



St. John UMC
 Leadership Board Meeting
 May 2026

Date & Time:	18 May 2026 6:30 PM
Location:	Classroom
Pastors in attendance:	Rev. Jenny Anderson
Leadership Board in attendance:	Mary Ottinger (Leadership Board Chair & Finance), Rich Bias (Finance—Chair), Paula Matson (Staff Parish Relations - Chair), Warren Spooner (Trustees- Chair), Sawyer Branham (Mission and Ministries Liaison), Nichole Kuehl (Trustees), Alison Wright (at large), Dan Griggs (Finance), Mark Barron (Staff Parish Relations, Lay Leader), Karen Phelps (Secretary) Absent - Greg Capers (Trustee), David Johnston (Staff Parish Relation)
Church members/staff:	Rebekah Bryant, Director of Programs and Discipleship

Opening Prayer – Warren Spooner opened the meeting with prayer.

Spiritual Formation – Mark Barron led our spiritual formation using our book Weak Enough to Lead : Chapter - Saul – Tragically Flawed.

Review of New People – Emily, Rebecca’s cousin has been attending; Melinda has been attending. Both filled out online connection forms.

Goals Review and Accountability

Guiding Principles

- Responses to changes, updates and edits to our Guiding Principles were reviewed, item 19 and 20. The word Council needed to be changed to Board.

- In items 12 and 15 references were made to the employee handbook. Recommended date changed to reflect the latest version employee handbook.
- Changes were approved.

Goals for 2026 set at Leadership Retreat

1. Continuing modifications of the facility to improve accessibility. With the focus for this year being installation of an automated door, handicap ramp, and doorway transitions into the sanctuary.
 - Alison Wright provided an addendum report about possible places for grants to support ADA modifications to building buildings. Enclosed and consent packet.
 - Leadership board guidance was for the trustees to move forward with current projects given they should be approximately \$5,000 or less. These changes do not need to be delayed since seeking grants can take a long time without certainty of being awarded grants.
 - Rev Anderson will check with contact in the conference about UMC disability ministries. That seemed to be an appropriate place to ask for a grant, but they had not released their cycle for this year. The board questioned whether there would be any money for this grant.
2. Collecting and compiling reports from church working groups so that we know their goals and activities and their needs. No follow action this meeting.
3. Streamlining our online communication - No follow action this meeting.

Stewardship Team– No update.

Review of Minutes. Board approved April 2026 Minutes after edits and clarification were made.

Generative and Strategic Work

Trustees - Trustees report was distributed to the board and reviewed by Warren Spooner.

- Current projects were reviewed. Many are waiting for quotes. See the report for details.
- From the prior minutes, trustees will look at how best to make a modification to the sign out front that still lists a 9 a.m. Worship Service.
- The project to install new flooring has been delayed due to lack of action by person who had been asked to do the project. Warren Spooner will discuss this with Beth Dixon to find someone to do the flooring even if we need to go back to the company so this project may be completed.

- Nichole Kuehl reported she had dropped off the plaque at Blue Ribbon company so that Rev. Anderson's name could be added to the plaque in the narthex.

Staff Parish Relations – The SPR report in the consent package was reviewed. SPR Chair, Paula Matson gave the report.

- Rich Bias reported that he had emailed the point of contact at the Valdosta Church but had received no reply. He will call tomorrow, May 19. If he does not get in contact with this person, he will communicate with Paula Matson so she may reach out to the company representative for a better point of contact.
- Paula Matson has been developing questions to ask other customers of REALM. These questions can be placed into a Rubik to guide decision-making. She also provided additional information about the cost of realm. A significant difference between current software, Power Church and REALM, is that REALM has monthly fee \$99 and Power Church has no monthly fee.
- Power Church is less intuitive for new users and does not produce reports that are as easy to interpret as REALM. Currently, Power Church is somewhat slow. A possible reason for the slow processing with Power Church is the size of our current data base which goes back to 2004. One other challenge with Power Church is removing a person from the database. Version 15 of Power Church is now available for \$145 one-time fee.
- Rich Bias, who has worked with Power Church for many years, recommended we update to version 15, which may help particularly with the speed of the program.
- Rich will ask Krissi to call Power Church technical support to about removing data that is greater than 10 years old.
- Board agreed that we will continue to look at other software, but unless REALM (or any new product) can import and export data into Power Church it is unlikely that we will purchase or adopt that new system to handle contributions.

Finance Report: The Finance Team did not meet but an updated finance report was reviewed by Finance Chair, Rich Bias.

- Rich highlighted that as of April 30 we had a deficit of \$22,490.
- As of May 7, the kitchen account had a deficit balance of (\$47.77) but with additional monies from parking events, the current balance is positive at \$302.
- Finance team requested Board approval to roll over the \$200,000 CD at South State Bank when it matures on June 2 , 2026 if rates at that time (6 months or 12 months) are greater than return rate on the money market account. After discussion and clarification, the board approved this request.
- Nichole Kuehl reported that she had clarified that Chip Matson was not listed as an authorized agent on the Schwab endowment account. She will ensure that a previous authorized agent, who is no longer employed with the church, is removed as an authorized agent from that account.

- Warren Spooner and Rich Bias explained that our water bill is expensive because of fees for wastewater and runoff not due to our water usage.

The **Generative and Strategic Work Reports** from Trustees, SPR and Finance were approved.

Communications

- Warren Spooner will contact Beth Dixon about finding someone to get the flooring project complete
- Trustee's will address the sign in front with incorrect Worship Service time.
- Rich Bias will have Krissi contact power chart technical support about decreasing the size of our database
- Rich Bias will move forward with us purchasing the update, version 15 of Power Church.
- Reverend Anderson will check with her contact at the conference about the UMC Disability Ministry grants.

Mary Ottinger closed with prayer.

Next Meeting– Sunday, June 14, 2026 at 3:00 PM