

22 November 2023

Greetings Yorkshire Church!

It is my hope that each of you is enjoying this season of Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving comes at a time of year that brings change in seasons and ushers in the season of Advent. I love living in this part of the country as the changes in weather come with great beauty with the fall colors, spectacular sunsets, and a forthcoming focus on the season of



Advent, where the whole world focuses on the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ (even if they don't know it, yet!). For me, fall has always been my favorite time of year, full of wonderful memories. Some are bittersweet, but it is the love of those who we will miss dearly during the holiday events of this season, that we can reflect on the greatest joys of our lives. And in sharing those joys with others, we will create memories that others will reflect on in their lives, as well!

The Thanksgiving/Advent Season is always a busy one at the church. As we find joy in memories past, we also find joy in sharing in many fellowship opportunities with our brothers and sisters in Christ; for us, our Yorkshire family! I want to use this "What's Brewing" to provide some information about some of the things to look forward to this season at Yorkshire.

Hanging of the Greens: This is such a fun time of fellowship and gathering as we decorate the sanctuary and church for the Advent Season. This year, we will decorate on Sunday, November 26th beginning at 3PM. Bring your favorite potluck dish as following the decorating we will share in a potluck supper- nothing fancy, just a simple a time of fellowship in the Fellowship Hall to officially launch our Advent Season which begins on December 3rd. Even if you cannot make the decorating part, please plan on joining us around 4:30ish for this great time of sharing with one another!

Christmas Eve Services: This year brings with it the anomaly of Christmas Eve being on a Sunday. We will celebrate Christmas Eve, which is also the 4th Sunday of Advent, with 3 services. We will have only **one Sunday morning service on December 24th at 9AM**, which will be a hybrid service of Christmas hymns in varying traditions, as well as a focus on the Christmas Story as told in the scriptures. Based on an informal survey that I conducted after Sunday morning services, I decided on the 9AM time slot which provides for an opportunity to worship together while also giving time for the greatest gap in services as our next Christmas Eve service will be at 5PM. A third Christmas Eve service will be held at 7PM. So, our schedule still allows both AM and PM worship opportunities while giving those who serve in the worship responsibilities a good break in between to take care of their own Christmas Eve preparations, family gatherings, and traditional activities! So, in summary, we will have three Christmas Eve Services:

9AM: Christmas Eve worship, combined service (*No Sunday School or 11:15 Service*)

5PM: Candlelight Service, Contemporary Style

7PM: Candlelight Service, Traditional Style

Church Conference, December 10th at 6PM: This is not an Advent-related event, but this year, it just happens to occur during the Advent season. The Church Conference is an important gathering where the fellowship comes together to do brief review of the church's overall status from the current year, as well as vote on a new membership slate for the upcoming year. Various financial elements are reviewed such as our shares of ministry and pastoral compensation levels. These meetings are typically fairly concise in duration, may thirty to forty minutes depending on conversation and interest expressed by those in attendance. One of the key topics to be discussed this year is the leadership team's plan to transition the church from a traditional leadership model to what is called the Simplified Accountable Structure. This is a plan that has been in development for over a year with the leadership team, and the team voted this year to adopt the new structure as we move into the 2024 church calendar year. To do so, requires the approval of the church members. Therefore, we will vote on this at this year's Church Conference.

So, what does this mean in regards to a leadership structure change? Well, currently, the church operates under a leadership structure that has 7 different teams, each led by a Team Chair, or Committee Chair (Trustees, Staff Parish Relations, Finance, Education, Worship Support, Missions/Outreach, Nominations & Leadership). Each team has 5 to 7 members assigned to it and each team meets at least one time per quarter. In addition to these 7 teams, the leadership team also has a Chair, known as the Administrative Council Chair, a Lay Leader, a "Member to the Annual Conference and Alternate," and currently 2 "members at large." So, in 2023, we operated the church with a total of 55 "leadership positions." Keep in mind that our Sunday morning worship averages about 125 (not including special Sunday/Holiday observances).

