

TRANSITIONING TO OUR FUTURE

4-11-21

Pam Meek reminded everyone of the email she sent on Friday, 4/9/21, about two outdoor services in May and starting indoor services on 6/6/21.

Lisa Melton reviewed a power point that summarized the discussion from two weeks ago, our mission statement, and what needs to happen next. Pr Sarah Pierce's devotion about forgiveness of sins at the 4/8/21 council meeting reminded her that the main idea is to center our discussion and actions around Christ. The Reaching up section of the mission statement is most connected to this theme. Lisa has become more aware of what the council does since she has been attending the meetings as part of the Transition Team and a member of council. We have gone through a lot of changes in the past year. We are doing a lot of positive things. Having outdoor worship makes us more visible to the neighborhood. Carla Girkin has done a great job of getting the youth activities organized. Betsy Reese has offered to do a bible study. Project Comfort is on pause but should resume shortly. Our donations to MLM and Community Services League have been a priority for a long time. One of the things we have learned is that we will need to continue our online presence going forward. Thanks to Pam Meek for submitting a technology grant proposal to the Central States Synod with a very short turnaround time. Our social media presence has increased through the website and Face Book. Thanks to everyone that has helped so far. The stage is set for us to move forward.

At our first meeting we came up with 4 ideas for opportunity. We chose 2 of them to work on immediately at the second meeting. Today we want to get people to volunteer to lead and/or work on the two areas: communication and service projects. We want to expand our service projects. Since we are a small congregation, it may work best to partner with other churches or organizations instead of doing it on our own. Pr. Sarah is learning the other churches in the area and is already working together with them. Carla has the youth working on care packages for our members that aren't able to come to services. This is an internal project and now they will work towards external projects. One possibility is mats for the homeless that can be donated to Uplift. Uplift is an religious based organization. Please check out their website for more info. This can be expanded into an intergenerational project and adults will be needed to help deliver them. Pam asked if we could have a representative from Uplift speak at one of our services to share their vision. We may have more buy in from people that aren't on the calls.

Lisa reminded everyone that we are in deep need for service to our own church. We need service commitments for two council positions and the financial secretary.

The other area is communication within and outside of our congregation. We do have a newsletter, weekly emails, and texts. A phone tree was suggested. We need a small group to lead it. A prayer chain and check in calls with members is also a possibility.

We talked about hosting an outdoor movie night. The community would be invited. We could provide rides for members that don't want to drive at night.

We want to end today with actions steps.

Pam: Thanks to Lisa for laying it out succinctly. These are all great ways to move forward. The council is not able to lead these groups but will support them. We need leaders for both the service projects and communication that would work with small groups (even 2-3 people). We have two openings on church council and so far no one has stepped up. Our congregational meeting is on 5/16 and need people to fill these positions. Sheryl Seevers resigned as financial secretary. The financial secretary is not as task oriented as council but is necessary for audit purposes. We need others to help by stepping into these roles.

Suelyn Olson has a friend that would let us borrow their projector for the outside movie night. She also has a big screen that we could use if the side of the building doesn't work out.

Pam: We should test it on the building before we host an actual movie night.

Suelyn: Maybe the youth could pick the movie.

Pam: This won't be until the end of June or July. The people on that team can make that decision. We have many people doing individual tasks, and are learning that we need to have more than one person to help when needed. Phil Gross takes care of the building and maintenance. Paul Blixrud mows the lawn. We can use more participation, so we don't fall behind with the jobs we take for granted that will be done. Ron Easton does our tech. It became very clear when he was unable to participate because of health reasons that when we lose one link in the chain, it falls apart. We have a responsibility for online services. How we are viewed by the community or how we present ourselves to the community is reflected in our online presence.

Lisa: To those of you not on council: How can we encourage people to join groups or council?

Suelyn: I am willing to send out texts or emails. I don't have all of the knowledge that Ron E has but I am willing to learn.

Pam: The more immediate need to help record services and post them online. Pr Sarah or David can't do it because they are leading the service.

Pr Sarah: Maundy Thursday and Palm Sunday showed that we are woefully inadequate when it comes to Zoom. We need both tech equipment and personnel to run the camera and open the Zoom meeting. It should be relatively easy once we get equipment and instructions. We can learn how Ron E updates the website and does texts. Jean Meroni, church secretary, sends out the weekly emails.

What kind of information do we need to share that we aren't doing right now? What is falling into the gap?

Pam: Ron E is in the hospital so members will have time to think about it.

Suelyn: Maybe You Tube is easier for some to use instead of Zoom? If you have Face Book and a smart TV, you can watch it on the TV instead of on your phone.

Pam: We talked about You Tube at council. We want to offer as many options as possible to reach the most people. We will include Suelyn in any tech discussions going forward.

Phone calls have become somewhat of a lost art due to texting. It is nice to have a friendly call to check in and say hello.

Suelyn: Skip Davis really enjoyed Carla's visit when she dropped off the care packages.

Pam: Mary Simpson also thanked us for keeping her in our thoughts.

Lisa: We used to have pop in visits to visitors and would leave a gift if they didn't want to talk. We need to get back the community feeling that has deteriorated during the pandemic. Thanks to Suelyn for considering working on tech.

Pam: Transition takes all of us to be optimistic about the future. We are a blank slate and we shouldn't be afraid to write on it.

Lisa to Ron Schwantes: Does being a sound guy and working on the Talent Show translate into helping with tech? Will you be able to set up another Talent Show later this year?

Ron S: I do not know about the tech side and don't have to time to devote to it. I will decide later about the Talent Show when we see what happens after we reopen. I am not sure what church will look like in the future.

Lisa: We want to start new projects and keep the existing ones. We don't want to leave them behind. Thanks, Ron, for leading the Talent Show for so many years.

Carla: Thanks to Lisa for her presentation. I can work on the outdoor movie night and look into legal concerns.

Pam: Carla has done a great job in motivating the youth.

Lisa: I can help with the outdoor movie night also.

Pam: Our congregational meeting is after our 5/16/21 outdoor worship.

Please get the vaccine if you are so inclined.

Meeting ended prayer by Pr Sarah.