

Leadership Board Minutes
November 11, 2025

Present: Bill McKellar, Donnie Wilkinson, Harry Solomon, Lee Sanders, Kaye Stevens, Stacy Wells, Eddie Moore, Preston DeLaune (treasurer)

Guests: Sarah McCurley (taking minutes), Kathy Seal, Jackie and Cheryl Nelson, Joe Fowler, Chris Spencer (from the United Methodist Foundation)

The meeting was called to order by Bill McKellar at 6:01 PM. Rosemary opened with a devotion emphasizing that the church is fundamentally a people rather than a building, and Donnie will lead the devotional for the December meeting.

Donnie introduced Chris Spencer, President of the United Methodist Foundation of Louisiana, who spoke about the Foundation's role in managing church funds and providing resources for planned giving. Chris also described the Foundation's capacity for offering loans and grants to support ministry efforts. He presented the 2025 Year in Review, showing growth in our invested funds over the past year. Harry noted that the \$27,000 distribution listed was the amount approved for withdrawal at last month's meeting, marking the first distribution taken in quite some time. Preston asked about the size of the Foundation's balanced fund, and Chris reported that it currently stands at around \$90 million. Joe asked whether our bylaws still require that 20% of surplus funds at year-end be allocated to the Foundation, and Bill clarified that this is no longer the case. Chris offered to speak with any group in the church that wishes to learn more about planned giving opportunities.

Preston reviewed the overall financials, noting that our operating cash account holds \$44,000, which includes the recent distribution. The endowment figure listed on the balance sheet will need to be updated to the correct amount of \$604,000. For the month of October, the church collected \$59,000 against a budget of \$58,000, with no major variances on the expense side. October expenses totaled approximately \$63,000, resulting in a significantly smaller deficit than in previous months. The year-to-date deficit stands at \$120,000, but there is optimism that November and December may reflect improvement.

Donnie provided an update regarding pledges. In 2024, the church received 92 pledges totaling \$448,000. This year, 89 pledges have already been submitted, totaling over \$530,000. Cheryl commended Donnie's generosity campaign and especially his personal handwritten notes to pledgers, saying she believes these efforts contributed meaningfully to the increase. Bill reminded the group that last year actual giving surpassed pledged amounts by nearly \$100,000.

Bill then shared a status report on the Mayfair parsonage, which is valued at \$255,000 and has recently undergone painting, cleaning, and roof repairs. The total cost of repairs was about \$20,000, and closing is scheduled for Monday, November 24.

Donnie updated the board on several outreach initiatives. The “Thank You for Your Service” boards were recently delivered to Barksdale Air Force Base. Additionally, Erica Lindberg and Sasha Toms have arranged a gathering for military mothers the following morning. Plans are underway for a cookie drive and an invitation to a Christmas party at the church, with more details forthcoming. Childcare coordination is also in progress for squadron Christmas events. Members received a printed copy of the Washington Post article featuring our Helping Hands Food Pantry. Donnie has applied for a new grant that would support Helping Hands and help launch a monthly dinner church for those served by the ministry. He and Sarah McCurley are also starting a new outreach effort to Rusheon Middle School by distributing donuts to students as they arrive tomorrow morning.

Donnie shared an update from his recent meeting with the District Superintendent, Chad Brooks, and Kelly Berne. He expressed confidence in a clear direction forward, particularly in ministries connected to Barksdale Air Force Base, Rusheon Middle School, and Helping Hands. He emphasized that while the surrounding community has evolved, the church’s mission remains unchanged.

Donnie also described a practice from Baton Rouge involving quarterly prayer calls and encouraged forming a team to reach out by phone to members we have not seen in some time. He asked the group to begin praying about this initiative.

Finally, it was noted that the Charge Conference will take place this Sunday, November 16, at 3:00 PM at Asbury. There is one current vacancy on the Leadership Board, and Russ Toms has been nominated to fill that position.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, December 9 at 6:00 PM.

Donnie concludes the meeting in prayer at 7:19pm.