

Minutes of the Discernment Committee - FUMC West Point, MS  
6p.m. Thursday, June 15, 2023

Present were Norma Atkins, Tommy Bryan, Chuck Carson, Jeff Hairston, LaDonna Helveston, Tracey Holcombe, Art Shirley, Brooks Tinsley, Shannon Wallace, Dr. Darian Duckworth.

Dr. Darian opened the meeting with mediation and prayer.

I overflow with praise when I come before you, for the anointing of your presence satisfies me like nothing else. You are such a rich banquet of pleasure to my soul. Psalm 63:5  
(The Passion Translation)

June 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting Minutes were reviewed. LaDonna Helveston made motion to approve minutes. Art Shirley seconded. Minutes were approved and will be posted on discernment page.

#### New Business

Chairman Chuck Carson presented a proposed operating timeline to organize discernment committee meetings and process of gathering and distributing information. After much thoughtful discussion, a motion to approve the timeline was made by Brooks Tinsley. Art Shirley seconded. The timeline was approved.

June 15<sup>th</sup> Finalize Slide Show Presentation for release to congregation

June 22<sup>nd</sup> Finalize congregational survey process and questions. Finalize Q&A for release to congregation

June 25 – Tentative Guest Speaker

June 29<sup>th</sup> Dr Darian's Bible Study Video Release

July 2<sup>nd</sup> – Alternative Date for Guest Speaker

July 6<sup>th</sup> - Survey Opens

July 9<sup>th</sup> – Guest Speaker

July 16<sup>th</sup> – Survey Closes

July 20<sup>th</sup> – Intentional Time of Quiet Reflection & Scriptural Study for congregation and discernment committee members; Discernment committee will review and reflect on survey responses

July 27<sup>th</sup> – – Intentional Time of Quiet Reflection & Scriptural Study for congregation and discernment committee members; Discernment committee will reflect on overall process and accumulated information then prepare a recommendation for the administrative council.

Next, the West Point FUMC discernment page created by Art Shirley was reviewed and current information and general format approved by the committee.

Discernment link <https://fumcwestpoint.com/discernment/>

Discernment Committee Contact [discernment@fumcwestpoint.com](mailto:discernment@fumcwestpoint.com)

Discernment page updates will post as soon as approved by the committee. Updates will also be mailed to members as inserts within church newsletters.

The next piece of new business was finalizing the first form of information release to the congregation. Multiple examples of slideshows, web pages and Q&A forms were shared, reviewed and discussed throughout the past week. As a result of those efforts, the committee was able to review a working template and finalize an informative presentation for release to the congregation. Tracey Holcombe volunteered to finalize the necessary adjustments and formatting. The final version will be emailed to the discernment committee for final approval. Upon final approval, the presentation will be posted on the discernment page. Printed copies will also be made available for members not using the church website.

Lastly, Q&A information and church survey were discussed. Due to the extensive time spent discussing timeline and finalizing the presentation, the committee chose to further review Q&A samples and information around survey questions and methods during their own time over the next week.

#### Next Steps

LaDonna Helveston, Chuck Carson and Dr. Darian will work together in continued outreach to potential guest speakers for date ranges laid out within timeline. Discernment committee members will conduct further research and review and share amongst the group questions and answers that will be compiled and finalized during next committee meeting on June 22, 2023.

#### Closing Discussion

Members of this committee spent much time discussing the purpose of discernment, the goal of this committee and how we best operate to the benefit of all church members. Committee members acknowledged and agreed this process has become necessary for our congregation. It was agreed that we will continue our work together in ways that prayerfully and thoughtfully consider all of our members and all the many viewpoints represented within our congregation. Chairman Chuck Carson closed the discussion by reminding everyone this committee's responsibility is to review and present both sides of disaffiliation discussion using legitimate information that allows members of our congregation to decide what is best for themselves and their families.

The meeting closed with Benediction.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you.

The Lord lift up his countenance (Numbers 6:24-26)