

Connections Committee Meeting Minutes

Members present: Rich Floyd, Jay Tomlinson, Don Ingerson, Patty Rusco, Anna Urbas, Kathy Nelson

Patty Rusco opened the meeting with a prayer.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Review of Connections Responsibilities

Discussion centered around adding *Care For Our Church Family* under Ministries that Encourage Church Family (#1 on our list of Connection Responsibilities). It was felt that the responsibility for this task not only falls on Connections, but on all our church congregation. Caring for our church family includes many of the things Connections is already doing, but also things like visits, giving rides, doing chores, etc. Rich made the motion to add *Care For Our Church Family* under Ministries that Encourage Church Family. Kathy seconded the motion. Motion passed.

2. Dinner Initiative

Discussion centered on new idea as to how Connections could start dinner invitations within our church congregation. Kathy presented an idea where a group of three or four couples would hold monthly dinners rotating the host couple so each couple in the group had the chance to host a dinner or it could be a luncheon. Three couples would go for 3 months, four couples for 4 months. The same 3 or 4 couples would have dinner together. Each host couple could decide on a variety of ways to host such as: the menu, a theme, a location, a challenge, or just a home gathering. Kathy agreed to put a plan together to start this dinner initiative sometime this fall. If successful, future couple dinner groups could change so that our congregation could meet and get to know each other better. This initiative could include singles or groups of singles for those who do not have a partner or spouse.

3. New ideas presented at the February meeting

- a) New resident visitation team
- b) Church member visitation team
- c) First day of school kick-off breakfast
- d) Provide church services at the BWCC & Carefree Living
- e) More frequent Food Shelf initiative

After discussion, it was felt we could begin with focusing on the Food Shelf initiative immediately. Kathy has connections to someone who works or volunteers at the food shelf and will contact that person to learn how we can fill their needs. For instance, what kinds of foods are needed, canned, dry foods, non-perishable, what quantities, by the case or box or can, etc. This initiative can be implemented more than once a year. It can be quarterly or even monthly. Once we have more information from the Food Shelf, we can formulate a plan of action.

We determined that the other four new ideas were not something we could tackle at this time, and we felt the first day of school kick-off breakfast was not practical as Kathy had first-hand experience with her daughter, Ginny's family, as to how hectic that day is for families with children trying to begin a new morning routine after summer vacation. So that idea was kind-of quashed.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Church Vision and Values: (Ad Council asked us to come up with single words describing our church Vision and Values.

The following words were suggested: Inclusiveness, Hospitality, Love, Benevolence, Reverent, Caring, Prayerful, Agape-Love, Participation, and Cooperation.

2. New (Old) Ministry Initiatives

We discussed some of the old ministries that seemed to have been lost or discontinued and the reasons and felt we are continuing with some of them such as the prayer shawl ministry. We also felt we are doing some of the old ministries in new ways, such as sending cards to people on our prayer wall. We discussed how we could help out our aging congregants by providing rides to appointments, helping with meals, doing chores they find difficult now, weekly visits. Further discussion is required to set-up a system for our congregants to have a contact number for assistance.

We determined that childcare assistance is not something Connections can offer. Childcare is not the same as a family hiring a sitter. Childcare requires training, licensing, and liability insurance for any kind of accidents or unforeseen events.

3. Regular monthly meeting time:

We set our regularly scheduled meeting time for the first Tuesday of each month at 5:30 PM.

4. Adding new members to our committee

We recognized that, with the exception of Kathy and Anna, all our committee members have been members of the former Visioning Committee for more than 10 years who are already assigned to many of the connection's responsibilities. Connections needs to add more committee members to fulfill our growing number of responsibilities. We are asking each current member of Connections to ask one other person from our congregation to join our committee.

Our next scheduled meeting is Tuesday June 4th at 5:30 PM.

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted: Jay Tomlinson – Connections Chairperson

CONNECTIONS COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES. *(As of March 21, 2024)*

- 1) **Look for Ministries to encourage Church Family - Involvement/Fellowship:**
 - **Pot Luck Dinners – Sunday following New Year’s Day, Palm Sunday, Sunday following the 4th of July & Sunday before Thanksgiving:** *Linda Hane Coordinator*
 - **Develop and Promote Group Bible and Spiritual Studies:** *All*
 - **Church Monthly Calendar:** *Pastor Craig & Jay Tomlinson*
 - **Sunday Morning Coffee Fellowship:** *Weekly Volunteers*

- 2) **Keep Membership Records up to date/current:**
 - **Birthday Club:** *Patty Rusco & Jeanne Tomlinson*
 - **Church Directory:** *Jeanne & Jay Tomlinson*
 - **Church Membership /Associate File:** *Jeanne Tomlinson*
 - **Membership Book:** *The Pastor of the Church – Pastor Craig*
 - **Google Email Groups (Church Friends & Sunday School):** *Pastor Craig & Jeanne*

- 3) **Look for Ministries to enhance Church growth:**
 - **Weekly Prayer Wall:** *Jay Tomlinson*
 - **Prayer Chain:** *Linda Hane responsible for phone notifications; Jeanne Tomlinson responsible for email notifications*
 - **Sending Appropriate Cards to our Prayer Wall Persons:** *Judy Bonderson*
 - **Keep our Church Advertisement in the Echo up to date:** *Jay Tomlinson*

- 4) **Look for ways to enhance a spirit of welcome within the Church Family:**
 - **Parish News:** *Pastor Craig*
 - **Maintain & Update Welcome Packets in Pews:** *Head Usher – Dan Johnson*
 - **Ministries to Promote Spiritual Awareness within the Congregation:** *All*
 - **Church Greeter:** *Don Ingerson*

- 5) **Look for Ministries to promote our involvement in local community:**
 - **Apartment Christmas Trees:** *Church Youth & Parents*
 - **Consider Movies to be shown:** *All*
 - **Multi-Church Service and luncheon:** *The Clergy from the respective churches*
 - **Sponsor, Support and Promote the *Jumpin’ Jehosaafats*:** *The Ely UMC*
 - **Prayer Shawl Ministry:** *Paula Mattila & Gail Haney*

- 6) **Look for Ministries to promote our involvement in worldwide community:**
 - **Personal Dignity Kits:** *UMW*
 - **Church Website:** *Jay Tomlinson / Gary Ritner*
 - **Church Facebook page:** *Anna Urbas*
 - **Video Camera Productions:** *Scott Meland*
 - **International Child Sponsorship:** *The Ely UMC*
 - **Love Offering for Annual Conference:** *Free Will Offering from the Ely UMC*

- 7) **Recommendations to Administrative Council for local & beyond ministries:**
 - **Church Benevolence Fund Distributions:** *In Ad Hoc Committee Now*

- 8) **Report to Administrative Council:** *Committee Chairperson – Jay Tomlinson*