

Lincolnton Methodist Church
Leadership Council Meeting MINUTES - **DRAFT** (4/12/26)



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1.0 Call to Order – April 12, 2026		Stephanie Goldman
Stephanie opened the meeting in prayer and reminded the team that the purpose of our meeting is to provide support for the church to fulfill her mission encouraging us to align our decisions and recommendations with our spiritual goals.		
1.1 Members Present		Beth Brigdon
Leadership Council		Ministry/Program Leaders
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stephanie Goldman, Chair (SPR Chair) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John Brantley, Vice Chair, (Trustee) <input type="checkbox"/> Sharon Cadden, Treasurer (Finance) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Beth Brigdon, Secretary <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rev. Mike Gudka, Pastor <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clay Antonakos (Trustee Chair)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kristen Cartledge (Finance Chair) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steven Dawkins (Finance) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nick Perrin (Trustee) <input type="checkbox"/> Lisa Powell (Lay Leader) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brian McCorvey (SPR) <input type="checkbox"/> Rod Pye (SPR)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Children's Ministries – Katelyn Norman <input type="checkbox"/> GMC Deacon-in-Training – Lisa Powell <input type="checkbox"/> Master's Closet – Cynthia Carroll <input type="checkbox"/> Men's Fellowship – Jim Butler <input type="checkbox"/> Music – <input type="checkbox"/> Parsonage – Debbie Rankin <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> River of Life (ROL) – Chuck Beggs <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sunday School – Dan Whitehead <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Women's Ministries – Jennie Simons <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Youth – S. Goldman/K. Cartledge
2.0 Secretary's Report		Beth Brigdon
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beth opened the floor for amendments or support for the minutes from our 3/08/26. DECISION: The draft was adopted unanimously. She also reminded everyone that 3 months of the calendar are provided on the website https://lincolntonmethodist.org/calendar and encouraged everyone to EMAIL Janice churchoffice@lincolntonmethodist.org any updates including requests for reservations of facilities & the van. 		
3.0 Finance Report		Kristen Cartledge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kristen reviewed the monthly financials reports that were attached to the agenda. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As of March 31st, we are 25% through the fiscal year and the spending against most accounts of the General Fund are below that threshold and the one that isn't (advertising) was expected and approved ahead of time. The Designated Funds Balance Report also included the bank balances of all accounts. Capital Campaign Update: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loan Balance: \$131,006.91 Pledges for 2026: \$ 93,200 Designated Giving to-date: \$ 45,000 ACTION: Kristen will include the loan balance on the Designated Giving report with the other bank account balances in the future. Kristen reported that our Credit Card has been canceled because of a fraud alert. The Finance team is working getting a new one established. Kristen also discussed challenges we are having with Youth registrations for River of Life and other events since so few families have checks anymore. The Finance team received a request to enable online payments through some of the popular cash apps. Using the relationship with NCLL, the team developed a Policy recommendation for Council's approval. Kristen described that the online payment app would not be connected to the main checking account and there would be limited access to the ability to move funds from one account to the other. Kristen also said that while the Finance team is looking at a solution that might be used for online giving too, this policy was strictly related to payment for registration fees. DECISION: After a good discussion about the benefits of enabling this online payment opportunity and leaning into the opportunity to enable online giving in the future, the Council endorsed the policy as drafted unanimously. In a related discussion about the Policy Library, the Council also uniformly supported an ACTION (Beth) to move the approved policies to the public facing part of the Church's website. 		

