

Shared Ministry Vision Team



Sunday, May 23, 2010
Caldwell UMC, 1:30 – 4:00 p.m.

Members present: Pastor Joyce Rich, Pastor Grace Baldrige, Mary Schoultz, Tom Rossmiller, Ross Harmon, Pastor Sue, Steve Lohr, Joyce Ketchpaw, Kristine Weir-Martell.

Guest: Bonnie Bell, North Prairie UMC

Facilitator: Terri Weiland

Secretary: Judy McFarlane

Kristine Weir-Martell opened the meeting with a scripture reading from Matthew 8:23-26. Kristine enhanced the reading by stating that this scripture can be compared to challenges and fears in our lives. The Good Word is that these feelings can be calmed by our faith in God and knowing also that we are in Jesus' loving care.

Terri asked the team members to share one word that describes their mental state today. Feelings from the group ran from serene, happy, and calm, to overwhelmed, worn, and tired. Terri brought the group to agreement as she identified the agenda components for today and reiterated that the team has done amazing work thus far, but that more decisions need to be made before we can report back to the Shared Ministry congregations.

Terri asked if there was any feedback from participating church members with regard to the listening sessions held at St. James UMC on May 2. While it was hoped that there would be more participation by members, the sessions were very informative, and many questions were asked by those in attendance. St. James reported no negative feedback while Caldwell and Bethel said there was little discussion concerning the listening session.

The following discussion includes strategic objectives based on realistic goals evolving into concrete action plans with timelines. Team members felt that a 2-5 year plan was feasible. Action plans will be developed from the objectives listed under each focus area. Objectives are listed in the order prioritized by team members, and they will be implemented in that order .

Focus Areas

Spiritual Formation

Goal: Increase activities and programs that will provide on-going spiritual formation and growth with multi-generational participation.

Objectives:

1. Develop a strong men's ministry.
2. Establish a Shared Ministry youth group which includes mission focused activities and fun events (movies, mission trips, Second Helpings, outings).
3. Develop long-and short-term Bible studies.
4. Develop a survey to identify the spiritual needs of the congregation's members.
5. Develop an in-home ministry to include worship, faith support, member visits, and spiritual small-group activities.
6. Coordinate Vacation Bible School among the Shared Ministry Churches.

Mission

Goal: Develop spiritual and faith-filled mission activities.

Objectives:

1. Develop an intergenerational mission weekend.
2. Establish a data base of talents for establishing a mission outreach.
3. Create a community/church on wheels (COW).
4. Participate in a work camp mission trip.
5. Explore uses for the Caldwell parsonage.

Community Connections

Goal: Develop and enhance community connections that are recognized as fulfilling a significant spiritual and personal need.

Objectives:

1. Serve as a host location for local community groups.
2. Reach out to the local school districts to provide support for recognized school and student needs.
3. Establish mentoring support for residents of local group homes.
4. Establish a faith-filled ministry for residents of local group homes.
5. Develop a financial support process for local community impoverished individuals; ie., similar to HOPE NOW, Inc.
6. Establish a non-profit transportation system for the three communities.

Lay Leadership

Goal: Expand the role of the lay leadership within the Shared Ministry churches.

Objectives:

1. Identify individual strengths through a congregational survey.
2. Develop a process to recruit additional lay leaders and speakers.
3. Provide lay leadership training.
4. Develop a “get acquainted” lay leadership program to be shared among the Shared Ministry churches.
5. Develop a community outreach plan using lay leaders and speakers.

Worship

Goal: Share and expand worship experiences among the Shared Ministry churches.

Objectives:

1. Establish a team to coordinate worship resources among the churches.
2. Develop a resource list for summer music and drama presentations.
3. Initiate shared planning for topical Sundays.
4. Develop a resource bank for suggested worship activities.
5. Create a musician and choir group that will rotate among the churches for special events.
6. Establish a pulpit supply list to be used by the Shared Ministry churches.

