

**Alabama-West Florida Conference
United Methodist Church
CORE Team – Blue Lake
Meeting Minutes
February 6, 2010**

Opening

The meeting opened 9:35 a.m. by Steve Furr.

Present

See attached.

Introductions

Steve Furr instructed everyone to introduce themselves and tell what book they were reading.

Devotion and Joys and Concerns

Martha Rovira gave a devotion on Luke 5:11.

Prayer requests

Prayer requests were done by Dan Morris. Dan led us in prayer.

Minutes

Minutes from the December 2009 meeting were approved.

Financial Report

Frank Dunnewind gave the year end financial report. 2009 apportionment year end receipts were reported at 74% versus 78% last year (2008). 2009 conference benevolence receipts were reported at 64.98% versus 70.74% last year (2008).

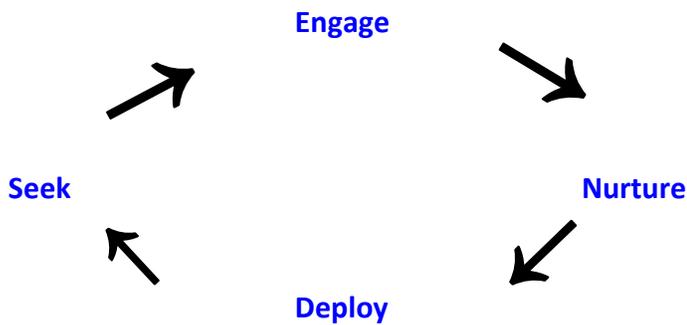
Neil McDavid reported that the conference budget has gone to CFA and will be presented at the 2010 Annual Conference. He also noted that CFA was grateful for all of the hard work done from the three (3) individual budget teams (missional, administration and leadership) and the entire CORE Team as well.

The missional team has proposed funds to be allocated to the boards and agencies for 2010. We are delighted that more money was available to allocate to the agencies. The missional team is also proposing to set up a meeting with all the agency directors to discuss common needs and concerns. Subsequently a workshop seminar would be set up to address those needs and concerns. Also proposed is doing a ministry audit of the agencies.

Dan Morris made a motion to accept this proposal (Dan also noted to give first priority to the agencies and ask the boards to practice frugality). Meredyth Earnest second the motion. 2010 Funding Allocation Proposal from the missional team was approved.

Meeting Focus - Visioning

Neil McDavid passed out a MINISTRY ACTION PLAN (see attached). A team has been working on our mission, vision, values, and operating system. The foundational scripture is Matthew 28: 19-20. The proposed operating system is:



It is not a linear model. Any person could come into this system at any time. Much like all of the functions of a computer are linked to the computer operating system, all of the ministries of the conference would be linked to the conference operating system.

This team has been working on a vision (see attached). Discussion was held to include Christ changed lives into the vision statement and/or use the word transformed in place of changed.

11:05 Break

11:15 Resumed the meeting with discussion held around the CORE team vision of a leadership/spiritual formation center.

Neil McDavid passed out EXISTING MINISTRIES within our conference (see attached). Broke into groups having conversation about the leadership center around the questions listed below:

1. What courses/seminar topics should be covered?
2. Should the schedule be 2-day, 5-day, once a month?
3. Who might be the teachers/leaders?
4. About funding. Should be expect this to be funded by individual donors, churches, the conference, foundations?
5. What about web-based, online courses?
6. Is the focus equally on clergy and laity?
7. Who oversees the 'center' initially? The Office of Connectional Ministries or some other group?
8. What programs are already underway that might come under the umbrella of the leadership center such as the Natural Church Development which is led by Barbara Sadler or the Student Leadership Institute or the Rural Leadership Initiative?
9. Can we get the 'center' up and running in the next 24 months?

Group Discussions:

(Neil McDavid)

Our group felt like there was a sense of urgency around the issue of the leadership center that if we could begin with something in the next twelve months that it would be helpful. We also thought the leadership center ought not only to have a geographic location where courses are offered but also offer courses online as well. Some of the course offerings might be staff management, pastoral leadership in the 21st century, courses related to lay leadership. It was suggested that we might have courses under the umbrella of organizational leadership and relational leadership. We thought it would be helpful to look at other leadership centers and universities as find out what is being offered in the area of leadership as it relates to

the ministry in the church. It was suggested that we might give courses to church size so that leadership would be tied in with church size; small membership, mid size or the large church. Another course offering we thought about was change management. In terms of funding we felt it important that the leadership center have a compelling vision that (1) would hopefully create interest and perhaps even create resources that is someone might find that vision so compelling they would want to put resources into it; (2) we also saw the funding sources coming from the participants (fee based). Certainly there may be grants and other resources available for such a center. Another suggestion was to take the conference boards budgets for one or two years and put that into the leadership as seed money. Our group felt important that the leadership center have a distinctive quality about it so that it would not just be one center among any others. We asked the question, 'what would be distinctive about our leadership center'.

