

Leadership Update by Lowell Gustafson on April 14, 2024

It's my pleasure today to bring to you some of the discussions that we've been having on the leadership team of which I am a newbie member. The other team members are our lead pastor and lay leader, who bring with them the views of our entire congregation and friends. We have representatives of teams which focus on the topics covered by Wayne Cares, Finance, Staff-Parish Relations, and the Trustees. And because of Janelle Meck, we have the carefully prepared records of our meetings on which I have come to depend. I've started to learn a lot from the careful discernments made by my fellow team members, and of how well they bring with them the prayerful considerations of the people on the teams they represent. In this way, the Leadership Team actually includes every person at Wayne church.

I've learned that the health and vitality of our church depends on the active leadership of people on all of our teams throughout the church. There are well established teams, and the always creative identification of the need for new ones, such as the ones currently being formed on anti-racism, community engagement, fellowship after our morning services, food pantry needs, and others. Is there an interest or need you see? Mention it and let's make that a part of our church's life.

One thing we discussed this past week is the need to continue to recognize those who have offered so much leadership over the years. Our church's strength rests on the legacies of the faithfulness of so many for so long.

We also discussed the Methodist denomination's General Conference that will run from April 23 through May 3. Methodists have long highly valued our connections with others and seek to serve Christ through love of God, and others as ourselves. There are many in our church, denomination, nation, and the world who are discerning what this means for our relationship with all of nature, including the gift of human sexuality. To this end, in addition to the two church wide discussions led by Pastor Greg last month, our team and the staff have read and discussed *Multiplying Love: A Vision of United Methodist Life Together*, by Paul W. Chilcote. In my view, anyone would benefit from reading and reflecting on this book. There will remain a need for continued prayerful and respectful discernment even after the General Conference.

In addition to that, we are discussing the best way to get all of the needed tasks in our church accomplished, as well as how to maintain our physical plant and financial health.

As we continue work on all of this, our team is grateful for the leadership provided throughout our congregation.

Thank you.