

**Minutes of the Visioning Committee
Front Street United Methodist Church
September 24, 2026**

The Visioning Committee met at 7:00 p.m. in Room 402 with the following persons in attendance:

Lee Conner, Chair	Daniel Polito	Melissa Miller
Steve Cecil, Vice-Chair	Tom Sineath	Carol Sineath
Gary Harris	Marianna Harris	Shane Stadler
Curtis Price	William Inabnit	Caroline Conner
Jan Davis	Rett Davis	Matt Estes
		Betty Massey

OPENING

Lee greeted everyone and Daniel offered an opening prayer.

MAY MINUTE APPROVAL

As no meeting was held during the months of June, July and August, a motion was made by Tom and seconded by Curtis to accept the May 2026 minutes as written and was unanimously approved.

MUSIC

Matt began the committee reports by sharing that the repairs to the Sanctuary organ are underway with 24 pipes currently in Pennsylvania for repair. These are the larger pipes, some 12 ft. long and weighing 200 lbs. each. We anticipate their return before Advent and the organ will be tuned once the pipes are reinstalled. Tuning is recommended every 2 years. Matt has chosen a fun anthem for the choir to welcome the return of the pipes!

On a side note, Tom shared that Matt had spoken to his Sunday School group and recommended Matt as a wonderful speaker if another church group would be interested in asking him to share his love of music!

Matt also shared that our church will be a host location for the Vienna Girls Choir in April 2027! They would be interested in selling tickets to their concert on December 6th after our Advent Lessons and Carols service, if the Trustees approve. Jan will ask Tom Steele to review the matter of ticket sales and any written agreement, including an insurance liability and hold harmless rider.

UNITED WOMEN IN MINISTRY

Carol shared that the circles have committed to preparing 106 casseroles for the Market 4 Missions this year! All of the recipes have been distributed among the women and they will not have to seek assistance from other groups this year! Thank you ladies for sharing your cooking and baking skills!

STAFF PARISH RELATIONS

Curtis reported that the SPRC had not met since the last Vision meeting, however was pleased to report that salaries will be increased in our 2027 budget. No increases were granted for 2026, so this is a positive step! Per Daniel, reporting for Pastor Ray who could not be present tonight, that Tammy's financial projections, we expect to be operating in the black by the end of 2026!

We have received 2 applications for the Aldersgate worship/music leader and SPRC will be meeting next week to discuss and hopefully extend an offer.

FINANCE

The prior discussion lead into our financial status and the proposed 2027 Budget (which had been distributed by email for the meeting). The proposed Budget increased by only \$35,000 which mainly represents salary increases and associated costs. Note: the Conference also increased salaries by 2%, so our overall increases were in line. Discussion was open for budget questions, none were posed, and the committee voted unanimously to accept the proposed 2027 Budget without amendment.

LAY LEADERSHIP

Rett shared that our church will be providing our next-door neighbors at the Fire Station a Fireman's Breakfast during the first week of October. This will be the 2nd year we have provided this breakfast in appreciation of their service to our community. It is important to recognize that this idea of hosting a breakpoint for our first responders grew as an outreach idea from a small group of a few couples meeting to share and discuss how to show the love of Christ in our community. Kudos to all involved and to Rett for continuing this idea, which we hope will be an annual event! Financial donations will be accepted—this is outside of the church budget—please contact Rett.

TRUSTEES

Jan said that the majority of her report was initially prepared for last month, and since the August meeting was canceled due to a city water main break, she shared the following:

- Update on parking lot agreement for across the street being used by Duncan Exxon – 1) owners have not been carrying an insurance rider to protect the church from liability, so that is now added to the discussion, as the church wants annual proof of coverage going forward; and 2) due to regulations regarding non-profits (the church), we are revisiting Duncan continuing to make a donation to the church for use of a portion of the parking lot vs. considering a lease to charge rent so not to generate income.
- Heritage Center—painted and new carpet installed in August for approximately \$34,000, expect total renovation to come in around \$40,000—all paid through designated funds and not pulled from the Budget.
- Parsonage – remodel of the bathroom underway and should be completed in a week.
- Aldersgate and Sanctuary – both will have new sound system upgrades for approximately \$9,500 combined, which will enhance sound for on-line viewers and also assist hard of hearing in-person worshippers.
NOTE: now that our early Sunday morning worship service in Aldersgate is being live-streamed (like our traditional 11:00 am Sunday service), our on-line views have increased and currently average 70 viewers per week.
- Safety for Children – we had a SWAT team visit the church and provide suggestions for making our children areas safer, including adding window shades for lower classrooms, designating emergency exit route, adding signage for exits and placing “you are here” maps throughout the church for emergency personnel to navigate the church building in the event of an emergency. Also considering new door access code(s) for different groups/functions.
- Water intrusion in the basement Southwest under Sanctuary—looking into cause and remedy.
- Bricks are sinking near the seating benches near the new columbarium—contractor has been contacted to remedy situation.
- HVAC—Air Conditioning in the Sanctuary has burned out 3 motors. The 1988 system needs replacement. This is a massive undertaking which will require engineering and a crane. William stated that the estimate is around \$100,000. There is currently no timeline available for this work. Curtis added that we may look into a split system if there is enough room on the rooftops to support one. A new system will have an electronic thermostat (the current system is pneumatic and is no longer available, so this will allow an upgrade). Services will continue to be held in Aldersgate while the weather is warm. More to come.

