

ST. PAUL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
COUNCIL MINUTES FROM MEETING OF  
Tuesday, April 11, 2023

**Council Members Present:** Aaron Johnson, Sue Mrowka, Julius Enesey, Dan Case, Jane Dykowski, Fred Miller, Toni Hill, Marjorie Barnard, Jennifer Ruffner, Conrad Heidt, Jeannette Wackro, and Rev. George Reed..

**Excused:** Pat Staffeld and Barbara Schultz

Also in attendance: Cindy Romas and Harold Fick

**Guests:** Church Building and Grounds / Security Ministries and Christian Education Ministry

Meeting called to order by President, Aaron Johnson, at 6:56 p.m. followed by opening prayer led by Rev. Reed.

Motion by Toni Hill, seconded by Julius Enesey, to approve the minutes of the March 14, 2023 Council Meeting. Motion carried.

**Agenda Additions/Deletions:** Delete Pastoral Search Update from Reports and Updates and add By-law change and Sally Sigman Plaque presentation to Old Business

At this point the Council guests shared their plans and concerns. Dan Case shared the work list of maintenance tasks prioritized from most urgent to least urgent. Marjie Barnard shared research on carpeting upstairs classrooms. Because of the cost, the focus will be on the main classroom and IM room. Dan Case reported that in a walk-through few corrections needed to be made in anticipation of the Fire Marshal's visit. Julius Enesey noted a fire extinguisher location may need to be modified in the north east corner of fellowship hall during the rummage sale. Sue Mrowka and Marjie Barnard reported that camera and security lock needed to be fixed on the east hall entrance. Bids are being sought. Harold Fick reported that there were no large projects coming up. He will be replacing dead shrubs and planting flowers from Blocks. There are no gas needs presently. There is an area around the parsonage that needs additional fill to provide drainage away from the structure. Also, gutters need to be cleaned. The drive drain on exit side is sinking. Drains have been cleaned and small hole has been covered.

Pastor Schalm provided her written report, but was present to expand on it and represent Christian Education Ministries. March was very busy with Easter plans and doing additional visitations and phone calls. She will be adjusting back to Christian Education plans at this time. The mission trips take a lot of time and now 18-year olds are required as volunteers. Vacation Bible School will have a pet theme. There are plans for a blessing of animals on a Sunday after VBS. Maybe the planning will be in coordination with Picnic and Rally Sunday in September. She related her concerns for attracting younger families. The whole family many times does not attend after confirmation. (Confirmation classes will begin in September.) She suggested that the final song by a praise group be scheduled for the April 16, 2023 worship service. This is a small group with older participants. Motion by Toni Hill, seconded by Sue Mrowka, to have the praise group on Sunday, April 16. Motion carried. The indication seems to be that the younger people do not attend worship, but see us as their church.

## **REPORTS AND UPDATES**

**Treasurer's Report:** Dan Case reported that February, March and Quarterly fund reports are available. Giving is down in March, but one large donation (\$12,000) was very positive. Maybe by second quarter we should have a catch up Sunday. Utilities will now be reported a month late because of accounting changes. Churches are having to make tough decisions because of membership losses. Dan also stated that we have reserve money and can run at a deficit for a while, but need to be frugal with our resources. Motion by Fred Miller, seconded Toni Hill, to approve the Treasurer's report. Motion carried.

**Pastor Cheryl Schalm:** Written Report and discussion as Council guest earlier in the meeting.

**Rev. George Reed:** Written Report. He expanded on his written report sharing plans to meet with Search Committee in setting up small groups to get to know us. This provides him with our history, our identity, and our vision to help us get to where we need to go. He has pulled back his profile and will stay with us even though offers are out there. He expressed his enjoyment in working at the fish dinners. He was thanked for his help.

