

**CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD  
DISCERNMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES  
JULY 26<sup>TH</sup>, 2022**

A meeting of the discernment committee of the Church of the Good Shepherd was held on Tuesday, July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Discernment committee members present: Cindy Cobb, Amy Eschelbach, Felicia Martineau, Philip Moros, , and Linda Webster. Also, present Cindy Willis, Minute Taker. Absent: Marjorie Strong

The meeting was opened at 5:35 PM by Phil Moros with Cindy Cobb reading the discernment prayer.

Approve Minutes: Cindy Cobb moved approval of the minutes, Amy Eschelbach seconded, motion carried.

### **MECHANICS**

**When to include Earl?** Phil Moros and Linda Webster are doing this in tandem. Earl is not the leader – this is process we are doing. At some point he may be included or invited when he may have something to say. There may be questions that would be good to discuss with Earl so maybe invite him to next meeting or the one there after. Sarah Cowan ([sarah.a.p.cowan@gmail.com](mailto:sarah.a.p.cowan@gmail.com)) is Good Shepherd's DCDC contact – if there are questions, we can go to here.

**Questions to Keep in Mind throughout Our Discernment:** Questions are listed on the agenda. No need to answer at this point but keep them in mind. These questions help identify strength and weaknesses. Going forward they may provide good information about ourselves.

**How do we accomplish this?** Let's brainstorm strengths, weaknesses and barriers.

**Strengths** (besides a cute senior warden who feeds us well):

- Congregation looks to be a mission driven church
- Our service is based in bible – readings are important
- Beautiful building, structurally sound and handicap accessible
- Doing this with Earl still here – we have a good leader who can help us (and potentially others if we end up merging) through this process and be a “sounding board”.
- Stained glass windows
- New organ which we as a congregation made it happen with community support
- Congregation is strength – tied to tradition, however we do put little changes in but keep overall traditional in place – when had two services, appealing to two different clienteles
- Moving to one service brought people together
- Welcoming church
- We are good at filling voids
- We have rectory

## **Weakness**

- Congregation is rigid in traditional
- Service is confusing
- Handicap access is not apparent
- Parking can be a problem – this is not within our control
- Not good at making things know about the church
- Age of congregation – no young families, no Sunday school, not child friendly, most of our members are older
- Number of “active” members is small compared to total number of members – there are limited resources
- Lack of connectivity/fellowship in church presently
- Lack of “pairing” – helping new members understand what’s going on
- Rectory is dated and needs work

## **Barriers (similar to weaknesses)**

- Tradition is important
- Most members are not actively involved
- Not anything in person except the service and coffee hour in person
- Coffee on the lawn is a mobility issue and it’s hot

## **Learn from experience in our church’s history**

- Between priests, all took roles and did morning prayer-learned how to supplement church leadership
- “Bullied” into buying the rectory – it was a poor decision and made too quickly – we need to do “what is right for us”.
- Collaborative relationship between priest and congregation – not all for just one.

## **Look to the Future & access new possibilities**

### **Areas to Improve:**

- More presence online – website is dated – need to keep site up to date (could we get together with other parishes to “share” good web site administrator?)
- Upgrade Zoom
- Better signage for handicap accessibility
- Service easier to follow – project up on screen?
- How to know if someone in parish is in need and how to respond to that need – improve connectiveness

### **Try new things:**

- A game night
- Music
- Garden flattening

- More overt activities – homeless outreach is strong but limiting for us because not much of community gets to know us.
- Workshop on environment
- Poetry slam
- Community dinners

**Discussion:** A lot of these things are vestry items. How can we be better known in the community? We can't lean on a "cult" personality. Phil and Linda have talked about how Earl is going to be useful in making transition to a new person and helping us through whatever plan we come up with. We will at least have something in place so next person will know what they are coming into and may help define who next person is. This discernment process will help us know if there is a next person or even "Church of the Good Shepherd" – everything is on the table. Aim of plan is to address issue of a full-time priest. There was a question on if we could afford a full-time priest – maybe. We need to get reports to determine our direction. We need to have attainable and meet those goals. Can we grow? Maybe Earl can give us an assessment of this. The diocese will provide lay church leadership for ongoing education.

We will start looking at data on the 9<sup>th</sup> of August – not everyone will need to present their data.

Schedule of next meetings – August 9<sup>th</sup>, August 23<sup>rd</sup>, September 6<sup>th</sup>, September 20<sup>th</sup>, October 4<sup>th</sup> and October 18<sup>th</sup> (if needed) at 5:30PM. Phil may not be at September 6<sup>th</sup> meeting – his surgery is September 1<sup>st</sup>.

Meeting concluded at 7:34 PM with a prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cindy Willis