

ST. PAUL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
Council Meeting of January 10, 2023 – 7:00 p.m.  
MINUTES

In Attendance: Conrad Heidt, Toni Hill, Michael Isaacs, Aaron Johnson, Dave Lange, Fred Miller, Jennifer Ruffner, Barbara Schultz, Pat Staffeld, Teri Staffeld, Bev Gunther, and Rev. Geoff Drutchas.  
Present by Telephone; Dan Case and Mark Ennis

Excused: Suzanne Mrowka

Guests: Tracy Hoffman and Cindy Romas

The Meeting was called to order by Dave Lange at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was then opened with a prayer offered by Rev. Geoffrey Drutchas. Pastor asked that the council include the names of Dan and Debbie Case, and also Suzanne Mrowka to our prayer list, since each are not feeling well at this time.

Dave Lange asked Pastor Drutchas to speak to the Council prior to the beginning of the usual business procedures, since Pastor did not intend to stay for the entire meeting. Rev. Drutchas reported that the Parsonage is now virtually empty, with just two bed frames and some cardboard boxes remaining inside. The church office is also nearly empty with just a few remaining boxes to be taken out. Pastor reported that he is continuing to provide Pastoral Care and will do so until Rev. Reed has arrived and is able to begin his work with us. Pastor Drutchas will also be available during the coming weeks in case he is needed to perform a funeral or memorial service. He will also continue to visit those in hospital and in some cases to visit and say 'good-bye' to our homebound members. Pastor spoke for several more moments sharing his thoughts, his feelings, and his affection for this church and the members of the congregation. At the close of his statements, the Council Members rose and warmly applauded Pastor Geoff Drutchas for all the special moments we have been able to share with him and with his dear family. He will be missed.

Tracy Hoffman elected to speak later in the meeting under Old Business. Dave Lange then asked if everyone had read the minutes of the December 13, 2022 Council Meeting. All agreed to having done so, and a motion to accept the Minutes from that meeting was made by Barb Schultz and seconded by Aaron Johnson. Motion carried.

Dave Lange asked if there were any additions or corrections to the Agenda presented for this meeting. Aaron Johnson asked that we add the letter 'G' under Reports and Updates to say: Financial Advisory Ministry Endowment Performance for 2022.

Dan Case spoke by telephone and reviewed some details of the Treasurer's Report for the previous month. It was noted that although we finished 2022 ahead of the Budget, we must raise more funding for next year, since all expenses are going to increase by a rather large amount. We are facing the U.C.C. guidelines for Pastoral Compensation, also the possible increase in the cost of providing music for our worship services. There may, very likely, also be other increased dollar amounts that could surprise us within this next year.

Aaron Johnson made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report; seconded by Michael Isaacs. Motion carried.

Dan asked to make a motion to move the amount of money we have received this year that is over our budgeted costs, and place it into a reserve account. That would protectively 'hold' this overage

amount until, or if, it is needed to pay bills - only. If for some reason we should fall below our expected income, and need to add this amount back into the regular funds, a special meeting of the Congregation would be needed to do so. A lengthy discussion took place in order to 'define' what the many aspects of this motion would mean: Motion was seconded by Aaron Johnson and carried.

Pastor Cheryl Schalm's report was included in the printed package, and was available to all Council Members.

Michael Isaac reported for the Trustees that both the East and the West Entry Doors have been repaired. The Parsonage has been examined and although we had already made arrangements for a thorough cleaning, the firm we were to deal with cannot do the work within our time constraints. Several names of either individuals or other companies were noted, and Michael will be contacting them as soon as possible. A number of church members have been good enough to volunteer their help with the work that we need to accomplish. We are all very grateful for their kindness in being willing to helping in any way they are able. Fred Miller has been contacted by a friend of the church who has worked the Fish Dinners for many years, and who has offered to donate a large check to help with repairs that are needed. We are very grateful for his generous gift! Mark Ennis added the name of a member who may be interested in filling either the Trustee or Deacon vacancies on the Council for next year.

Michael noted there are some repairs needed to floors inside the Parsonage that were apparently caused by water leaks from the window Air Conditioners. This may mean that carpeting must be installed to cover anything that cannot be restored to its original condition (discolorations, etc.).