What the Simplified Accountable Structure does is modify the church leadership structure to about 12 positions. In essence, the entire leadership team will be comprised of what is now each team's Chair. There will still be a Leadership Team Chair, a Lay Leader, and members at large, but the overall team will be made up of only 12 members, instead of 55. Instead of "rostered" teams, the efforts of what the current teams do will be handled by ad-hoc groups of church members who want to be involved in various aspects of church management. For example, our Trustees team currently has a Chair Person, Josh Strange, and 6 members. But, when it comes to doing the "trustee-related" work around the church, we had far more than 6 folks participate, sometimes up to 30 – even though they were not on the "rostered" team. Our Education Team, chaired by Barb Snare, currently consists of 5 additional team members. But you will often find Barb in a meeting room on any given evening in the church with 5 to 7 other folks discussing our educational process, plans, and goals, with many of them not being on the "rostered" team, but having an interest in the plans that Barb is developing and implementing.

As far as each team's meetings, we will continue to have quarterly meetings for various focus elements of the church, but the difference is that our fellowship, as-a-whole, will have an open invitation to participate in areas that they have an interest in during pre-scheduled leadership team meetings. Instead of having predetermined structural teams appointed and voted on based on a year-to-year term, the opportunity is open for anyone to participate on a meeting-to-meeting basis, as well as serve on short-term teams that are addressing a specific issue or objective of the church. These functions will continue to be managed by the 12 leaders that the church does appoint and approve on an annual basis.

There is much more to this plan. If you have any questions, please, feel free to reach out to me – I will be happy to discuss the elements of the new structure and the benefits that it has for a church like Yorkshire! The Simplified Accountable Structure is an approved leadership structure of the United Methodist Church; a structure that many churches have adopted.

Finance Report: The last bit of information that I would like to present is our third quarter finance report which demonstrates our financial position through the end of September. These numbers include the Joyful Noise Christian Preschool:

Income (Offering, Gifts, Designated Giving, Tuition):	\$ 420,041
Expenses (including Preschool):	\$ 385,824 (incl 3 rd Qtr Shares)
Net (Gain)	\$ 34,217

What these numbers show is that the church is operating in a manner that we are able to pay our bills, our mission expenses, and continue to invest in the necessary repairs that our aging facility requires. Currently, we have significant expenses that will be paid in the 4th quarter such as the new sanctuary projectors (old ones were failing-often shutting down during worship), critical electrical panel upgrades, window repairs and maintenance, and other cost-savings improvements necessary to keep our facility functioning. Your continued generosity will allow us to do these things, while also being able to fund our non-maintenance expenses. It is our hope that the level of maintenance related expenses will begin to be reduced as we have been able to get caught up on the major repairs that have been necessary. So, if you would like to consider any additional gifts during this Thanksgiving and Advent Season, they will be appreciated!!!

I am thankful for our Finance and Trustee teams and their leadership in discerning how the church utilizes the gifts that you present. Earlier I mentioned quarterly meetings that occur as part of the leadership team process, but these folks (and others) are working on a daily and weekly basis to make the necessary decisions to provide the critical legwork in managing and maintaining our church operations and facility. This is all “behind-the-scenes” type effort that is critical to our success as a church!

In closing, I am looking forward to the Advent Season at Yorkshire Church. There are many opportunities for additional church fellowship and I would invite you to really look at the calendar of events listed in the monthly newsletters that Shannah is publishing and plan to attend as many as you can. A church is not successful based on its financial performance, the structure, or the maintenance and repairs that we accomplish. The success of a church is directly related to the fellowship of the body of it. What I enjoy most about the various events that we do as a family outside of worship is the laughter and the joy of comradery, being together, and sharing the essence of being children of God, united through our relationship with His Son, Jesus Christ, and having the ultimate essence of our faith uniting us together, God’s Holy Spirit!

As always, if you have any questions regarding information in this “What’s Brewing,” please feel free to contact me directly. I am always happy to discuss all things Yorkshire with you, my brothers and sisters, in Christ!

Peace!

-pastor dave.

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What's Brewing Addendum: Proposed Simplified Accountable Structure (*To be Approved*)

Note: The yellow highlighted names have been nominated by the Nominations & Leadership Team for the 2024 calendar year. Approval of these folks will be conducted at the Church Conference on December 10th.

Yorkshire Church Proposed Leadership Council & Structure

