

Alabama-West Florida Conference
United Methodist Church
CORE Team – Blue Lake
Meeting Minutes
May 22, 2010

Opening

The meeting opened 9:30 a.m. by Steve Furr.

Present

See attached.

Devotion

Traci Herndon gave a devotion on obedience and responsibility.

Prayer requests

Prayer requests mentioned. Leigh Meekins led us in prayer.

Minutes

Minutes from the February 2010 meeting were approved.

Meeting Focus

Neil McDavid informed the group that the today's meeting focus was on (1) Discussion from the Leadership Center Task Force; (2) CIRCLES, an innovative campaign designed to eliminate poverty; and (3) Conference Board of Congregational Development meeting with Mont Duncan. If time allows, other discussion will be held on Haiti and the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

LEADERSHIP CENTER

A task force met to have discussion on a leadership center. First a name was given – The Academy For Church Leadership. Discussion was held to possibly partner with the Duffey Institute at Huntingdon College. The Duffey Institute has the following objectives:

- Increasing the capacity of clergy for effective servant leadership in the church and community through course offerings, seminars, distance learning, and retreats;
- Maintaining the health of pastors and their families through a holistic approach to wellness;
- Equipping the laity for ministry in today's world by providing relevant training and education;
- Preparing future leaders for church and society through Youth Leadership Conferences and opportunities to explore one's calling to ministry; and
- Educating and nurturing individuals who feel called to church vocations.

Based on having similar objectives, it seems appropriate that the Academy For Church Leadership and Duffey Institute be linked. This academy would help with leadership development for clergy and laity, spiritual formation, congregational development, and becoming a healthier church. A steering committee needs to be developed in order to move forward with the establishment of the academy. This steering

committee would be people who have the vision to create leaders and make disciples of Jesus Christ. Suggested names for the steering committee were to be given to Neil McDavid. A great point of reference is that the extended cabinet incubator groups process for leadership could be one model used in the academy.

Dan Morris made a motion to authorize Neil McDavid to form this steering committee and move forward with the vision of the academy. Michael Lawler second. All were in favor.

CIRCLES™

Susan Hunt led discussion on the CIRCLES™ program. CIRCLES™ is an innovative campaign designed to eliminate poverty. A handout was passed out (see attached). CIRCLES™ is a long term program – not just a band aid. Audio clips were played.

A question was asked does the Conference CORE Team want to consider supporting this program? There is some “emerging ministry” money to get it started. What is needed is a leader – someone to be “in charge”. Lisa Pierce of ARM (Alabama Rural Ministry) has been approached and is interested but has not given a commitment.

Frank Dunnewind proposed that a 5-year plan (maybe even a 10-year plan) be in place. He also suggested that this program have benchmarks. Dan Morris said this would be great for local churches to implement – a great way for the local church to get involved within their community. Phyllis Murray said that this would help the local church to already have a ‘plan’. CIRCLES™ has already developed a strategic way of eliminating poverty. Local churches do not have to come up with their own ideas/a plan. Shirley Woodie concurred. Susan Hunt said that testimony given by people who have been involved in this program say it is a ‘roaring success’.

A motion was made by Meredyth Earnest to empower Susan Hunt to bring back to the CORE team a proposal with a budget and a timeline regarding the CIRCLES™ program to the next CORE team meeting in September. Dan Morris second. Frank Dunnewind reminded Susan to include a 5-year plan. Michael Lawler reminded Susan to include a plan that includes the local church. All were in favor.

10:55 **BREAK**

11:10 **RESUMED MEETING**

CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT MEETING

Barbara Sadler led discussion on the meeting that was held with the Extended Cabinet and the Conference Board of Congregational Development. They met with Mont Duncan, Director of Congregational Development for the Florida Annual Conference. Below are notes from the meeting:

Key Characteristics of a Church Planter

1. *Visioning Capacity*
 - ❑ *Ability to see preferred future*
 - ❑ *Persuasively sells vision to people*
 - ❑ *Believes in God’s capacity to accomplish great things*
2. *Personal Motivation*
 - ❑ *Commitment to excellence*

