town hall meeting.

Jeff's Report

Talked about the NTUMC tithing policy (giving 10% of what the church receives to missionaries). Ask Jeff for a copy of the report for more details. Carl accepts the report, sending it to sub-finance team to make recommendation at February Meeting. Carl wants us to fast and pray before that meeting.

Mike wants good minutes to start the year.

Rick gives his impression of the meeting with Towne Bank – says the bank is not concerned (which is good) and suggested we try to sell the building in a good market. Bank wants to support

Support night at the museum. Bank says it all boils down to PEOPLE IN THE SEATS.

Finance report was received.

Discussion about whether to include handouts online with the minutes or continue distributing them when someone asks for them.

Ministry Report

COFM had 15-23 guests stay each night, including a family. We had more men than women, great volunteer support. Had a couple of incidents, but all was handled well. Had a prayer-walkthrough and lots of food donations, including 11th hour givers. Took all leftovers to Pineapple Inn. Someone bought blankets for everyone.

Jeff adds a special kudos to Stephanie and Karen. Karen talks about how her highlight was how relational the congregation was with the guests.

John says First Night was a tremendous success, the treasurer for that group wanted us to host next year as well. We had lots of publicity from the event, everyone very happy.

Mikes Remarks

Concerning the continued opening for director of missions/evangelism, Mike met with Carol Dyke, who is available to be the global missions guru. She is willing to be the prime coordinator. Even though this is a sub-position, Mike wants LB involved. Mike motions for Carol to be official for however long they deem fit, John seconds motion, it's approved.

Results of vision visits – will come at the end of January. Events for the summer may include a Craig Marsh visit. Mike is going to the Aldersgate Conference, where Craig will be. Mike says we haven't extended an invitation, depends on whether we can afford to bring Craig here.

Carl wants us to pray and fast before the next meeting, and talks about the many ways to fast. The meeting will start early at 6:45.

January 23rd will be district training for LB chairs and treasurers.