

## **FUMC Leadership Retreat Final Minutes**

February 3, 2024

Move and change. Learn and grow. Follow and become.

CC members present: Janeen Anderson, Rev Lee, Pam Erikson, Betty Hill, John Kindred, Richard Kittel, John Morgan, Kathryn Peiffer, Joy Shaw, Judy Stout, Marlene Thurman, Matthew Utley, Barry Wehrle, Rev Leslie, Keith Flaming. And we welcomed guests Charlie Bouchard and Rev Bryson Lillie.

Unable to attend: Nicloe Ceciliani, Mary Hannon, Susan Harding, Karen Lumpkin, Ellen Shepherd, Rick Tessean, Mike Westbrook, Andrea Ortega

Prayer Concerns: Mary Hannon (respiratory illness) and Naomi Heusinkveld (recovery from surgery)

Rev Leslie welcomed CC members and noted those new to the 2024 Council. She turned the meeting over to Judy Stout, Council Chair for an item of business:

**Approve the Memo of Understanding** among the entities associated with the Union Spiritual Community: FUMC Loveland, Trinity UMC Loveland and the Mountain Sky Conference. This memo was requested by FUMC Staff Parish Relations Committee. It is to be signed by the Council chairs of FUMC and TUMC, and by Rev Annie Arnoldy, Superintendent of Leadership Development and Director of Connectional Ministry MSC.

Motion to approve by Marlene, second by John Kindred.

**Discussion:** Rick sent an email of support for Union, but asked about more status and financial reporting as required by the MOU. Bryson replied that he provided Union financials at the outset to SPRC, and has continued to give them updates. It was suggested that we put a Union tab on our website for easy reference. He also said that anyone can subscribe to the Union email list by going to its webpage [www.unionloveland.org](http://www.unionloveland.org) and filling out the subscription information. We appreciate the occasional blurbs during worship that Bryson provides.

Motion was approved unanimously. Judy signed the document, and Marlene asked that FUMC receive a signed copy for our records.

Rev Leslie outlined goals for the day to leave with renewed/updated goals from our 2023 plans and to leave with new goals based on Charlie's research.

**Devotional & Prayer** ~ Judy gave the devotional, a series of sound bites relating to the importance of 'community' because that is a theme of today's work. She noted that Rev Lee said at last year's retreat that 'the purpose of church is to bless and serve the community.'

**Helpful Tools** ~ Rev Leslie introduced three tools that may be useful in planning for the future of our church

1. Mission Insight, a free demographics program that provides churches with instant access to community information. It provides data-driven insights into our community and ministry impact. Keith noted that the 80537-area surrounding our church shows the lowest level of education in the state; fewer married couples than the rest of the state; more than double the single-parent families (majority men) than in the state; and fewer younger people.
2. Readiness 360, is a congregational survey tool measuring perceptions and realities of members.
3. "Autopsy of a Dying Church," a book that Church Council members will read and discuss. If we find our 'book helpful,' CC members will facilitate similar book talks with interested members of the congregation. The book was recommended to Rev Lee by John Kindred.

There was general agreement that these tools would be useful in planning. We need to figure out a way to include people who worship online.

### **2023 Leadership Retreat Recap**

John Wesley emphasized the need for ministry to the body—heart, head, hands and whole body. Wherever we can meet these needs in church and the community is part of our ministry. Rev Lee mentioned the Abundant Health webpage on the Mountain Sky Conference website. Joy agreed that it provides many resources for wellness and health, including financial, economic and social.'

### **Overview of 2023 Leadership Retreat**

**Heart Ministry** ~ spiritual growth, worship.

**Hands Ministry** ~ missions, being the hands and feet of Christ

**Head Ministry** ~ life-long learning ministry  
**Whole Body Ministry** ~ physical well-being

### **Ministry to Our Strengths: Church & Community ~ Charlie Bouchard**

Charlie has been instrumental in investigating ways for our church to remain viable into the future. Our congregation consists mostly of older people, and most of the children are those of Union members. In taking an 'inventory' of our church's assets and liabilities, he found

Assets: location, building (structure), generous members, history in Loveland, Union Spiritual Community, available funds for repurposing

Liabilities: aging congregation, lack of appeal to next generation, ongoing budget struggles.

Regarding the building, he has ideas for turning the 'albatross' into asset for building community.

Charlie used a filter for examining ideas based on the Rotary 4-way process.

1. Is it consistent with our mission statement? (Loveland FUMC is an inclusive and safe community that values unconditional love. We embrace diversity and strive to live in harmony with the teachings of Jesus Christ.)
2. Will it help to build and serve community?
3. Is it financially feasible (cost-neutral or -positive)?
4. Is it beneficial to all concerned?

It is not about putting more people in places, but about how we can serve the community. Charlie talked to numerous people in creating his ideas: clergy, Union, church leaders and members, pre-school teachers in R2J (who were very excited). He also talked to people in the community

Christine & Joy from United Way (use of space for not-for-profit groups)

Hollis Hunt from Grace Place in Berthoud (they have a café and a lot of space for meetings)

City of Loveland Planning (we are zoned for many of Charlie's suggestions)

Jeff Doran (real estate) – we have lots of empty rooms, space that could be rented. There are 7 – 10 rooms that need some upgrading, but could be rented.

Claudeth at the library

John Freeman, architect who said that our building is structurally sound. We could do whatever we want, although it does need lots of updating.

Ann and Mark Kessler would be willing to help with sprucing up.

