

ST. PAUL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
COUNCIL MINUTES FROM MEETING OF
Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Council Members Present: Aaron Johnson, Pam Lange, Fred Miller, Toni Hill, Jane Dykowski, Marjorie Barnard, Jennifer Ruffner, Jeannette Wackro and Rev. Linda Anderson.

Excused: Dan Case, Sue Mrowka, Julius Enesey, and Conrad Heidt.

Guests: There were no guests.

Meeting was called to order by President, Aaron Johnson, at 7:08 p.m. followed by opening prayer led by Rev. Anderson.

Motion by Toni Hill, seconded by Fred Miller, to approve the minutes of the November 14, 2023 Council Meeting. Motion carried.

Agenda Additions/Deletions: Add to Old Business: Outreach – Thinking Outside the Box

REPORTS AND UPDATES

Treasurer's Report: Written report and notes prepared by Dan Case. In his absence, Aaron Johnson summarized the projected shortfall for 2023 to be approximately \$26,000. This takes into account the decreases in both income and expenses. After discussion about the reduction in OCWM contributions, the following motion was made. Motion by Toni Hill, seconded by Jeannette Wackro, to change the dollar amount for OCWM from \$666 to \$667. Motion carried. Motion by Margie Barnard, seconded by Fred Miller, to approve the Treasurer's Report. Motion carried.

Rev. Linda Anderson: Rev Anderson reported that she has been working on Christmas Eve services. They are almost completed.

Pastor Cheryl Schalm: Written Report.

Trustee/Building and Grounds: Marjrie Barnard reported that the new west lobby door has been installed. She also reported that for sanitary reasons, the west lobby drinking fountain has been removed and repainting completed to cover repairs to the wall. Also, the door closer from the west lobby lavatory has been removed which should eliminate excess moisture buildup in the room. Fred Miller reported that without a card or fob the new entry door can be opened with a key. The steps are a little different from the previous method. The trustees are searching for a new cleaning company as the current group has been doing a poor job. In order to have the parsonage appear to be occupied, lights are on timers and a wreath will be on the door.

Deacons: Jennifer Ruffner reported that 412 attendees in November is down from 2022.

Elders: Pam Lange reported that fewer communed in November—approximately 50. The inclement weather may have been a factor.

Search Team Update: Pam Lange and Marjie Barnard reported that the team is currently in contact with two applicants. They intend to talk with one of them again after the first of the year. Rev. Anderson related that a rule of thumb is for every year a pastor served a congregation (Rev. Drutchas, 36 years) should equate to one month that the church and congregation needs to readjust to their new circumstances (for us it would be 36 months).

OLD BUSINESS

1. Bag donation outreach program: The outreach bag donation contents were discussed to include the following: Instant mashed potatoes, canned vegetables, stuffing mix, canned fruit and \$15 gift card for meat. There is the opportunity to do this in January, February or Easter. Toni Hill related that we need a definite plan for what, when, and how this would be done and by whom. This suggestion should be revisited at the January meeting.
2. Fee Schedule for Sexton: No new information was presented to the council. Therefore, motion by Marjie Barnard, seconded by Jeannette Wackro, to approve the Fee Schedule for Sexton as presented. Motion carried.
3. Outreach – Thinking outside the Box: Jane Dykowski reported that Peggy Staten’s efforts in assembling the Gift Sale at the start of Advent was well received and seemed to enhance the Advent by Candlelight Event. The effort was rewarded with \$968 in profits for Christian Education and Sew ‘n Sews. She also reported that after several contacts with Michelle Matney regarding inviting the Girl Scouts and their families to the Annual Church Picnic is becoming a reality. If the Picnic date is July 28, 2024, she is on board with and very appreciative of the invitation. The picnic date should no longer be tentative on the Events Calendar.

NEW BUSINESS

1. 2024 Council Guest Calendar: Motion by Marjie Barnard, seconded by Pam Lange, to approve the 2024 Council Guest Calendar. Motion carried.
2. 2024 Event Calendar: Motion by Ton Hill, seconded by Pam Lange, to approve the 2024 Event Calendar with the July 28, 2024 Picnic date no longer as tentative. Motion carried
3. 2024 Employee Benefits Package: Motion by Marjie Barnard, seconded by Jeannette Wackro, to approve the 2024 Employee Benefits Package. Motion carried.
4. 2024 Holiday Schedule for Office Closure: Motion by Marjie Barnard, seconded by Fred Miller, to approve the 2024 Holiday Schedule for Office Closure. Motion carried.
5. Rev. Linda Anderson Housing Allowance: Motion by Marjie Barnard, seconded by Fred Miller, to approve the \$14,000 housing allowance for Rev. Linda Anderson. Motion carried.
6. Pastor Cheryl Schalm Housing Allowance: Motion by Toni Hill, seconded by Fred Miller, to approve the \$14,000 housing allowance for Pastor Cheryl Schalm. Motion carried.
7. Agenda for January 21, 2024 Annual Meeting: The tentative agenda appears appropriate at this time. Finalizing this is tabled until the January Council meeting.
8. Church Communications: There was concern regarding getting information to the public, congregation, and to the persons coordinating events. Jane Dykowski related the success and failure in getting the recent Gift Sale information “out there.” The electronic sign, Tidings and Morningtide were involved in addition to verbal communications. Starting with the sign, within hours of requesting it be placed on the sign, it was there. It appeared on the sign for approximately two weeks. (No one from the public domain came to the event because they saw it there.) An email with the information was sent to Margie Barnard and Cindy Romas for Tidings and Morningtide publication on October 20, 2023. There was an almost immediate response

NEW BUSINESS (continued)

8. (continued) that it would be in the November Tidings and it was. There was a chain of text messages that began on October 10, the email sent on October 20 and face-to-face request regarding the Morningtide on October 29. The item did not appear in the Morningtide until November 5. Why did it take so long? We do not know. However, we need to develop a protocol or follow up on our communications. It should be an easy and necessary process to get information “out there” efficiently and timely. In the course of this discussion, questions arose regarding the cancellation of events for what reasons and by whom. Also, Jennifer Ruffner pointed out that on the Events Calendar there is a statement regarding fundraisers being approved by Council. This was apparently unknown to the planners of the Gift Sale.
9. 2024 Budget Updates: In order to have a more accurate budget because of less revenue, the settled pastor’s salary, insurance, and OCWM were the major revisions. Motion by Toni Hill, seconded by Marjie Barnard, to approve the proposed budget to be presented at the annual meeting. Motion carried.
10. New Council Candidates: At this time, there are still vacancies for a 2nd Vice President, elders and deacons (1 and 3-year positions).
11. New Acolyte Procedure: Some changes are made in the acolyte procedure from Rev. Reed’s method. Also, Rev. Anderson suggested the Advent Candles be left burning and extinguished after the congregation departs.
12. Blanket, coats, hats, and gloves drive: This item was tabled for a future meeting.

ROUNDTABLE

Jeannette Wackro called attention to having the names of worship-leader participants printed in the Morningtide such as who is deacon, acolyte, etc.

Motion to adjourn by Marjie Barnard, seconded by Jeannette Wackro. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:49 p.m. followed by the Lord’s Prayer in unison.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane L. Dykowski, Recording Secretary.