

ST. PAUL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
COUNCIL MINUTES FROM MEETING OF
Tuesday, March 12, 2024

Council Members Present: Pam Lange, Jane Dykowski, Tim Ruffner, Dan Case, Sue Mrowka, Teri Staffeld, Toni Hill, Michael Isaacs, Louise Stanek, and Rev. Linda Anderson.

Excused: Jeannette Wackro, Mark Ennis, Marjie Barnard, and Fred Miller

Guests: No Council Guests were present.

Meeting was called to order by President, Sue Mrowka, at 6:35 p.m. followed by opening prayer led by Rev. Anderson.

Approval of the Minutes: Motion by Dan Case, seconded by Michael Isaacs, to approve the minutes of the February 13, 2024 Council Meeting. Motion carried.

Agenda Additions/Deletions: Add to New Business: 4. Marjie Barnard Resignation, 5. Personnel Issue

REPORTS AND UPDATES

Treasurer's Report: Dan Case reported that the financial giving has not improved. Income is under budget in both January and February. Everyone, however, is under budget in expenses. We will continue to monitor the financials. Automated giving continues to be \$4500 - \$5000 per month. There followed a discussion of starting to once again pass the plate. There is the expectation that an upcoming baptism, Palm Sunday, and Easter Sunday will increase attendance and consequently giving. Beginning Sunday, March 17, we will pass the plate. Sue Mrowka, Dan Case, Tim Ruffner, and Jane Dykowski agreed to this duty, Pastor Schalm should be aware of this change and a sign in the narthax will indicate there will be pew collection. Rev. Anderson related that all boards on which she serves are in similar financial discussions. There is some evidence that some members are returning to in-house attendance. Louise Stanek suggested we look at ways to reduce spending. Tim Ruffner and Dan Case related information about solar and geothermal energy grants that are available through the government and the UCC Church. Motion by Toni Hill, seconded by Tim Ruffner, to approve the Treasurer's report. Motion carried.

Rev. Linda Anderson: After returning from vacation, Rev. Anderson said she was glad to be back. She feels things are going relatively well. She is here to help and find solutions to issues. There was a new person in Bible Study who intends to return. (Dan Case related that response to Rev. Anderson's leadership has been positive.) Her office is always open to anyone. She recommended we include in the organization chart a Mission Ministry. This person or group would report to council the outreach projects that are happening. We do many things and need to get the word out there. Prospective ministers are looking at us and want to know why he or she should come here.

Pastor Cheryl Schalm: Written Report.

Trustee/Building and Grounds: Toni Hill reported that currently there is not much going on. There are projects that need funding—such as the garage roof. The leak in the family room has re-occurred. Dan Case reported there was \$14,000 available to spend on facilities maintenance.

Deacons: Teri Staffeld reported that attendance was 332 in February including in-person and Facebook. She feels passing the plate is a good idea. Some members have expressed dislike for the placement of the Easter Cross and the music stand. They felt they were distractions. There are two more weeks before the cross is moved so it will remain in place. One person's complaint must be considered in light of the whole congregation.

Elders: Pam Lange reported that there were 67 communicants at the last offering. The expectation is that good weather and Holy Week will have more participants.

Search Team Update: Mark Ennis, recovering from knee surgery, was unable to attend. Sue Mrowka related that Mark was concerned about having better teamwork among those participating in church operations.

Motion by Toni Hill, seconded by Tim Ruffner, to go into executive session. Motion carried. Executive session began at 7:15 p.m.

Motion by Tim Ruffner, seconded by Toni Hill, to return to regular session. Motion carried. Regular session resumed at 7:34 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Approve Employee Handbook with Annual Interview Form included: Motion by Toni Hill, seconded by Dan Case, to approve the Updated Employee Handbook. Motion carried.

2. Church Council Pictures: Rev. Anderson suggested a group picture. It was felt individual pictures with positions would be best. It was decided to take pictures with phone or camera and print at CVS.

