

Communications Committee Minutes

Nov. 27, 2023

Present: Amy Haskins, Ann Nelson, Katie Rather, members; Liz Detering, board representative; Eric Holmer, Rick Blum, staff

Absent: Kay Simmons

1. Amy called the meeting to order.
2. Katie offered devotions.
3. October committee minutes were approved.
4. Board update – Liz reported that the Board of Directors has not met since our last meeting. Liz has drafted text for a poster and announcement as part of the RIC subcommittee's preparation for nametag Sunday, Jan. 28, 2024
5. Video and other communication updates: Eric shared the various communications – letter, e-news, website and video - that announced out Pastor Chris's resignation from GS. The committee discussed methods and frequency of communication regarding the pastoral transition. The special section of the website will be maintained, along with FAQs, a paragraph in the Messenger directing members to the website, and slides projected before the services.

Eric reported that the e-news mailing list would be used for all-congregation notices. Some people have opted out of the mailing list. Breeze does not provide the needed capability.

Advent at GS began Nov. 26. An Advent handbook will be distributed in the bulletin and will be available in the lobbies at both campuses and electronically on the website. A video and podcast reflecting the Advent theme are being considered.

A concert by the Brilliance musical group, a fundraiser for the youth, will be held Friday, Dec. 8, at the Madison campus.

Ads for Christmas Eve services will begin appearing online in early December.

6. Social media and online worship updates – Rick reported that analytics show increased activity on the website, with the pastoral transition and Thanksgiving the likely drivers. Online views of the worship services have increased, as has traffic on Facebook and Instagram. Videos about poinsettias and pies were popular. Open rates for MailChimp have increased significantly.

Rick also reported that three local TV network affiliates covered the Thanksgiving meal.

The committee discussed options for broadcasting and recording Christmas Eve services. The committee recommends simultaneous broadcast of the 4:30 p.m. services from both campuses.

The generosity campaign has wrapped up with a 2% increase in giving. Giving Tuesday will be considered for 2024, with appeals for a specific ministry.

7. Old business: For families wanting to take a photo at church, a photo site with a new, vertical GS banner – will be created and stationed near a Christmas tree at both campuses. The banners can be used for Easter and other occasions.

Strategic Planning messaging was discussed. The Board of Directors will receive reports from the groups representing the pillars of the plan on Dec. 19. The questions to be answered are: What progress has been made? What can the congregation expect next? Should the pillar group be disbanded or is there more work to do? Where the pillars' planning is complete, the work will move to committees. For example, the topic of digital welcome strategy would move to the Communications Committee. Any suggested short summaries of the strategic planning initiatives be made available to the congregation.

8. Board approval requests or recommendations: None requested at this time.
9. The next meeting will be Wednesday, Dec. 20. Amy will offer the devotions.
10. Amy closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Minutes submitted by Ann Nelson.