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4.0 Old Business	Stephanie Goldman
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action Items from Prior Meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Door Codes for both the Carport door for the Admin Offices and the Sound Booth in the Sanctuary have been updated on the Leadership Council page. (Complete) ○ Stephanie reminded ministry leaders to let SPR know when they have evening events that need a nursery. Discussion about the May meeting of Women's Fellowship and Sunday mornings at 9am for the Children's Play Practice. (Complete) ○ Edits to the Employee Policy Manual based on NCLL feedback are still pending (In Process-Beth) ○ Lisa & Janice have worked to consolidate the weekly emails from the church office. (Complete) ○ Rod will speak to the Youth Council about the potential of adding a new Youth Breakfast for 2026-27 school year (In process-Rod/Youth Council) ○ Church Organization Tasks (pending human resources) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New software selection for member & visitor mgt, text & email management, newsletters, and giving management is on hold until we can get our vacancies filled. ▪ Chuck reported that he will be installing the new cable for the sanctuary projector on Monday (4/13) ▪ The implementation of the new worship management software package (Proclaim) is in progress. ▪ The SimpliSafe security camera installation around the main campus has been problematic. ACTION: The Trustees will consult with the Security Team and Chuck about alternatives. • Task Force Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Katelyn reported on the Phase 3 Facilities Planning Task Force and their very successful visits to the Sunday School rooms and the wealth of feedback they have received. She indicated that they are planning on an activity with the children at Club Christ tomorrow (4/13) and at an upcoming fellowship lunch. 	
5.0 Trustees Report	Clay Antonakos
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clay updated everyone on the Trustee's projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The new Sanctuary doors have been received, and they are working on an installation schedule. ○ They will inspect the Bell Tower and report those findings soon. 	
6.0 SPR Report	Stephanie Goldman
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stephanie reported that the SPR continues to screen potential candidates for the Worship leader but also highlighted that we are one of many churches looking for the same kind of position. Pastor Mike reported on the difficulties of getting our jobs posted on college campuses due to their implementation of online job posting services that are costly. The group discussed reaching out to smaller campuses and also using our relationship with UGA Wesley Foundation. 	
7.0 Lay Leaders' Report	Lisa Powell (in absentia)
<p>Lisa had left the new Pew Cards/Books on the table for everyone to review. These were passed out. Pastor Mike reminded that the purpose of bringing those back included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify & connect with visitors • Accurately record prayer requests • Move regular attendees toward membership • Stay in contact with those who may have missed services (when we have a membership management system) <p>Everyone liked the new format and the opportunities it will provide.</p>	

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8.0 Ministry Updates

Pastor Mike updated the team on the following:

- He asked for any feedback we may have received or personally had about the potential change to Our Daily Bread as a replacement for Upper Room. While we hadn't had much, Brian indicated he had been using both for a couple of weeks and could see a difference in writing style (more polished). Pastor Mike said he would give it another couple of weeks.
 - Note: It's possible to also make these available through our website, and encourage members to subscribe to email, podcasts, etc. <https://www.odbm.org/en/>
- Pastor Mike indicated he'd gotten feedback that our meetings on Sunday afternoon might need to be discussed and changed. The group enjoyed the opportunity to talk openly about the challenges of fitting this meeting in especially on the Sabbath although no time was ideal for everyone. The group did decide to move the regularly scheduled time to a week night and Wednesday seemed to have the least collisions. For those that find it impossible to attend in person, we celebrated the opportunity to use technology to enable them to participate remotely and even open it up to the congregation that might want to participate that way as well. **DECISION:** Move the meetings from 2nd Sunday, to 1st Wednesday at 6pm. Dates for the remainder of 2026 along with the schedule for the individual ministry reports will be:
 - May 6th - ROL & Sunday School
 - June - No meeting
 - July - No meeting
 - August 5th - Youth
 - Sept 2nd - Parsonage
 - Oct 7th - GMC Deacon-in-Training
 - Nov 4th - Men's Fellowship
 - Dec - no meeting
- The Pastor also invited us to celebrate the growth of our congregation and asked us to be intentional about including them in the various efforts we sponsor, projects, and events. It's sometimes easier to stay in a routine of counting on the same people who have helped over the years, but he encouraged us to step out of the routine of relying only on long-term volunteers to ensure new members feel connected and involved in the church's work. He also counseled us to remember that while we were administratively charged with conducting the business of the Church, we didn't need to let that overshadow the real reason we were called to serve.
 - In a related but separate matter, Pastor Mike asked how everyone felt the worship service was flowing given our changes to when announcements are made (prior to 11am) and adding in the "Greet Your Neighbor" segment after the opening prayer. While everyone enjoyed mingling with each other, doing it "in the middle" of the service, especially given how crowded the sanctuary is now, seemed awkward. There was also concern that starting announcements before 11am might make newcomers who thought they were coming "on-time" uncomfortable when they were coming in and we'd seemingly already started. It was noted (humorously) that starting prior to 11am also had not helped us end "on-time" either. **DECISION:** The consensus was to encourage the natural mingling prior to service starting and eliminate the "greet". Stephanie will update the order of worship for the tech team so that timers are displayed prior to 11.
- Pastor Mike reminded everyone that the North Georgia Annual Conference is coming up on Thurs, 6/4 from 6:00 PM – Sat, 6/6, to noon. Unfortunately, Lisa (as our delegate as Lay Leader) can not attend. Ellen is our alternate (Cynthia is the District At-Large delegate). Ellen wanted to offer her spot as alternate to a member of Council, but the group wholeheartedly endorsed her representation of our church. **DECISION**
- Pastor Mike has gotten questions about how to manage background checks for the volunteers from other churches and/or parents who are coming with their Youth for ROL. Stephanie reported that when they'd taken the Youth to