(Susan Hunt)

Attendance: Paulette Thompson, Helen Edwards, Susan Hunt, Bishop Leeland, Meredyth Earnest

Notes:

- A. We must start with a concrete list of
 - What's out there now already available?
 - Who is funding it?
 - How effective is it?
 - How well is it attended?
- B. Then survey congregations to ask them what they need to motivate them. Do a market survey to determine what they want/need.

Regarding a survey:

- Use an online survey system to help build a broad picture of what the need really is
- Also hold in-person surveys. Take a year to do the survey, meeting with small groups, churches and districts
- Work through the district CORE teams in work they're already doing
- Ask for positive statements through feedback. i.e., don't say what you don't want; say what you do want.
- In-person (not online) surveys should be done with specifically trained clergy and laity teams to lead and record the discussions. (specially trained to hold market surveys). Utilize lay members.
- Form a task force to

For leadership development:

- Use laity to lead some of the sessions and classes. We should have a list of those who are gifted in certain areas throughout the conference – those who are exceptionally good with certain areas
- Form a task force under the DCM to provide leadership and take the results of the market survey to determine the classes and direction the "Center for leadership" would take
 - o this group would determine the details instead of the entire CORE team
 - o Task force should include all or some from the CORE team, plus other Conference leadership
 - o The Task Force must include representation from the smaller churches who are not feeling connected so that any new ideas address their needs. Empower them to develop their own solutions

Fruitfulness:

- if the real emphasis is on fruitfulness, how do we get there?
- Define fruitfulness so we can have a common understanding

Financial support:

- build a mini-foundation for funding. Funded by business folks, church members
- to be self-perpetuating, overseen by a paid employee whose job is to ensure we stay connectional

First choice: individual leadership development

Second choice: church development

(Dan Morris)

Add to existing ministries list "Walk to Emmaus." We through this movement had made a significant contribution to leadership development within the AWFC.

We discussed web-based courses as a way to get the Center up and running. Our group thought classes offered through the virtual world were an immediate step that could be made. Example: Glenn Glover could teach a web-based class on preparing for an UMVIM experience. These type of web offerings could be supervised and led by the office of connectional ministries

It was noted that Vision 2000 was the last major Conference program making a lasting impact on our congregations. Many of our churches changed practices and became more intentional in mission and ministry. Can the center encourage these type of transformative classes, events and programs?

Much of our group discussion focused on issues related to personal integrity and accountability in Christian leadership. We discussed the Center as a potential bridge between exemplary leaders of our Conference.

It was the group consensus that the center should focus on primary leadership skill sets for instruction and emphasis. For example:

- *Commitment to Christ and the United Methodist Church*
- *Conflict Resolution*
- *Listening Skills*
- *Being a servant leader (avoiding entitlement dynamics)*

There is something basic in Christian leadership about knowing God's Word, being led by the Holy Spirit, being willing to be a disciple and to disciple others.

Discussion was held on the 'center'. How will this 'center' help a pastor? How will it appeal to him/her? Is it really wanted/needed?

Neil McDavid shared a story he recently heard while listening to Bishop James Dorff speak:

"Bishop Dorff's wife always got a teaching job wherever they moved. In her interview with the school principal she would say two things. First, she rarely sent a student to the office because she handled her own discipline problems. Second, she rarely failed a student because she would work with the student and parents to do all she could to help the student succeed. And if a student failed, she would ask herself what she could have done different so that the student would have passed."

What if each leader in the church took that same degree of responsibility for the ministry of the church?"

Bishop Leeland asked for volunteers to form a team to come up with a specific plan with all of the reports above. Those who volunteered were: Barbara Sadler, Paulette Thompson, and Pat Caylor.

Bishop Leeland thanked the group for being here today and for the leadership they bring to the Annual Conference. He expressed his appreciation of the wonderful spirit shown throughout this conference. Bishop Leeland closed with prayer.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m. with lunch.

FUTURE CORE TEAM MEETING DATES:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ May 22nd; Blue Lake❑ September 2nd. Location TBD❑ December; date and location TBD

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