

**Alabama-West Florida Conference  
United Methodist Church  
CORE Team  
Meeting Minutes  
September 3, 2009**

**Opening:**

The regular meeting of the AWF CORE Team was called to order a 9:35 a.m. on May 16, 2009 at Blue Lake by Rev. Neil McDavid.

**Present:**

See attached.

**Introductions:**

Dr. Steve Furr invited everyone to introduce themselves and mention any prayer requests.

**Opening Prayer:**

Pat Caylor opened the meeting with prayer.

**Devotion: Romans 12:1-8**

Dr. Larry Bryars gave the devotion for today's meeting. He spoke about modern day Christian martyrs in John Foxe's Book of Martyrs: A History of the lives, sufferings and triumphant deaths of the early Christian and the Protestant martyrs. One in particular was Colin Lee.

**Minutes from May Meeting:**

The minutes from the CORE Team Meeting in May were approved unanimously. They are located on the Alabama-West Florida Conference website ([www.awfumc.org](http://www.awfumc.org)).

**Meeting:**

Bishop Leeland thanked everyone for coming and for their service. He described the outline of the CORE Teams meetings throughout the year: First meeting, VISIONING; Second meeting, NEW AND EMERGING MINISTRIES. This meeting focused on sharpening the ministry focus and budget process; Fourth meeting (December 2009), recommending a BUDGET. Neil McDavid described the difference between a team and a group. We are a team - A group of people linked in a common purpose who share responsibility for the results of our work. We must keep before us our mission statement of "making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world".

Neil was reminded of what he was taught in seminary – how to be a good manager of a church. But what the church looked for in a pastor was good leadership. Neil pointed out the differences between a manager and a leader. Both are needed.

The meeting covered a recommendation from a task force and the budget process. The task force was comprised of Bishop Leeland, Steve Furr, Neil McDavid, Pat Luna and Meredyth Earnest. These individuals comprised a recommendation surrounding the idea of a place for spiritual formation and leadership for clergy and laity (see attached). If you form good leaders you can change the church and change the world.

## **Dialogue:**

Don Kirsch – Are there any models? Any other conferences, churches already doing this?

Dan Morris – What are the practical tools needed to establish this center?

Bishop Leeland – A good example/model are Adam Hamilton's books, study series/guides.

Tonya Elmore – We need to get behind this idea. Encourage others to get behind it. Give permission to go forward.

Dale Segrest – In order to develop leaders we first need to identify the problems that need to be solved.

Bishop Leeland – Bishop Leeland agrees with Mr. Segrest. The center needs to be missional; not institutional.

Neil McDavid – The dialogue above is exactly what the task force wanted to happen during this CORE Team meeting. There have been events, etc that have had the basis of spiritual formation and/or leadership development. But what was the outcome of these events? Not how many came, how much money was spent but what was the actual outcome.

Don Kirsch – We need to be willing to compile our resources towards this idea early on.

Nathan Attwood – How does this 'center' relate or differ from the Duffy Institute (<http://www.huntingdon.edu/duffey>)? Could these two ideas be partnered together?

Neil McDavid – The AWF Conference is partnering with the Duffey Institute in some areas, i.e. Rural Leadership, Student Leadership Institute.

Francis Turner – Why not the Duffey Institute?

Neil McDavid – It is worth exploring.

Meredyth Earnest – We should add Dr. Ed Trimmer, Director of the Duffey Institute, to the task force.

Jim Sanders – In regards to the 'center', let's also explore this 'place' being a cyber place, i.e. webinars, etc. Sometimes people have trouble actually 'attending' events, seminars, etc. This would be a way for ALL to attend.

Steve Furr – A cyber place has been thought of due to time constraints on people.

Paulette Thompson – In regards to Dale's point, it is very important that we identify what we are trying to accomplish. Spiritual Formation comes from within but the outside also has to change.

Dale Segrest – I am 100% in favor of this 'center'. The UMC is not doing what it ought to be doing. It seems what we are talking about (the 'center') is what we should already be doing.

Neil McDavid – This conversation is terrific.

Frank Dunnewind – I like the idea of looking into other models from churches, conferences, etc.

Bishop Leeland – Duke University, the KY Conference, and curriculum from Adam Hamilton are great examples. However, the CORE Team members are the leaders of the Conference and can help develop this vision.

Barbara Sadler – How do we get people to attend? How do you 'inform' someone that they need to come to the 'center'? Each clergy person is evaluated by the PPR Committee and each church has to fill out a local church report. Both of these 'evaluations' could show specific areas that need to be addressed.

Dale Segrest – It will take a spark of creativity to boost this vision/project.

Don Kirsch – This 'center' needs to have a mentoring component.

Tonya Elmore – Maybe the first line of the task force recommendation that states, "to develop and identify a place..." need to be changed. The word PLACE could be what is being questioned.

Dan Morris – Let's not forget about spiritual formation and leadership among the laity. The laity are a big part of the church.

Mike Gaby – What is the conference office doing to develop this vision?

Paulette Thompson – You must plant the seed to get people interested and inspired to what to come to the 'center'.

Barbara Sadler – Natural Church Development is a great resource to help develop this 'center'. One pastor

said that he has never felt more a part of a team with his congregation than he did when he and his church went through Natural Church Development. They (the church and the pastor) all learned skills together. Larry Bryars – Some churches have spiritual formation and leadership programs that are working within their own church. Maybe we should focus on the churches that need the help.

**11:10 a.m. BREAK**

**11:20 a.m. RETURNED TO MEETING**

**Budget Process:**

Jim Sanders and Frank Dunnewind introduced a PowerPoint presentation (see attached) that lays out a process for the CORE Team to evaluate and make recommendations regarding the 2011 annual conference budget.

Mission, Leadership, and Administration Budget Teams were formed. Neil McDavid will head up the Mission Team; Larry Bryars will head up the Leadership Team; and Paulette Thompson will head up the Administration Team.

**Closing:**

Neil McDavid asked for closing thoughts/comments from members of the CORE Team. Mike Gaby elaborated on the fact that the Board of Global Ministries is considering revamping the guidelines for THE ADVANCE. The ADVANCE needs to be reassessed. Dale Segrest suggested Frank Dunnewind assist/facilitate each of the aforementioned budget teams. Neil spoke about a story he had heard regarding a boy who had lost his father. The boy was supposed to talk about a bible story he liked. He chose the bible story about God removing the demons out of a little boy. He thought if God could remove these demons, why couldn't He bring back his father. The little boy was concentrating on what he had lost. But over time he began to change his thinking so not to dwell on what he had lost but what he had left. He began to remember all his dad had left him, and taking what his dad had left he decided that he would go forward and try and be the best person he could possibly be. In the day in which we live it is easy to focus on what we don't have. Instead let us focus on all we do have, all the wonderfully talented and resourceful people and churches. And let us go forward and be the best people, the best Christians, and the best church we know how to be.

**Prayer for the meal**

**12:25 p.m. Adjourned**

**FUTURE CORE TEAM MEETING DATES:**

- Thursday, December 3rd Montgomery

All meetings being with hospitality at 9:00 a.m. Actual meeting time is at 9:30 a.m.

**Attachments:**

- Leadership Center Task Force Report (WORD doc)
- Budget Steps (PowerPoint)