### Ideas 💡

- Rent rooms (generates cash flow, helps the community)
- Offer pre-school (helps community)
- Create a coffee shop with play area (place for meet-ups, place for people to hang out, some can have conversations in Spanish)
- Rent kitchen out to food trucks/other entities (food has to be prepared in a state certified kitchen). A commercial kitchen could benefit us in other ways.
- Create/rent non-profit meeting space
- Use Coy Hall for creative space
- Merge FUMC and Trinity (not so that both can die a little slower, but to look at the best of both and create something new and better)

Bryson spoke to this idea and said that for Trinity the term 'merge' is a non-starter at this time based on history, size (some Trinity members are intimidated by FUMC) and perception of conservative v liberal. The Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church merged in 1968, and there were some hard feelings around the merger. Some Trinity members don't want to be subsumed by FUMC. He suggested that the two churches could get together to strategize, and he pointed out that Union is the future of our churches. (At some time, the Conference could effect a merger.)

We need to be deeply strategic to build trust/partnership. Leaders from FUMC, TUMC and Union should hear what each other does. Barriers are starting to dissolve somewhat.

Next steps are:

- Do nothing
- Prioritize; add other ideas
- Get volunteers for in-depth research

Charlie's buddy Socrates said that the secret of change is not to focus energy on fighting the old but on building the new. Smart guy.

Discussion of the ideas was energizing and robust. The biggest question to be answered prior to proceeding is that of jeopardizing our non-profit status if we generate income. Charlie and Rev Lee have looked into that, and we are assured that if profits feed the mission of the church there is no jeopardy—an example is the café in Grace Place. Rev Lee found that churches can rent space for profit, but we would pay taxes on the portion of the building used for profit. We can rent space to non-profit organizations. A couple of District Superintendents said that the state has been cracking down on non-profits, making sure that shared space meets the mission of the church. There is a church in Denver that nets 60-70K/year renting space.

Rev Lee said that consensus among the people she reached out to is that as long as the rental/use of space is aligned with our mission it is OK. She will send an email when she gets further information.

Keith said it has been our policy not to rent to for-profit organizations because it is simpler to keep records.

All of the ideas fit our mission and are therefore possible.

Rev Leslie in thinking of tax-exempt status, wondered what is different when we are landlords of rental space and earn income. Would we just pay taxes on the income and retain our status?

Relative to the discussion of charging rent: We need to examine our rental policy and clarify **consistency** of charging for the use of our building and facilities. If a yoga instructor wants to offer classes, how is that charged? (It fits with our mission,) If a member wants space for a wedding/event, how is that charged? Trustees is tasked with reviewing the document and sending it to CC for discussion.

The participants were generally quite excited about having a **pre-school, re-purposing Coy Hall and providing meeting space.**

1. Renovate Coy Hall and open it to community rental, coffee shop, events, commercial kitchen, worship space, copy shop/recording studio. It would take quite a bit of upgrading; discussion about closing walls. Keith, Joy and Judy will investigate.
2. Pre-school ~ Charlie will take lead with R2J staff.
3. Rental space ~ Charlie will go through the rooms and determine which could be used for potential office space. We would like to generate more on-line presence. Maybe have a weekly podcast that could morph into a weekly worship experience. Maybe we could create a 'recording studio.'

**Review 2023 1-3 Year Plans Overview ~ based on our plans/goals, how did we do, how should we proceed?**

**Ministry Plans** developed last year using Whole Body Ministry Model (Rev. Leslie's term) as a guideline. The church is called to minister to the whole person...not just worship on Sunday.

#### **Heart Ministry – (spiritual growth)**

- FUMC offers Bible studies and will continue to do so.
- Rev Lee is offering centering prayer guidance and has had several presentations (for example suicide prevention).
- We have moved to one service for now.
- We are investigating the possibility of a contemporary service; people who were involved in the past have been invited to a couple of 'Lunch and Learn' meetings to share their thoughts.
- We are still interested in using our space to meet spiritual long/longing for the Divine.
- We need help in getting word out to the community.

#### **Hands Ministry – (mission and service ministries)**

- The Social Concerns Committee was not enthusiastic about the Fostering Families Assistance programs, but Barry will bring it up again.
  - o Could we do something like this for single-parent families since we have so many nearby?
  - o Maybe have 'Mom's Night Out' again
- The multi-faceted ministry to Truscott continues to be vital. Betsy Elliott is the champion, and the congregation is generous.

**Head Ministry – (lifelong learning)**

- Focus on personal growth rather than spiritual/theological growth.
- 'Great Decisions' program is one example.
- We are to be the presence of Christ wherever/whatever that is.
- Lee has brought in resources on programs such as dementia and suicide prevention.
- Missions Fair was very successful.

**Whole Body/Wellness Ministry – (physical wellbeing)**

- We definitely value this ministry.
- Anita William's exercise classes are current examples.
- Mental health teaching resilience skills. Matthew is interested in perhaps partnering with Jesse to provide this service/program. Union is 'dreaming' about some kind of mental health endeavor, possibly a ministry.
- Offerings to members and the community to improve wellness, physically and emotionally (such as yoga classes).
- Matthew is the champion, but needs help—maybe Jesse and Bryson.
- Suggestion for parenting classes such as 'Love & Logic.'
- Judy will contact Susan Kuhling, Nancy Baker, Carol Morganti and Anita Williams to see what they might be able to contribute to this ministry.

**Next Church Council meetings: March 18 and April 22 at 6:30.**

**Rev Leslie and Rev Lee closed the day with communion.** 🙏🍷