

Mount Cross MISSION EXPLORATION TEAM Minutes APRIL 20, 2018

Present: Mary Goodenough, Gordon Henry, Gayle Johnson, Susan Prosser, Joe Swindle & Pastor Bessey
Absent: Karen Cherry (due to previously arranged travel)

Meeting was opened with the Light of Christ and a devotion from the Southwestern Minnesota Synod – Devotions for Congregations in the Call Process led by Susan Prosser.

As this was the first meeting of the team, Pastor Bessey gave a brief introduction to the process and explained that not all 65 ELCA Synod use a MET process. Pastor also told the group that of the 112 churches in our own synod, 25 have no permanent pastor. There are a number of congregations in the same process we are going through.

In order to organize the group, nominations for Chair were requested and Susan Prosser was elected Chair to convene MET meetings and to serve on the Call Committee once the MET process has concluded.

Discussion focused on proceeding with the Congregational Vitality Survey which the Synod has given Mount Cross permission to self-administer. The survey needs to be given to those in attendance at worship for two weeks in a row. It was decided those Sundays will be April 29 and May 6 at both services with time provided within the normal time allotted for the service. Pastor will structure those services to permit adequate time for the surveys which should take no more than 10 -15 minutes to complete. Although the surveys are anonymous, it was agreed that we will attempt to keep track of who completes a survey by use of a member list. This may prove useful with follow-up if we end up with a low initial rate of completion. We will also have some sort of “sweet reward” to give those who turn in a survey.

Since we are administering this survey on our own, the team decided to expand the times and events where the survey will be given and added two Wednesday nights (May 2 and 9), Confirmation Class (May 2), and 3-D (May 4). Team members expressed a willingness to take surveys to shut-ins or others unable to be present at any of the survey times. It was decided to communicate that contact can be made to request an alternative arrangement.

Several weeks after Mount Cross submits all the completed surveys, a summary analysis from the University of Northern Colorado will be produced. Additionally the ELCA will provide census data for our surrounding area which will aid in evaluating the congregation. These reports will be brought to Mount Cross by a representative of our Synod who will guide the team in understanding the results.

Team members also pointed out that the standardized survey leaves no room for comments or input beyond the structured answers. It was agreed that after each survey time MET member(s) will have an obvious presence to take and record input from those who wish to further share. **This will not be a time for members to ask questions about the call process and MET members will have no answers nor will they express opinions about the input that is being shared.** All additional input will be compiled and taken into consideration by the MET as they proceed in their work. Susan will make MET clipboards for the team and a MET table will be on the patio during Sunday services.

It was determined that a direct letter to the church membership from the team would be the best way to introduce the team and the survey as the first step in process of collecting input. A letter will be prepared and mailed in time so that members have notice prior to the first survey Sunday (April 29). Susan will prepare a draft for members to review and comment.

Team members need to start thinking about what other sources and/or types of input we want to pursue so that we are ready to proceed with additional efforts while the survey data is being analyzed. Pastor Bessey committed to getting the team a copy of a MET report from another church and asking the Synod for what resource they can offer the team.

Next meeting - MONDAY, APRIL 30th at 1 pm.

The purpose of the meeting will be to debrief the first survey and input experience. Please let Susan know if for some reason you cannot attend. Pastor Bessey will not be in attendance.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Prosser