



STEWARDS OF OUR CHURCH

United Methodist Church
of Westlake Village

Winter
2015

“With ourselves it is impossible, but not with God; for all things are possible with God.” (St. Mark 10:27)

A Note from Our Pastor



Membership Care

Membership care covers many things. As pastors, Brian and I are involved with membership care every day. Emergencies, surgeries, hospitalizations, counselings, home visitations, deaths, and so much more come our way every week. With a congregation of some 500 people, you can imagine what a big job it is. While, as pastors, we are involved in everything and some things, like funerals, not everyone can do, there

are certain things people in the congregation can do to support our members. This is what membership care is about. We seek a way to support members and train people who would like to assist in the necessary follow-up on our shut-ins and with those who have special needs. While your pastors can make periodic calls on people, what really supports our shut-ins are regular phone calls or visits to see how they are doing. At this time, Linda Menges is our new Membership Care Ministry coordinator, along with Terri Webb. We are looking to train some new people in how to make a

visit to a shut-in, a phone call to see how someone is doing, and other outreach needs. The most important talent needed for being on the Membership Care team is simply having an empathetic spirit, a good heart, and a ready ear. If you would be interested in this area of serving your church and our people, please contact Linda Menges or me. You have a gift for others. We need you to use that gift for our church.

May God continue to bless us as we support our church with loving care.

GARY

Trustees at Work

We would like to say a special thank you to all who gave above and beyond to help make many of our wish list items become a reality in 2014!

Completed projects in last 3 months:

- ◆ Repairs on the Church Monument
- ◆ Updating of Memorial Wall
- ◆ General maintenance to the church

Goals by year's end:

- ◆ Drainage system outside air handler room
- ◆ Continued repairs & upgrades around campus

Attendance

	October	November	December
5	282	2 264	7 236
12	235	9 338	14 357
19	225	16 261	21 489
26	255	23 274	24 480
		30 242	28 110

Wish List Ideas

Under \$250

- Christmas Ornaments (gently used is acceptable)

\$251 - \$500

- Security cameras
- Card tables (6 total)

\$501 - \$1000

- Flat Screen TV for the WFR

\$1001 - \$5000

- Automated Electronic Defibrillator (AED)
- LCD Projector for the sanctuary
- Portable tent to cover grass area

\$5001 and over

- A/C for Alton Hall
 - Replace carpet in the sanctuary
 - New phone system for office
- Any financial donations accepted*

Treasurer's Report

4th Quarter Income \$173,712

Fiscal YTD Income \$855,107

4th Quarter Expenses \$173,247

Fiscal YTD Expenses \$854,643

A Note from Finance: Rev. Brian Long



INVOLVING YOU IN CHURCH FINANCE

Membership care is a vital component to any church. Yet when it comes to membership care, there is only a broad understanding of what these two words mean. How membership care is to be lived out or how it is to look in the life of a church needs to be understood as well. Our most obvious responsibility as a church is to care for a person's spiritual needs. We do this through the weekly services and all that goes into them, as well as the other programs and

ministry staff who oversee these programs. As a church, we strive to encourage people to daily grow more deeply in their life of faith and in their relationship with God. Yet, addressing one's spiritual needs is only a portion of membership care. There are the day to day aspects of a person's life that are equally as vital to address. As Christians and as a church, we should strive to care for the whole person, which means we look to address the four components of member care - spiritual, physical, emotional, and financial, as best we can with the resources available. For this year, our operating budget is approximately \$775K. This operating budget covers staffing,

program ministries, office operations, facility expenses and more. These items allow us to offer membership care in a variety of ways. Each year we look over the budget to make sure we include plans to meet the vision of the church. Ultimately, our hope for this year and every year is to provide the farthest reaching and greatest opportunities to help meet our members' needs.

Rev. Brian Long for the Finance Committee

Highlighting Membership Care: Steve Ames

Linda Menges, Chair of Membership Care Committee Dr. Gary Alan Dickey, Staff Person

Looking to further exemplify the United Methodist Church of Westlake Village (UMCWV) as a caring Christian community, changes are being made as Linda Menges assumes being chair of the Membership Care Committee.

When she and her family were members of the Ellisville UMC in St. Louis County, Mo., she was in a church where she worked closely with a Membership Care person on staff.

"I think that the church has done a great job of doing membership care, but it's been done by a person in crisis mode, or having a need and being plugged into a different area of the church," she says. "So friends from that area step in and help out."

Dr. Gary Dickey, senior pastor, and Brian Long, associate pastor, will carry out their respective roles in the

church while guiding Menges and her committee through the process of monitoring and responding to the special needs of people who will benefit from membership care.

"I think that we need an intentional ministry that is a place where everyone knows they can go and that we can work from our committee and reach out to people," she says.



Linda Menges

Menges would like to establish a list

of people who enjoy visiting with others to go visit with shut-ins and just give them that human touch that they don't get when they can't come to church for whatever reason, for an extended period - or even a short period.

She says the key benefit of the committee is that there will be a representative from UMCWV to be an extra set of hands to extend the work of the ministers.

Menges, says Dickey, "will be an umbrella for helping other groups in the church like In-Touch, Prayer Ministry and others who are also reaching out to touch people - to coordinate some of that so we don't have people who fall through the cracks, one group thinking that someone is being take care of, and then discover actually that there's a person we've missed."

Membership Care: continued

"I know there are different tools available to the church," Menges says. One of the things that she recalls from her time at Ellisville UMC was to look at Sunday church attendance. This is input every week after the register pad is signed.