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<p>the retreat a couple of weekends ago, they were required to sign an attestation that they had completed a background check through their home church and had been approved through their home church's child protection program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The group discussed adopting a similar policy and if there were parents who were helping but did not have that from their home church, we would ask them to complete ours. ACTION: Katelyn will amend the existing Youth & Child Protection Policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pastor Mike reviewed his schedule for June & July) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Education: 6/29 - 7/6 (out Sunday 7/5 - Communion) ○ Vacation: 7/27-8/3 (out Sunday 8/2 - Communion) ○ He will work on the opportunity to bless the elements for the July service so that we won't miss communion two months in a row. 	
<p>Jennie Simons was invited to update the group on the Women's Ministry. She reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● good attendance at the monthly meetings, ● how the group enjoys the opportunity to meet with the men for special programs, ● their support for the church through the group's service during fellowship meals, and ● doing service projects such as delivering blessing bags to the teachers and staff in the schools and at the Board office. ● She also indicated that the regularity and quality of our Women's Bible studies had attracted a broad community of ladies from across the area and from other churches. <p>Jennie also asked for input on the group's willingness to provide a scholarship for a youth to attend River of Life in honor of the Butlers long-standing service. Chuck was in attendance and supported the idea and others had suggestions of other individuals that might be honored if the Fellowship group could support a 2nd scholarship. Jennie believed that would be possible. Discussion also led to the suggestion that honoring the members for which these scholarships are dedicated could possibly be included during the Keeper of the Water recognition in the closing service.</p>	
9.0 New Business	Stephanie Goldman
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● With the change in meeting schedule, Stephanie asked if the group felt that we needed a meeting in July or might be able to cancel it for June & July. DECISION: The consensus was that we could cancel Leadership Council for both months. 	
10.0 Upcoming Meeting Reminders	Stephanie Goldman
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stephanie reminded the group of the key items for our May meeting (now May 6th) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sunday School report & Promotion Sunday discussion Dan Whitehead <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Given Pastor Mike's schedule, we decided the Celebration of student promotions & teacher dedication will now be July 26th with students going to their new classes on August 2nd ○ ROL final prep update Leigh & Chuck Beggs 	
11.0 General Session - Adjournment	Stephanie Goldman
<p>Meeting was adjourned with closing prayer from Pastor Mike at 2:45</p>	

Ministry Rotation Schedule – UPDATED (4/12/26)

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|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Jan 11: Master's Closet ○ Feb 8: Music ○ Mar 8: Children's ○ Apr 12: Women's ○ May 6: ROL & Sunday School ○ June: no meeting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ July: No Meeting ○ August 5: Youth ○ Sept 2: Parsonage ○ Oct 7: GMC Deacon-in-Training ○ Nov 4: Men's ○ Dec: No Meeting |
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