

Leadership Board Minutes
January 13, 2026

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

Guests: Sarah McCurley (taking minutes), George Herbst, Kathy Seal

The meeting was called to order by Bill McKellar at 6:00 PM. Bill welcomed Russ Toms as the newest member of the Leadership Board. Donnie opened the meeting with a devotional based on Ephesians, focusing on the theme of God's new creation.

Preston presented the financial report, noting that the operating account balance is approximately \$75,850. Proceeds from the parsonage sale are currently held in designated funds pending a decision on their use. The endowment is not accurately reflected on the balance sheet; however, an updated report from the United Methodist Foundation was distributed with the correct figures. The renovation loan is now being paid from the endowment account. Year-to-date income totaled \$707,931 against a \$700,000 budget. The church is exploring opportunities to reduce insurance costs through a new plan. Parsonage expenses exceeded projections due to renovations completed prior to Donnie's move and the sale of the Mayfair parsonage. The budget anticipated a \$99,000 deficit, and the year concluded with a loss of \$97,840. The vendor list was missing from this month's financial report. Bill highlighted the \$19,000 received for the General Missions designated fund as a sign of positive momentum.

Donnie led a discussion on better understanding the one-board governance model. Nominations were opened for Leadership Board Chair, who also serves as Trustees Chair. Russ nominated Bill McKellar, and the board unanimously re-elected Bill to the position. It was reiterated that board members serve in three functional areas—finance, trustees, and personnel—and the board agreed to divide into work groups aligned with those responsibilities. Members were asked to begin discerning which work group they would like to join. Donnie confirmed that meetings will continue to be held on the second Tuesday of each month. Devotional leaders were scheduled as follows: Lee for February, Russ for March, Rosemary for April, Kaye for May, and Harry for June. Rosemary requested an updated list of board members and contact information. Donnie shared plans to introduce the Leadership Board during both worship services on Sunday, February 8. Donnie and Bill also requested that the board contribute a quarterly update to the church newsletter beginning in April. A letter from Donnie and the board included in the packet will be sent to Fellowship United Methodist Church for their Founders Day celebration. Donnie invited the board to begin considering several trustee-related matters, including removing the final pew in the sanctuary to improve accessibility, evaluating restroom renovations on the north side of the building, and selling the current buses in favor of purchasing a single 15-passenger van.

The board discussed the long-term sustainability of a \$100,000 annual deficit, recognizing that while it cannot continue indefinitely, the church is not currently positioned to reduce expenses by that amount. Donnie proposed adopting an income-based budget of \$700,000, with staff working over the next month to prepare a full budget for approval at the February meeting. It was noted that the church's financial position has improved significantly over the past six months, and while closing the gap will take time, progress is being made.

The board confirmed that the Fifth Sunday potluck tradition will continue this year in March, May, August, and November. Ash Wednesday services will be held on February 18 at 6:00 PM. Palm Sunday will include one worship service at 11:00 AM. Maundy Thursday will be observed with a 6:00 PM service in the Fellowship Hall, and Good Friday with a 6:00 PM service in the Sanctuary. The church will promote Centenary's sunrise service on Easter morning and host its two regular services with brunch during Sunday school. May 24 will be observed as Confirmation Sunday and Summer Kickoff.

Donnie shared that this summer marks the 250th anniversary of the United States and that he will begin developing ideas for how the church might thoughtfully recognize the occasion. He emphasized the importance of modeling faithful patriotism without falling into harmful expressions of Christian nationalism and referenced *Strength for Service to God and Country* as a potential resource for ministry with the base. Donnie also noted that the church, founded in 1910, will celebrate its 120th anniversary in 2030 and proposed forming a Vision 2030 team to begin discernment and planning for the future.

Donnie informed the board that he will be on silent retreat from February 23 through March 6, with Chad Brooks preaching on March 1. In response to a question from Russ regarding personnel matters, it was clarified that the Leadership Board fulfills the responsibilities of the Staff-Parish Relations Committee, with those discussions taking place in closed session. Donnie distributed copies of *Winning on Purpose* and asked board members to read chapters one through three prior to the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:36 PM.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, February 10 at 6:00 PM.