"We would look and determine that if somebody had missed three Sundays in a row that maybe they needed to be reached out to," Menges says. "Maybe there was something going on and they just didn't have a chance to let the ministers know. I'm hoping to get that sort of thing established."

One of the things that Dickey and Long will do is when someone is at the hospital they can visit.

"If someone is in a situation that requires a pastor visit, we can do that, but we cannot call on someone every single week or every single month because we have a pretty big congregation that would not allow that," Dickey says.

"We would like to have people who are willing to reach out to primarily our shut-ins once a month.

"The first month we're going to - after a connection has been made - ask them, 'How are you doing and what can we do for you?'"

"The second month, stop by and actually make an in-home call and say, 'We just want to be here as a personal presence of the church to let you know we are thinking about you and caring about you.'"

From those contacts, a Membership Care person will keep a ledger or a log in which will be recorded any of the findings from calls or visits and whether there are special needs. If the committee member finds the person needs to see the pastor, that

message will be passed to Dickey and/or Long.

"We can come over," Dickey says. "If someone is anticipating a surgery they can let us know, we can make a call. So, this helps us to be in contact with people who don't always let us know when something's going to happen. This is one of the problems we face."

He says people are always told that if there's a need, please call the church. But, Dickey says, that does not always happen.

"Three days later, I find out by a little bluebird that so-in-so is in the hospital. When I go to the hospital, I ask them, 'Why didn't you let us know?' And the answer is, 'We didn't want to bother you.' I say, 'We're here to be bothered. We want to be bothered, so please let us know.'"



Dr. Gary Alan Dickey

He says that when someone goes to the hospital that he'd like Long or himself to be present with him or her and the family to have a prayer of support with them.

"If at all possible, I try to be there before surgery - before they go under anesthesia, and have a prayer with them," Dickey says. "That means a lot."

It's not a question of whether they

remember that a minister was present in the hospital with them, the point is that a representative of UMCWV was there at the moment and made a difference by giving a prayer. "It is the ministry of presence that we're trying to do here," he says.

"The calling of Membership Care is the ministry of presence by word or by visit," Dickey says. "So, once a month, a call, asking 'How are you doing?' Then a visit the next month, a call the next month, then another visit."

Every year that person will get six calls and six visits, which would be far more than Dickey and Long can do with every single person who is in need.

Membership Care will not be a typical committee that has monthly meetings.

"I plan to start a little bit small so that what is established is established well, because I think that Membership Care could mushroom to a huge job," Menges says. "I am going to focus on the 'miss three times' aspect of it and reaching out to shut-ins that the pastors know about, and then gradually try to expand the program if I have more worker bees."

"I'm also planning to talk to others. I know there is a choir team and In-Touch Ministry, and I don't want to step on their toes on what they're doing. So, I am touching bases so we can work hand in glove."

Dickey says that is what the church staff would like to see - to have people who would be willing to say, "I would like to volunteer" to do this. There will be some training so people will feel comfortable about doing this and know what we expect of them.

Membership Care: continued

“We are not expecting people to be counselors, we’re not expecting people to be pastors; we’re expecting people to just care,” he says. “The purpose of it is not to have to take care of their problems, not to have to take care of any situations, but simply be a contact person who makes a presence and brings information back. It’s not a caretaker job; it’s not a pastor’s job. It is pastoring.”

Committee members will not be asked to step outside of their education or training in any area to try to do something to say, “I’m substituting for the pastor.” Dickey says, “We’re not asking that. *We’ll* do that if we find out what the issue is. Most people don’t feel comfortable with that anyway.”

Menges says that she is going to try and set up training so volunteers will

know how to go about contacting people and visiting with them - and coordinate a group of people willing to do that, and to have a list of names ready to go.

“I also hope to be recognized as a place for people to come, to let them know that there’s something going on and so they can get assistance for helping out,” she says.

The hope, Dickey says, is that when a person wants to become a Membership Care Committee member that what will improve will be the connection of UMCWV to be more “Johnny on the spot.” He says the church staff would rather hear about something that is going to happen than hear about it after it happens.

“Hopefully, more immediate information will be given to us so we

can reach out before a person is going into a crisis situation or surgery or whatever it is they’re facing, rather than hear it four or five days afterward,” Dickey says.

Menges says that, in addition to serving on the committee, a first step in locating those in need of assistance from the committee and/or the ministers is to make sure the people in worship services take the red attendance pads seriously. When they sign in, if they desire a phone call, wish that a pastor will call or know of a need for Membership Care, they can inform the office in that way beside their name.

If you are interested in serving on the Membership Care Committee, please call the church office or speak with Pastor Dickey or Linda Menges.

Lay Leaders

Trustees

2015
Phil Severance, *chair*
Janet Todd
Ron Glass

2016
Sharon Kenney
Mike Stone
Tom Sutphen

2017
Margie Price
Sunny Benjamin
Bob Each

Finance

Phil Severance
Boyd Donavon
Charles Laing
Janet Todd
Karen Kever
Lee Friel
Gene Cooper
Mark Suzumoto

SPRC

2015
Bob Carman
Tom Hopkins
James Lawson

2016
Jon Birmingham
Natalie Ruge
Lynn Guess

2017
Dorr Looman
Janet Todd
Sunny Benjamin

The Focus Statement of Our Church

The United Methodist Church of Westlake Village is a caring Christian community that welcomes everyone to experience the loving embrace of God, nurtures one another, and reaches out to the community and the world through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

INVITE INVOLVE GROW SHARE

Serving the people of the greater Conejo Valley and beyond in ministry since 1969.