Teri Staffeld reported for the Deacons that all things are going as they should. She will be undergoing surgery shortly, and extra help may be needed from others until she is back on her feet. There was some discussion about the correct locking practice for all exterior doors. There is a form that must be filled out by any person/group who uses the building. That form includes the mandatory information about locking doors.

Mark Ennis reported for the Elders. Christmas attendance was somewhat lower than our usual count, however, this is a different time and we are facing different situations. Mark is feeling upbeat about our search for a new Elder. Mark reported that there have been rumors spread concerning the well being of this church. He asked that anyone who hears negative talk about our future, stand up and end the discussion and a positive response on behalf of all the generations of members who have loved this church and worked so tirelessly to build it up in every way!

Barb Schultz reported that with the beginning of 2023 she has begun to schedule supply Pastors for the weeks of January. Barb served on January 1, 2023; Pastor Cheryl Schalm served on January 8, 2023; Pastor Linda Anderson is scheduled for January 15, 2023; Pastor Carey Orlando is scheduled for January 22, 2023; and Pastor Schalm will serve on January 29, 2023. Barb noted that it is the usual duty of the Elders to review yearly giving by members and to tactfully contact the members or families who have not seemed to share in the financial support of our church. She asked if Council wants the Elders to re-establish this review process or not? The subject was discussed and since the list will not be available until perhaps March of this year, Council will consider this later in 2023.

Aaron Johnson reported that our financial year of 2022 on stocks, etc., was not outstanding, yet since we have not sold any stocks or holdings, the losses are only 'on paper'. Our investments showed increases in value, but again, until they are sold or traded, it's not a win. It was mentioned that once the Endowment Fund had been repaid, many members may have incorrectly surmised that we no

longer needed to ask for funding. This is **not** the case, and if we hope to continue as a successful Church Family, we must condition ourselves to continue investing our funds in order to serve all of us. We are facing the cost of repairs needed for the Parking Lot, and any other repairs which may become necessary.

Tracy Hoffman reported for the Music Ministry. We are still undecided on how we can best serve Sally as she recovers her health. We don't know for certain what the next month or more will mean for Sally; and a formal decision on which way to move is premature. This topic will need to be considered in the coming months, once a number of issues have been clarified. Amid the discussions held, Mark Ennis reported that he had visited with Sally, and she is recovering quite well at this time.

Michael Isaacs reported that the budget allocated for repair of the Parsonage contains the Payroll Protection Funds from the Covid loan received from the Government. The total funds received will not need to be used, but this does give us an operating budget for what may need to be repaired or updated.

Dan Case reported that bequests have been received from the Estate of Velma McGee; from the Estate of Lynn Hogan; and from coins saved by the late Don Gruenberg. It was reported to the Church that the Estate of Daisy Stedman had left the church a bequest, however, this has not yet been received.

Dan suggested it might be a wise idea to move \$500 from the Bequest Fund each month and deposit it into the Endowment Fund, particularly with the price of stocks being so low at this time. After some discussion, Dan made a motion to move \$500 each month from the Bequest Account and invest it in the Generational Endowment Fund. Motion was seconded by Teri Staffeld. Motion carried.

Michael Isaacs detailed specific jobs that volunteers could do to update and repair parts of the Parsonage. There are a lot of things to do – and we have a short amount of time - many volunteers are needed!

The date for the Annual Souper Bowl needs to be changed and Dave Lange asked for a motion. Motion was made by Barbara Schultz seconded by Toni Hill to change the date for the Souper Bowl from January 29, 2023 to February 5, 2023. Motion carried.

Plans for the yearly Council Dinner are to be put on hold until after the Congregational of January 15, 2023. Once the new Council Members are on board, the final plans can be made and those who have just gone off Council, plus those newly elected, are all invited to attend.

Having concluded the business scheduled for this meeting, Dave Lange asked all Council Members to stand and join in a unison recitation of The Lord's Prayer.

The meeting closed at 9:15 p.m., with a unison recitation of The Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by,

Beverley Gunther  
Recording Secretary

Council Minutes – 01.10.23