

ALB (Accountable Leadership Board) News

On April 9, 2019 Fifth Ave. United Methodist Church held a special charge conference that formally approved a change in management systems for our Church. We went from having an Administrative Council (AC) management system to having an Accountable Leadership Board (ALB) management system. The ALB is comprised of 9 – 12 members who serve 3-year terms. The past work teams still exist but work with and advise 1 or 2 representatives on the ALB. These representatives then bring the needs of the team before the board for action. The entire ALB acts as the manager for a team not just a single person. For example, the Church's water heater needed replacement. The trustees team identified the need, the solution and the costs that were brought to the Trustee representative on the ALB. The entire ALB acting as Trustees approved the solution of purchasing and installing a new water heater all in one meeting. There was no need for a second meeting, thus greater efficiency. The ALB is responsible to make decisions that address issues within the Church. Because the ALB is much smaller in number than the AC was, decisions are made much quicker on how to proceed to deal with an issue.

What has your ALB been doing?

The first major step was to get the ALB up and running and understanding how the new system operates. This included the Nominations and Leadership team approaching persons to join the ALB and serve the Church. Not an easy task. A questionnaire was developed to seek out the interests of persons and where they would best fit on the ALB. A Covenant on membership in the ALB was created followed by a Guiding Principles document. The Guiding Principles document is crucial as it lays out the parameters within which the ALB operates every day.

Some of the other issues that have been dealt with was the Mother's Day celebration, the Church picnic, Maxwell Street booth, having an intern join the staff and assist in handling media issues (this person has since left after the internship expired). We are currently dealing with several different issues/opportunities that are presenting themselves between now and the end of the year, plus going forward from there.

The greatest challenge we have been trying to deal with is managing the Church finances and budget. Fifth Ave UMC has lost over 100 members in the last 5 years and with the result being our finances have taken a hit. For several years now we have had a budget that exceeded our pledged giving. Only through the wise shepherding of the finance committee and the AC have we been able to meet our budget. We have begun a new budget process at this time that will require justification of all expenditures in advance. When we have completed our stewardship drive, we hope to be able to compare pledged income to potential expenses and make educated decisions on what we will be able to accomplish in the year. Our yearly deficit in the past year was close to \$70,000. With additional appeals by our Pastor we were able to reduce this deficit but not totally eliminate it. We need the congregation to step up and support the activities of our Church including actively helping with a stewardship campaign. Please contact our Pastor to offer your help and support.

The second major financial step we have taken is changing how endowment funds are invested with the United Methodist Foundation (UMF). Previously we had our funds invested quite conservatively at 40% in equity (stocks) and 60% in fixed (bonds) investments. After

investigating our options and meeting with the UMF the ALB voted unanimously to change our investment strategy. We have changed our investment strategy to being 60% in equities (stocks) and 40% in fixed (bonds). Hopefully this should result an increase in earnings which the Church will be able to utilize in our continuing outreach efforts.

To go along with the investment strategy change we are gradually changing our accounting process to more accurately reflect the financial status of the Church. This cash management change is a continuing process and hopefully the majority will be accomplished by Jan. 1, 2020.

Our most recent outreach project has been the purchase of a used van from Interfaith. The proposed purpose of this van will be transportation of numerous folks we have living in facilities such as Cedar Ridge which have no reliable way to attend Church but our enthusiastic in expressing their desire to able to attend and be part of their Church family in a more active manner.

We have continuing work to do on a new mission and vision statement for the Church along with discerning how to proceed with our outreach efforts to revitalize Fifth Ave. United Methodist Church and our ongoing role in the community of West Bend, WI. As part of this we are looking at doing a "Grace Haven" make over. The planning is in a very early stage as we try to envision possibilities This could include enhancing our front entry area to make it more inviting and colorful to the public. Possible additions would be a pergola over the front walk with some outdoor furniture, a possible addition of a labyrinth in front along with a bench and a small library box. Stop and see the Pastor for more details.

Please plan on attending church on Sept 29th as this is the 5th Sunday of the month and we are planning a town hall type meeting about the Church and ALB activities.

Please feel free to contact our Pastor or any member of the ALB with your ideas and thoughts.

Stan Schneider

Chair, Accountable Leadership Board