3. Acolyte Volunteers for April forward: Louise Stanek volunteered to acolyte during April. It was referred to Worship Planning to decide how we perform the acolyting--perhaps changing the process. While in this discussion, the responding to Make-a-Wish Cards was discussed. Generally Make-a-Wish Cards are honored. It is recommended that they be signed so that request can be clarified and addressed. There should be no reason not to sign as not signing does not facilitate the "wish".

4. Organist Search Update: Sue Mrowka related there was no report. Again, the importance of getting the word out there is essential. Our Facebook page, LinkedIn, flyers at college, UCC publications, and the newspaper were suggested.

5. Locking front doors/handling panhandlers: Dan Case reported that Safety and Security recommended that the main sanctuary doors and East ramp door remain open during worship. The West Lobby door be open 9 - 10:10 a.m.; locked from 10:10 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.; Reopen at 11: a.m. during coffee hour; East lobby door remain locked. Signage should direct people to doors that are open. If panhandlers appear, police should be called, emergency team should talk with person, and the event should be documented. Motion by Dan Case, seconded by Teri Staffeld, to implement the Safety and Security Committee's recommendations. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Approve Organizational Chart: After discussing changes in the chart, this item was tabled until the next meeting. The Hand bell choir, Resource development, and Youth choir are to be deleted and Outreach ministry should be added.

NEW BUSINESS (Continued)

2. Easter Sunday Ushers/Communion: It was recommended that Pew Communion be served on Easter Sunday with 4 servers only. Maundy Thursday will be Altar Communion. Sue Mrowka will report this to Worship Planning.

3. Downriver Homeschoolers Room Request: Toni Hill contacted Leticia Loreaux from the Downriver Homeschoolers about our building use beginning in the fall. Toni Hill will followup and invite her to give us a presentation of their needs at the April Council meeting.

4. Marjie Barnard Resignation: Sue Mrowka read a letter from Marjie Barnard in which she resigned her position as council trustee effective immediately. Motion by Tim Ruffer, seconded by Michael Isaacs, to accept her resignation with regrets and thanking her for her dedicated service to this church and our congregation. Motion carried. Michael Isaacs recommended Cindy Romas be apprised of this change and it be reported in the church publications.

5. Personnel Issue: Sue Mrowka reported that Harold Fick has some issues regarding speaking at the council meeting when he was a guest, furniture in the usher's room after prior furniture was removed, and other items. Harold is a great person and does a beautiful job on our church grounds and serving as sexton. Tim Ruffner and Trustees will be reaching out to him to discuss the issues and encourage working together on irritating items.

ROUNDTABLE

Dan Case suggested Worship/Planning address the donation from the Wolframs, part of which was used to renovate the pastor's office, to plan some type of dedication ceremony. Everyone is invited to visit the renovation of Pastor Shalm's office and the upstairs generally. Charlie Barnard is completing a table for that room using part of the piano that was retired. Dan Case shared that Cathy Williams is willing to arrange for Hands Only CPR classes after coffee hour later this year. Jane Dykowski shared that Michelle Matney had thought that last week was for the Scouts as council guests. Jane suggested she be invited to the April meeting along with Christian Education. Everyone was reminded that Council has coffee hour during March. Tim Ruffner continues to get the "good" donuts. Rev. Anderson related that in Bible Study they had a discussion about developing a current church brochure. Tim Ruffner noted that the Search Committee had developed something similar for the ministerial search. Kari Cappello could be contacted for this. Dan Case is preparing a flyer with Holy Week events. (At this writing the flyer was passed out with the fish dinners drive thru.) Michael Isaacs addressed the needs for technology help for Easter week services—which services are being on Facebook and the need to have Tracy Hoffman's and Eric Poet's help. Tim Ruffner will be available on Thursday as Michael Isaacs will be out of town.

Motion to adjourn by Tim Ruffner, seconded by Toni Hill. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:56 p.m. followed by the Lord's Prayer in unison.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane L. Dykowski, Recording Secretary.

