

Minutes from
Children and Family Team meeting
1-9-2011
12:15 p.m. in room 108

Our meeting began at approximately 12:30 p.m.

Thank you all for taking time out of your busy schedules for our meeting. I forgot to take attendance, but to my best recollection, those present were: Mandy Brown, Carrie Dulaney, Michele Fenton, Lara Greene, Darcy Hamre, Leslie Ivey, Kristin Keener, Heather Schuelke and Cathy Stone.

Advent/Christmas activities: Lessons and Carols, Dec. 19, Christmas Eve

There was a positive response from Lessons and Carols. We liked the variety of the smaller singing groups and involvement of more members in the readings.

We discussed changing the Sunday school hour program from Dec. 19 into something less rehearsal dependant and more all-church related, possibly a program that had the traditional nativity narrative, with some reading parts for older children readers, opportunities for children to dress in simple costumes and all-group singing. There is a desire to find a structure that can become a tradition to be repeated each year and children can progress through the parts (i.e. preschoolers are always angels, and 5th graders get to read, etc.)

We are interested in changing up Christmas Eve. We wondered – what is the purpose of this service and how can we design to that purpose? We discussed moving the family service to the afternoon (i.e. 3:00 p.m.) and looking at something that is child-friendly, but possibly a little more structured/traditional. We are going to gather ideas from friends and families to see what they do.

Heather raised the question as to what FUMC will do for services next Christmas (2011) when it is on Sunday.

Souper bowl of caring (Feb. 6)

Tweeners (3rd, 4th, and 5th graders) will collect money on the day of Sunday, Feb. 6. We decided to set a goal of \$100 more than last year's take in. 100% goes back to Mobil Loaves and Fish. We will encourage children (collectors and anyone else willing) to wear sport jerseys or cheer outfits to draw attention. We will try to coordinate Tweener groups to visit adult Sunday Schools the first 10 minutes of class to accept donations. We also want a couple of the older children to have the ministry moment that day.

Idea for next year – generate teams among the classes to “win” the Souper Bowl with the most donations given.

Baby celebration (Feb 20)

We will acknowledge and bless families that had babies in the last year. New idea to give a wall cross (instead of a flower) to each family and include for new families contact information of a mentor family from our church with children a few years older. Mentor families can help orient new families to our ministries and events.

Teacher appreciation (Feb 13, but may move to Feb. 20)

To include Sunday school teachers for class ages 2-18 (toddler through high school) and child care workers.

- Sunday morning at the 11:00 a.m. Sanctuary service, teachers and child care providers will be acknowledged and thanked and their names and years of serving will be listed in the bulletin.
- We plan to have the current child care workers bio's printed and available to parents.
- Hearts will be set home ahead of time for children to decorate and return – which will be added to a “heart garden” on the walls of the basement hallway for the teachers.
- A homemade brunch buffet provided by volunteers will be set up (room TBA) for teachers and child care workers to enjoy either before or after Sunday school.
- Photo cards for each teacher and child care worker will be ready with the individual's name and photo. These can be posted each Sunday outside of the classroom or nursery room to indicate who is working to help parents learn and recognize the adults caring for their children.

Easter Picnic (Saturday, April 23)

We want to provide an inviting Easter celebration for families and visitors of all ages. We are still trouble shooting issues of volunteer parents not being able to spend time with their own families and how to engage and attract more than just families with small children. Ideas discussed were having church groups provide entertainment (i.e. youth ensemble to sing and/or play). We like having a big entertainment booked like the steel drum ensemble. Darcy offered to call group for their availability. We are going to brainstorm other ideas for activities and entertainment. Egg hunt issues include how to create the age areas and how to help all children find a respectable amount of eggs. Cathy said youth could help again, but it would help if there was something to draw them there. Lara will book a reservation with the capitol.

VBS planning

We need one person to chair with Sarah Colby (thank you, Sarah for doing it again!) and two assistant chairs who can help this year with the intention to lead next year.

Terrytown UMC (our usual partner in VBS decorations) will be doing Group Publishing's Hometown Nazareth. It is set up a little differently from the other Cokesbury programs we have used, but not too far off. We will decide by this Sunday (Jan. 16) if this curriculum is compatible with our needs or if we should go with Cokesbury's Shake It Up Café, which is set up more like last year's program. Please check out the websites to give us feedback!

<http://nazareth.group.com/>

<http://www.cokesburyvbs.com/shake-it-up-cafe/index.php>

Also discussed – do we want to change when we hold VBS? Cathy said we might catch more youth volunteers earlier in the summer. Lara will talk with Sandy about FUMP issues and calendar and the Navajo contact about their availability.

Hallway decorating and improvement

We will be freshening up the hallway decoration supplies. Leslie suggested we hang bulletin boards in the halls per classroom to help communicate to parents each Sunday the lesson topic, the teachers’ names and the morning schedule/room assignment for that age group. The boards will include our new idea of photo cards to indicate the morning’s workers/volunteers. Thank you, Darcy and Michele, for taking on the first steps toward this! Our next theme is Valentine/hearts to tie into teacher appreciation.

Teacher volunteer recruitment (especially for summer)

As always, we are looking for volunteers for summer and next year. I will be collecting teacher information from our current teachers and will ask for fall commitments in late Feb/early March. Our summer volunteer drive will begin at the same time.

Meeting adjourned approximately 2:00 p.m. (though I am a little fuzzy on this detail)

Priority ACTION ITEMS

Name(s)	Action
ALL	Review VBS programs and give comments to Lara by Sat. Jan 15
Darcy and Michele	Take pictures of all SS teachers and child care workers over the next 3 weeks for photo cards
	Send hearts home with families
All	Make and bring brunch items on Feb. 13
TBA	Volunteer to be a mentor family
All	Donate to Souper Bowl
Lara	Book capitol grounds for Easter picnic
All	Brainstorm ideas for Easter picnic
Lara	Contact Navajo group about VBS dates
All	Research ideas for Christmas Eve family service
	Define with ministerial staff the purpose and design of Christmas Eve service

Upcoming events:

- Feb. 13 Teacher appreciation
- Feb. 13 Scout Sunday
- Feb. 20 Baby celebration

April 23 Easter egg hunt
May 8 Mother's day