**Trustees/Building and Grounds:** Fred Miller reported on several projects: Bid on parsonage windows was over \$3,075, second bid is coming; Family room leak; LED lights in the parsonage; Pastor's office needs carpeting and hanging of the doors, the desk has been refinished, and room will be put back together when carpet is laid; Kitchen circuit breaker panel needs a "Push-matic" which is difficult to locate; and ceiling in east bathroom needs to be repainted—no longer used for showers. Julius Enesey, Fred Miller, Marjie and Charlie Barnard, and Michael Isaacs were thanked for their extraordinary work on the parsonage rehab.

**Deacons:** Jennifer Ruffner reported that March attendance (c. 340) is about the same as last year. March averaged about 96 per service. Easter had 134 compared with last year's 160.

**Elders:** Pam Lange reported that Easter had c. 180 communicants; Maundy Thursday had 28; and Good Friday attendance was about 30. The teachers were served communion up stairs on Easter Sunday.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

1. Marjie Barnard reported that following a meeting by the trustees on February 17, to discuss by-law changes of number and terms of council representatives, more work needed to be done. They felt that if a committee deemed that a change was necessary, trustees would draft a proposal to be presented to the membership at the semi-annual meeting. "The trustees have therefore unanimously decided that going to just 2 council representatives for any position would create a hardship for the 2 representatives and would adversely impact the St. Paul governing body. The Council positions are currently filled; therefore, the Trustees feel that the idea has no merit at this time."
- There followed an open discussion on how people are approached to serve. How are all duties of positions reviewed and understood by prospective candidates. A council retreat was suggested to review all positions. Acquainting new members with duties when they assume their positions is very important. Perhaps each group should meet to review the present expectations.

2. Sally Sigman Plaque Presentation. During her presentation, Pastor Schalm related her concern for Sally's wellbeing at this time. It was decided to have a small group to present the plaque at this time. Pastor Schalm will contact Michele Mellin to find an appropriate time and place. It was suggested the group include members involved in the Music Ministry.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

1. Staff Expectations/Alignment Review Templates Approvals and 2. Staff Review Responsibilities. These two subjects generated a lively discussion of the manner and depth of reviewing the paid employees at the church. Templates were viewed and discussed. What job expectations are and what employee's expectations are need to be clear. There may be need of a paper trail in case of legal ramifications to protect the church. This extensive type of evaluation may not be necessary for our organization—over the top? Discussion with employees on how to improve their performance with congregation's support would be helpful. In our smaller organization loyalty seems to be a factor. Staff members could do self-evaluation providing feedback on areas that need help. The plan should not be designed to pick on someone. State laws on firing are "at will." Previously the office staff met with the pastor at start of the week to review what the needs are. We have 11 paid employees. There have not been lawsuits, but we cannot predict the future. We need to keep good back and forth to foster good relationships. Aaron Johnson summarized after the discussion and the issue was tabled.
3. Small Groups Joys/Concerns with Rev. Reed: Rev. Reed expanded on how the groups will help with our church's direction. He wants groups of 6 – 8 to meet for about an hour. He will work with the Search Committee to put this in motion. It will help him with understanding how you got here, what do you celebrate, and what are your concerns.
4. Collection Plate/Donation Box Procedure: The discussion was whether the collection plate should be on the collection box or only have the box. If only the box is present, the offering would be put into the plate to take to the altar. Jennifer Ruffner said people were confused by the box/plate. The indication is that the plate is preferred. Marjie Barnard expressed concern for the procedure of placing money in the safe. Motion by Toni Hill, seconded by Fred Miller, that person delivering the plate to the altar meet the council representative at side Chancel door and proceed together to deposit offerings in the safe. Motion carried.

#### **ROUNDTABLE**

Dan Case asked for ideas for a plaque for Kathy Williams. Just send them to him. He also reported that background checks are updated. The cost is \$200. Toni Hill suggested that a plaque be presented to Women's Fellowship for their work. Motion by Toni Hill, seconded by Sue Mrowka, that such recognition be done. Motion carried. Conrad Heidt suggested that at services with few in attendance they be encouraged to sit together near the front of the sanctuary.

Motion to adjourn by Conrad Heidt, seconded by Marjie Barnard. Motion Carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m. followed by the Lord's Prayer in unison.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane L. Dykowski, Recording Secretary.