Terri introduced a Multi-congregational Cluster Model to the group. The models are—

Loose association of independent churches

1. Multiple congregations merge certain programs to create a single, strong program;
2. Certain negotiated expenses and programs are shared.

Cluster or area ministry

1. One staff team serves multiple congregations, each with its own name, its own governing board;
2. Includes some shared programming and an additional council that oversees the cluster relationship.

Full amalgamation

1. Single church that conducts services at more than one location.

After discussing the characteristics of each model, the team agreed that Terri would make the changes on the blue/green/red boxes on the two-sided sheet captioned, “Multi-congregational Cluster Model”. The information on this two-sided sheet, agreed upon by the team members, will constitute the material team members will discuss with each congregation at the listening sessions. This is also the material that will be referred to in the question that comes to a vote on August 1.

Terri then asked what kind of structure would the team members envision if a financial gift was received (could be a grant from other sources). Discussion points included—

- Start working on the objectives. Not all objectives would need money.
- Money would be used by the churches for Shared Ministry meetings and activities.
- Have someone from each church who would oversee the money/budget for Shared Ministry.
- The Shared Ministry plan that we are presenting to the congregations will follow the Cluster Model, which implies that an administrative team representing all of the churches would be established, and they would have a budget for Shared Ministry activities.
- All three churches would share the costs associated with Shared Ministry.
- Do the goals lead us to shared staff between the churches? How much more effective would we be if we had a shared staff for all three churches?
- It is important to utilize people in the most efficient way. We can do shared Ministry without shared staff. The goals do not lend themselves to needing shared staff at this time.
- Team members agreed that in the next 2-5 years, the goal is to grow from a “Loose association of independent churches” to the “Cluster or area ministry”.

Communication Plan

The initial communication of the Shared Ministry plan follows:

The written plan will be developed and emailed to the Shared Ministry team members by May 28.

Reverend Carrie (St. James) : Pastor Sue and Pastor Joyce will meet with Reverend Carrie by June 10.

District Superintendent: Terri Wieland will email the plan to the DS for comments by June 10.

Circuit #37 leaders and members: Pastor Sue and Pastor Grace will meet with the Circuit May 25, and inform them of the progress being made by the Shared Ministry team.

Bethel, Caldwell, and St. James will schedule listening sessions prior to August 1. Individuals from the churches can attend any listening session. A written vote to participate in a Shared Ministry plan between Bethel, Caldwell, and St. James will be conducted at the three churches on August 1. An approval or disapproval decision is a majority vote of those present on August 1. Since individuals have received the information on Shared Ministry at the listening sessions, only a vote will be taken on August 1 with no discussion. The consensus of the team members is that all three churches participate in Shared Ministry or there will not be a Shared Ministry.

Terri will develop the ballot which will be a written vote to be used by members at each church conference. An Elder, not under current appointment to each church, will preside and collect the completed ballots. The ballots will be given to the appointed church pastors who will count the vote. The pastors will communicate/email the outcome of the vote to everyone on the planning team.

Next Steps

- Administrative Council chairs will consult the Book of Discipline to develop the rules for the August 1 vote. Be sure to clarify that all three churches must approve the Shared Ministry concept for it to continue.
- Pastors will find the elders to be present for the August 1 vote.
- If Shared Ministry is approved following the August 1 vote, Terri will set the next meeting date.

Phase III of the Shared Ministry plan would be implemented by a majority approval vote. Phase III would be the implementation phase. It was discussed that members could rotate on and present members could rotate off the team as work in Phase III begins.

The positives of the meeting were: well organized/lots accomplished, good plan to share, great participation, kept on task, minutes/recorder. Negatives included poor attendance, meeting ran late.

Terri encouraged churches to tell volunteers that meeting attendance is critical to the success of the implementation stage. The covenant agreement to serve during Phase III should include the importance of attending meetings and serving for the length of the implementation stage.

Respectfully submitted

Judy McFarlane, Secretary

Potential leaders in Shared Ministry, Phase III

Lucy Janke (Caldwell)
Jenny Henskens (Caldwell)
Diane Garvens (St. James)