- ❑ *Takes initiative*
 - ❑ *Willing to work long and hard – high energy level*
- 3. *Creating Ownership of Ministry*
 - ❑ *Instills in the people a sense of personal responsibility for growth & success of church*
 - ❑ *Establishes a congregational identity, unity & commitment to the mission*
- 4. *Reaching the Unchurched*
 - ❑ *Communicates in a style that is understood by the unchurched*
 - ❑ *Intentionally breaks through the barriers erected by both the church and the unchurched*
- 5. *Spousal Cooperation*
 - ❑ *Creates a workable partnership, agreeing on ministry priorities, each partner's role and involvement in ministry and the integration of ministry with family life*
- 6. *Relationship Building*
 - ❑ *Takes the initiative in getting to know people with the understanding that deepening relationships is the basis for more effective ministry*
 - ❑ *Displays godly love and compassion to people*
- 7. *Commitment to a Healthy Reproducing Church*
 - ❑ *Believes in church health/growth as a theological principle*
 - ❑ *Values church growth as a method for building more and better disciples*
 - ❑ *Commitment to being a lifetime learner*
- 8. *Responsiveness to Community*
 - ❑ *Adapts ministry to the culture and needs of the local community*
- 9. *Utilizes Giftedness of Others*
 - ❑ *Equips and releases people to do ministry according to their spiritual gifts*
 - ❑ *Avoids personal overload by delegating effectively*
- 10. *Flexibility & Adaptability*
 - ❑ *Copes effectively with constant and abrupt change*
 - ❑ *Adapts oneself and one's methods to the uniqueness of the particular church planting project*
 - ❑ *Shifts priorities and emphasis during various stages of church growth*
- 11. *Building Body Cohesiveness*
 - ❑ *Demonstrates teamwork as a foundational value*
 - ❑ *Enables the group to work toward a common goal while skillfully handling divisiveness and disgruntled people*
 - ❑ *Quickly incorporates newcomers into a network of relationships*
- 12. *Resilience*
 - ❑ *Able to sustain oneself emotionally and physically through setbacks, losses, disappointments and failures*
- 13. *Exercising Faith*
 - ❑ *Has demonstrated an ability to take risks, trusting God for the outcome*
 - ❑ *Demonstrates how one's convictions are translated into personal and ministry decisions*
 - ❑ *Possesses a conviction regarding their call to church planting ministry*

*Conference Structures & Processes
(Support System)*

1. *Buy-in from the top – Bishop and Cabinet*
2. *Conference New Church Development Team*
3. *District New Church Development Team*
4. *Discernment Process*
5. *Nomination Process – Candidate Pool*
6. *Teaching/Training Vehicle*
7. *Deployment Method*
8. *Funding Streams*

Our Strategy

- *Extended Cabinet & Board of Congregational Development*
- *Task Force*
- *Current Financial Constraints*
- *Initial Oversight of Process -Connectional Ministries Office*

Some members of the CORE team said they liked the 10-year commitment from the church planter, the 18-month evaluation, and the fact that spousal support is a must. POINT OF REFERENCE: (1) Ethnic appointments are treated a little different, taking into account cultural distinctions; and (2) This pool of pastors have both local pastors and full connection members.

Closing Thoughts

Today we have been a part of creating a framework for specific areas of ministry within the conference. This allow us to move the mission of this conference forward. The members were reminded to mark their calendars to attend a leadership summit on August 28th at St. James UMC in Montgomery.

Amelia Fletcher, Conference Coordinator of Disaster Response, is on top of the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. A meeting was held at Navarre UMC for coastal pastors to discuss the spill.

Michael Lawler was part of the first team to go to Haiti. He gave an overview of the crisis in Haiti. Pictures were shown of the disaster and of the work performed by this team. A second team is scheduled to go to Haiti in August 2010.

Neil McDavid blessed our lunch and closed our meeting with prayer.

12:15 **ADJOURNED.**

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| FUTURE CORE TEAM MEETING DATES: |
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- ❑ September 2nd Blue Lake
- ❑ December 9th; Location TBD

All meetings begin with a coffee gathering at 9:00 a.m. The business begins promptly at 9:30 a.m.