FINANCE

William advised that in July, August and so far in September, the church is currently about \$100,000 in the red for 2026, but this is typical of this time of year as contributions lag during the summer months. However, in comparison to the prior 2 years, we were \$213,000 behind in 2025 and \$309,000 in 2024. The good news is that projections are still anticipated to put us back in the black by December 31st! Everyone, please continue to support the work of the church and our approved budget!

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Melissa highlighted a very busy schedule of activities with our children's ministries:

- Sunday School is back in the swing!
- Nursery workers are needed for all services!
- Little Lambs Play Group meets the 2nd Saturday each month—some church members and some Playschool families join in for this time of family fun!
- New—a small parenting group starting up—"Faith Every Day"—to share faith at home daily among family.
- Fall Festival—at the Farm at Camp Chestnut Ridge in Efland on October 10, 10-12 noon!
- Creation Day at Dinner Bell Farm upcoming.
- C4C—Eastlawn has new administration again this year—Melissa has met with both the new principal and assistant. Need teacher treats and will start distributing over-weekend backpack foods next week at the beginning of October. Anticipate over 100 will apply—time to ramp up our food donations—regular sized cans that children can carry home!
- Fresh Mobile Market going strong—the need is great and lots of people are being served.
- Playschool is full!
- Acolytes are currently not serving as services being held in Aldersgate. This will be revisited.
- We are encouraging children to serve as Lay Reader and read Scripture once a month during the Sunday morning worship services to include them and show them they are a valued part of our worship.
- Rett suggested possibly having the children assist in taking up the collection plates and Melissa agreed.

YOUTH REPRESENTATIVE

Caroline updated us on the Community Medical Closet. So far, we have collected 300 devices and have given away 100! Approximately \$25,000 worth of medical equipment has been given away to date! We are still in need of wheelchairs—most of what we have are transport chairs, but not wheelchairs that a person could use to maneuver themselves with the big wheels. She thanked the church staff who interact face-to-face with persons who come to the office to request a device and distribute them.

MINISTER OF DISCIPLESHIP

Daniel had much to share:

- First expressing thanks to Caroline for continuing this important ministry on the Community Medical Closet!
- Market for Missions—(November 14th, 10 am – 3 pm)—we have area leaders this year, there have been some difficult cuts, such as no lunch will be offered this year and no silent auction. The team has been discussing “What is our Mission” – and we will be seeing “Mission Spotlights” for each mission on our website, thanks to Joanna and others involved.
- Discipleship—Sunday School continues
- Book Club continuing—new books
- Faithful Families started strong the first week, looking forward to more
- Youth have an opportunity for Sunday School during this time
- Worship Planning – we have a good vision through this year and into next
- Youth Group—average 18 kids for Wednesday Breakfast Club—come join at Biscuitville on Huffman Mill Road; averaging 12-15 Youth on Sunday nights for a light snack supper, devotion discussion, fun and fellowship!
- October 1-12—Daniel will be away (honeymoon) but others will be covering Breakfast Club and Youth Group, so continue to stay involved and bring a friend!
- Josh (although at his new church assignment) is participating in the anti-racism for the District; Bishops of the United Methodist Church are encouraging a shared witness for all people of faith—book study at First UMC Graham.
- Packathon—meal packaging event (October 18th) for churchwide participation headed up by our Youth Group. Chris Huneycutt will help lead this event as this has become an annual event to provide for emergency non-perishable food! This is a lot of fun and many hands make light work! Please come and be involved!
- Sanctuary Project—this is the name of a recently new shared fund in which our church participates with other churches to pool resources and be able to assist those in need with rent and utilities. Over the summer, we participated on a 3-month trial basis. This program allows people who are housed to stay housed. In

the past, our church had a fund to assist someone once up to \$100 in a 12-month period for utilities only. By joining together with other churches, we now combine and funnel funds through the Women's Resource Center who vet the clients and have more connections in the area to refer clients for other services which we do not provide.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Tom reminded everyone to complete the survey from the Conference sent by email to the lay leadership and submit it by the deadline of October 1st. There is a short and long version, taking around an hour to complete. This will assist the Conference with reporting and may lead our church into more important discussions.

Tom also shared that Wheelchair Ramp #431 has been completed!

Curtis shared an incident in which he gave kudos to our police department for a rapid response, and to Jackie and Hannah.

Jan gave kudos to Melissa for a great experience at Vacation Bible School this year!

Daniel said that Jimmy has been doing well as our interim worship and music leader in Aldersgate. Praise singing and worship continues!

CLOSING

Lee closed the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,

Betty Massey
Recording Secretary