**COMMUNITY MEETING MINUTES**

October 26, 2021

6:30pm

Pastor Brian Abasciano

Pastor Kevin Kimball

Number of congregants attending: 20

Pastors Brian Abasciano and Kevin Kimball opened the meeting at 6:41pm with prayer. Pastor Brian then announced the following agenda items:

Relationship Between DTL and FCC

Missions Giving

He also noted that this was a hybrid community meeting in that the short business portion would be combined with a shortened version of a typical church prayer meeting. With that he opened the meeting to the sharing of praises.

Relationship between DTL (Down the Line Ministries) and FCC (Faith Community Church)

Pastor Brian read aloud a prepared statement as follows:

First, we want to say how much we love DTL’s ministry and are thankful to God for it and for the great effort that has been put into it! Souls have been saved, there is nothing greater than that!

Second, the developments within DTL mean that the relationship between FCC and DTL is changing. FCC will still have a close relationship with DTL, but DTL is going to be its own independent ministry. It will be a non-profit (501c3) organization. So now the FCC-DTL relationship is more accurately expressed as a partnership between FCC and DTL.

FCC will be partnering with DTL in this way. We will continue supporting DTL at this time with the use of our church building, keeping up with DTL news, supporting them with our prayers, and financially supporting DTL Club (which is the high school outreach arm of Down the Line Ministries) by buying food and supplies for their Wednesday big group meetings.

Giving to DTL will no longer be through FCC. For those of you who give to DTL, Allison O’Neil will be in touch with you regarding how you can continue your giving.

For those of you who volunteer within DTL's ministry, we appreciate your labor for God’s kingdom! We support you and will be praying for you!

We are so very thankful for how God has used DTL to save souls, and we pray for God's continued blessing upon DTL as an independent ministry, reaching youth and the action sports community for Christ.

Allison O’Neil (DTL Operations Director) then read aloud a prepared statement as follows:

Dear Faith Community Church,

It’s been a bit of time since we updated our church family about Down the Line, so we wanted to take a few minutes to do just that.

Over the past few months, we’ve experienced some significant changes, but God has been faithful, and we are actually very excited about what He has for the ministry moving forward.

The biggest change for the ministry has been in our core leadership team with both Ben and Paige changing their roles.  Ben has recently fully stepped down from the ministry to focus on school. We are so thankful for how God used him to help found Down the Line.  We love him and support his decision to focus on his art program at school and are excited for what God has for him at UMass Lowell.

As for Paige, she has shifted her role from core leadership to a more focused role in both campus and action sports outreach alongside her sister, Carys. She is thrilled to use this season to be fully immersed in all that campus life has to offer while still furthering the mission of the gospel and reaching people for Christ with Down the Line. There are some really cool things happening for Paige and Carys as God opens doors to relationships through action sports.  They have already been hitting up the skatepark, making surf trips, and there’s building excitement for this winter on the slopes!

So, as for the administration of the ministry, I will be taking lead in my role as Operations Director.  New to the official team (but one of our biggest supporters all along) will be my dear husband, Kevin.  Also new is Tom Stedman from UMass Cru, who some of you may have met this past summer with Hampton Beach Summer Mission.  God’s timing in sending Tom has been a real blessing and he has already had a lot to offer.  We are also super thankful for the continued support and assistance from both Blankenships who play several significant volunteer roles.  With us since the beginning, the Blankenships not only have a veritable plethora of talents but also such servant hearts and a shared vision for reaching the lost in action sports.  God is good and though we can always use more laborers to administrate the ministry, we are trusting the Lord for that provision in His time.

Down the Line Club - the high school outreach arm of the ministry - is going strong under an epic new peer leadership team.  With Tori McLaughlin taking the helm as the Senior Club leader, we also have leaders Sam Hackett, AJ McLaughlin, and Grace Nowland.  Club helpers are Hannah and Robert Pfeifer.  Club has been drawing about 20 teens each week and word on the street is it’s going swimmingly!  Let’s pray God continues to save souls through Club and we have more baptisms to celebrate next summer!

In addition to Club, DTL provides a “step-up” opportunity to a small group setting for any teens wanting to go deeper.  We are still asking for prayer for a young women's group leader, but Gary continues to knock it out of the park leading the dudes - and we are beyond thankful for God’s provision of him.  As you may know, Gary is one busy dude, but he has a real connection with these guys, and we appreciate his sacrifice of time for the ministry and the Kingdom.

Lastly, BIG news is we are finally at a place to take the next steps toward being our own 501c3 - a goal we have long held since the foundation of the ministry.  We do not know the specific timing of that coming to fruition, but God has been so good to provide help through our many connections in the world of action sports ministry, our local ministry supporters, and also Faith Community Church. FCC has been so faithful to support us and guide us in our growth… and even to generously provide weekly meeting space for DTL Club! Thank you so much, Kevin and Brian.

So, since this is a *big* step of faith for our grassroots ministry to become our own 501c3, we are asking for your prayers.  We are shifting the way we receive tax-deductible donations to be through one of our partner organizations in action sports ministry.  Please pray that the transition goes smoothly!  All ministry partners will be notified with details; donation information is also explained on our website.  We are so thankful that FCC handled that for us for this past year and specifically for the work Valerie did in helping us with finances in general.

In closing, though the shifts and changes of the recent months have not all been easy, and we know change is often hard, but it’s when we are out of our comfort zone that God can really be glorified and also grow us.  God has been showing us once again that He is faithful and that He has His hand on this ministry.  It seems clear to us that God plans to continue to do a work in this community through Down the Line.  Please pray for us to be His humble servants - willing to go wherever He may call us.

Again, I personally cannot emphasize enough how much Down the Line covets the prayers of our brothers and sisters at Faith Community Church to *not get weary nor to lose heart*.

As it says in Hebrews 12… “*Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him, he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.*”

Thank you for all your support thus far and for what is to come.  If I can answer any other questions, or if you would like to share a word from the Lord or encouragement with us, feel free to email us at downthelineministries@gmail.com. We can always use the encouragement!

His Humble Servant,

Allison

The group then prayed for the ministry.

Missions Giving

Pastor Kevin provided an update on the church’s financial giving to its missionaries following from the discussion held at the last community meeting about whether to give a substantial extra gift to our missionaries at this time. The pastors have decided to go ahead and give $11,000 to FCC-supported missionaries, allotting as follows: $2,000 to each family (Blood, Walker, Haegeland, Rhodes, and Kimball, and $1,000 to Ian McNally). Pastor Brian noted the Noonans are supported in prayer only at this time. He then spoke about a possible visit from the Bloods in the upcoming weeks and how the timing of the missions giving decision has provided confirmation for this to the Bloods.

The group then prayed for the missionaries.

Fielding questions from congregants, Pastor Brian provided an update on the status of the church’s constitution and incorporation process noting the documents are ready to be finalized. New policies are required (whistleblower and conflict of interest). Once both pastors review the documents, they will move forward with incorporating the church.

An update was also provided on the deacons’ list with respect to projects. Window replacement/refurbishment was discussed in that the church is working with Brian Riordan on best possible options. No decisions have been made at this time. Pastor Brian will send out an updated projects/service list once it is updated.

The business portion of the meeting ended at 7:35pm.

The congregation then shared personal prayer requests and prayed for one another, and the meeting ended around 8:00 pm.