

Church Council Minutes

August 15, 2022

In attendance via Zoom: Alex Joyner, Lisa Hanrahan, John Sykes, Frank McMullen, Bill Clarke, Jim Campbell, George Batten, Evelyn Kessler, Dana Palmer, Guy Moffatt, Charles Kidd, Hu Shaffer, Jeff Taylor, Cindy Remington, Lisa Mann.

Lisa Hanrahan opened the meeting by asking for prayers for the family of Janet Reusing, whose death is imminent.

Bill Clarke offered a devotional reminding us of the active role First United Methodist played by offering water, shelter, counseling and first aid during the Unite the Right rally in 2017.

George Batten made a presentation on behalf of the Transition Team. Their work to date includes evaluating the assets of both First and Hinton Avenue congregations, gathering information from community leaders regarding community needs, and distributing a survey to determine the skills and interests of congregants. Jeff Taylor asked if there is a goal for completing the transition study; Alex answered that there is a September meeting with Kay Kotan to analyze the work to date, and the team intends to submit a recommendation to the bishop by the end of the year. George left the meeting after his presentation.

Bill made a motion to approve the minutes from the June meeting. Jeff seconded, and the motion passed.

Jeff Taylor gave an update from the Finance Committee. Year to date giving is lower than 2021 and \$27K below budget. He reminded us that there were gifts in 2018 – 2020 that will not be recurring; if giving continues at this level, we will have a reduction in operating cash unless we use additional funds from the Arthur gift. Lisa Hanrahan asked about plans/ideas for 2023. Jeff responded that the plan is to start our giving campaign earlier this year, and to be more intentional leading to Consecration Sunday. Jim Campbell asked that someone verify that the subsidy toward Alex's salary was actually received from the conference. Cindy asked if work areas need to trim their budget requests for 2023. Jeff answered that the 2022 budget anticipated growth in attendance and hope that increased giving would follow. If giving for 2023 tracks with 2022, we would expect a \$60K - \$80K deficit that would have to be made up with endowment funds. Frank commented that we need to emphasize the positive things the church is doing as we move into our giving campaign.

Evelyn Kessler reported on behalf of the Endowment Committee, noting that \$35K was distributed toward operating funds and that values of the investments have increased in the past month.

Speaking on behalf of the Ministry Council, Cindy Remington explained there is no Worship Chairperson and no Outreach Chairperson at present. She also reported that Dave Breslin and others met to discuss the possibility of taking an Appalachian Service Project trip in the summer of 2023.

Jim Campbell gave an update from Staff Parish Relations. The committee is working on a final draft of an employee handbook. An interview is scheduled for a Children's Coordinator; Jim commented that even though a significant number of people responded to the congregational survey that they have a skill/interest in teaching, no one from the congregation expressed an interest in the Children's Coordinator position.

John Sykes presented a report on the work of the Trustees. Removal of lead paint has been delayed due to weather. Church security has become an issue in the last several months; the committee has added more motion detectors, will put deadbolts on rooms on the third floor and is installing exterior cameras. An anonymous donor has offered to make a \$100K contribution toward a solar energy project. Additional funds could come from member contributions or potential government subsidy to nonprofit organizations. Guy Moffat explained that a local company was brought in to evaluate options, keeping in mind restrictions by the City Board of Architectural Review. Their recommendation was to install 220 solar panels at a cost of \$200K, generating a savings of approximately \$19K per year in energy costs. Cindy expressed that the Ministry Council would like to advocate for the project. Frank made a motion that Church Council allow Trustees to move forward on the project and commit \$200K. Bill amended the motion to allow \$100K to be borrowed from the Thomas Bequest and then repaid. Cindy seconded the motion and the motion passed.

Jim asked about progress on hiring a security guard. John responded that the Trustees are still researching options but have made no progress with local companies.

Lisa Hanrahan scheduled next meeting for October 3.

Alex closed the meeting with prayer.