

Faith Formation 5/14/26

Present: Lindsay Harren-Lewis, Jerry Parker, Caleb Peters, Katie Wetherbee, Susan Wherley

- Katie offered an opening prayer
- **Motion Approved Via Email Since Last Meeting**
 - Up to \$100 from adult education budget for the Racial Wealth Gap Learning Simulation luncheon on 5/17
- **Women's Retreat**
 - **Saturday May 16th at Fairmount**
 - Speaker Rev. Elyse Berry
 - She is helping with much of the programming
 - Over 40 people registered to date, planning for up to 50 people
 - This large group has necessitated additional spending, so the
 - **MOTION:** Allocate \$2000 from FF adult education budget to Women's Retreat.
 - Increase from prior allocation of \$1200
 - We expect to recoup some of this from donations
 - Proposed by Jerry, seconded by Katie, passed unanimously
- **Heights Tiger 5K**
 - We gave \$500 to be a sponsor for the third year in a row
 - We won't have anyone at the table, but we expect to return next year!
- **Kids/Youth Updates**
 - Club 4/5 wrapped the year nicely
 - Kids asked questions about faith, God, and the world
 - "We have the most interesting, thoughtful, curious kids, and aren't we lucky to go to church with them?" -Katie
 - Sitting together has provided a sense of community and bonding
 - Kids share hymnals, help each other manage behavior
 - WE Time finishes this week
 - Our nursery staff is graduating, seeking new team
 - Lisa wrapping up her school year, graduating on 5/29, staying for the coming year
 - Lisa and Kate are chaperoning the trip to Montreat Middle School Conference
 - 5 kids currently planning to go, possible 6th (a friend)
 - Senior youth are currently planning two fundraisers for the Appalachia trip:
 - Parents' Night Out 5/15 evening
 - Suggested donation \$35/child
 - 10 kids coming
 - All the youth will be there to help
 - Kate and parent volunteer will be supervising
 - Pancake Breakfast 6/14 after worship
 - Prior to an all-day trip prep/planning retreat for the youth
 - **MOTION:** Approve the two aforementioned fundraisers.
 - Proposed by Katie, seconded by Jerry, passed unanimously
- **Discovering the Spiritual Wisdom of Trees**
 - William Birkett Williams lecture was held on Wednesday May 13th by Leah Rampy
 - Turnout wasn't as good as hoped, 40 people at most
 - "Felt like a meditation." -Jerry
 - One more week in the book study with Alycia Ashburn
 - Around 15 people have attended each session

- **Governance**

- **Question 1: How well do you understand your role?**

- Staff has done a great job explaining what they need help with
- Honor volunteers by providing systems/clear guidelines about what to do: boundaries with kids have been made clear, materials are easy to find, procedures are understood
- "I could use a description again"
- [The committee read the description together and were surprised by a number of the responsibilities of Faith Formation, specifically including music ministries, evangelism, and stewardship/legacy.]
- A number of the subcommittees(?) that fall under adult education, such as William Birkett Williams and Faithful Lives Film Series, are not currently reporting to FF
- Curiosity about structure

- **Question 2: What is working well?**

- FF Council is working well, we have a clear agenda, we have tasks that we complete and follow up on
- Church leadership has communicated a clear message and goal: in bulletin, from pulpit, on laptop stickers, good branding, we live it because we see it being modeled by leadership
- "I don't have a full enough picture to provide an educated opinion"
- Good to have structure, because when there's an issue, it's not personal, it's policy

- **Question 3: What feels like it could work better, or is falling through the cracks?**

- Small groups are not always publicized well, so new congregants may not be aware or feel welcome to join
- "I sometimes wonder how well we do at welcoming new members" (pastors do this well, but the congregation perhaps does not) → we could be warmer to people we don't know
- We could grow in the area of hospitality
- Make visitors feel necessary to what we're doing here
- "Spirit of rotation" and "get in the middle of the bed" (so you don't fall off) → helping people feel like a part of things
- "I'm amazed at how little we get into scripture" → more bible study would be welcome (Ryan's Genesis series was much appreciated)
- All groups need to fall under a council for clarity

- **Question 4: Do you feel equipped and supported in your role? What would help you feel more prepared or connected?**

- Things that might be helpful: annual or semi-annual mapping/goals/objectives, Faith Formation retreat
- Current FF has more vision and been more proactive than the council has had/been in a long time
- Staff wants to find a balance between leading/providing vision but not completely taking the reins
- "Am I meeting the expectations of my role/attending enough events?"
- Clear expectations provide reassurance

- **Question 5: Is there anything about leadership that Session should know?**

- Not specifically

- Jerry offered a closing prayer