

## Accountable Leadership Board News October 2020

Well, this has certainly not been the year most of us expected last January. With the explosion of the COVID-19 virus in March, most all in-person church function ceased operating. If I recall correctly, 5<sup>th</sup> Ave's last regular service was March 15, 2020. Who thought that COVID-19 would be still continuing to have such a profound effect on the lives of our Church?

Even with COVID-19, the business of 5<sup>th</sup> AVE UMC must carry on. Your Accountable Leadership Board has been actively working on keeping operations as normal as possible. Our Pastor had to learn about addressing/preaching to her flock remotely. In doing so we identified some major issues/shortcomings with what was our existing audio visual, sound recording and broadcasting systems. Due to the very diligent work of our Technology Committee, numerous upgrades to our system have been approved and funded. We hope to have our improvements completed and operating by the end of September, 2020. To put it bluntly our systems were ~ 20 years outdated. As a result of upgrading, our services are now available on our website and YouTube.

Our adhoc reopening committee has been busy exploring many issues relating to how we can start having in person services in a safe manner. The current system of reservations, sanitation, social distancing is all a result of the work of that committee. We sincerely ask that you follow all the recommendations put out by the committee for your own safety and that of others.

The busiest committee on the Accountable Leadership Board has been the Trustees. Many needed items of physical maintenance to our church structures were identified. To name a few, a new entrance door into the kitchen from outside has been ordered, a majority of the tile floors in the church have been stripped and then waxed again. Other issues identified and in process of being addressed are tuck pointing the rock faces of the structure to prevent water and birds from getting into the rock, drainage from the roof needs to be visited so we can eliminate the possibility of more water leaking into the building, the steps and railing from the south door to the parking lot needs repair and our sign out front has outlived its usefulness so a new sign is being looked at. All are expensive issues to rectify but necessary to maintain the life of the physical church structure. The church is lucky to have our investment funds and another generous donation to assist us with these projects.

The COVID-19 virus has seriously altered many of the traditional happenings of our church. Several funerals have been performed by Pastor Clarissa along with a couple of weddings with very few persons in attendance. August 23<sup>rd</sup>, we did have our Youth Sunday service with confirmation of Emma Louk. It was a nice service planned by Emma.

Our Christian Education committee is working on how to have virtual Sunday School. Kaonou Latham polled the Sunday school participants and teachers. The result was that most were not comfortable in having in person activities. Also, the committee is trying to set up some adult education opportunities for this fall.

Wills and Memorial (Marolyn Kell) has been active in having a booth at the West Bend farmers market this summer besides their normal donations to various charities 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. supports.

Nominations committee remains active finding persons to serve on our various committees and teams to do the church's business.

As always in church life, the importance of consistent giving of pledges to meet the normal operating costs of the church is a concern. The COVID-19 virus has seriously affected the receipts of pledge monies this year. Pledged giving is down by over 50%. We, your Church, respectfully ask you to attempt to meet your pledged level of support. We realize many families have been adversely affected by COVID-19. If you need to adjust your pledge, please feel free to contact the Church. This will allow us to better plan on how to address the financial needs of the Church. If it is difficult to remember to send in your pledge without in person services, please considering utilizing electronic giving. Contact Alana for details if interested.

The last item of news for you is that you should start receiving information soon about our upcoming stewardship campaign. Hopefully, the stewardship campaign will give us a good idea of our projected income for next year to help us set a realistic operating budget for 2021. Please respond promptly to the information when requested.

*Stan Schneider*

*Accountable Leadership Board chair*