

ST. PAUL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
COUNCIL MINUTES FROM MEETING OF
Tuesday, February 11, 2025

Council Members Present: Pam Lange, Jane Dykowski, Sue Mrowka, Michael Isaacs, Toni Hill, Jeannette Wackro, Tim Ruffner, Mark Ennis, Wendy Warner, and Dan Case. Also present: Rev. Anderson.

Guests: Dan Case, Toni Hill, and Michael Isaacs reported for Building and Grounds and Trustees. The three of them were able to report the following: There was an issue with which areas were to be salted when slipping was possible. All entry areas are to be salted. There were two falls (For which accident reports are to be made.) in the recent icing situation. The Wild Game Dinner netted almost \$13,000 which can be used for the parking lot re-sealing. Monday February 17, 2025 evening is when new smoke detectors are to be installed. The fire suppression system in the kitchen has been completed. Gary Staffeld has arranged for the tractors to be tuned up for spring. Tim Ruffner asked about the organ repairs which Mark Ennis has arranged to have completed.

Dan Case reported for the Security Ministry. He noted that the homeless people have not been seen lately and the police have checked occasionally. He is checking on a locked mailbox as some members have had occasions that their mailed in checks have been stolen and cashed. The parties involved have filed police reports and were able to eventually get their money back.

Harold Fick for Groundskeeper and Sexton was unable to attend because of illness.

Men's Fellowship Chair, Ed Brainard, was unable to attend. (There was discussion about his care and health issues. Michael Isaacs has been dealing with his move and hospitalization.) Dan Case related that Men's Fellowship is planning for Muffins for Mom, Every Daughter Banquet, Steak Fry, and donations to Girl Scouts (\$800) and paper products (\$500).

Eric Poet for Snow Removal was contacted but did not attend.

After this sharing the meeting continued with regular order.

Meeting was called to order by President, Tim Ruffner, at 6:40 p.m. followed by opening prayer led by Dan Case.

Approval of the Minutes: Motion by Sue Mrowka, seconded by Toni Hill, to approve the minutes of the January 14, 2025 Council Meeting. Motion carried.

Agenda Additions/Deletions: To New Business add: 3. Faith Tree leaf in honor of Barbara Schultz.

REPORTS AND UPDATES

Treasurer's Report: Dan Case expanded on his written report. January was not a good month. Our expenses outweighed our income by about \$7,000. (Income \$8,590 – Expenses \$15,769.) February is looking much better at this point. He also shared a Step Chart detailing givers in donation amount categories. Many large donors have passed. Dan also reported that the Executive Committee and Elders would be meeting to review our membership rolls. Motion by Toni Hill, seconded by Michael Isaacs, to approve the Treasurer's report. Motion carried.

Ministry Department: Interim minister, Rev. Linda Anderson, asked that letters in regard to the non-participants not be sent until she returned from her leave. Even though it is important to have our membership rolls accurately reflect our numbers, dropping one's membership is very sensitive.

Ministry Department (continued)

Jane Dykowski questioned the associate membership status. Again discussion centered around a membership class. Sue Mrowka questioned who would put such a class together. Rev. Anderson volunteered to help. It could be short (one meeting) or more lengthy. The content should reflect our history, church government, membership responsibilities, etc. In this same arena, there is the possibility of a Confirmation Class to be offered. It, too, could be different from prior practice. A plan should be put forth. Doreen Thompson was suggested as a good source. Rev. Anderson related that there are some “Confirmation” books available. She also referenced another book, Not My Parents’ Offering Plate, on changes in today’s church.

The reporting then turned to our Lenten worship schedule. A general informal program is being planned for Lent with emphasis on what the church means to you and the community. Hopefully such discussions can generate the good things we have here and help us move to improving them and adding new things—establishing an identity of our own.

The Lenten schedule will begin with an Ash Wednesday service at 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary on March 5, 2025. There will be no communion on March 2 (First Sunday in March). There will be Pew Communion on Sunday, March 9, 2025, the first Sunday of Lent. On subsequent Wednesdays during Lent at 6:30 p.m. there will be informal devotions and discussions about what the church means to individuals attending.

Trustees/Building and Grounds: This item was covered earlier during the Council Guests section.

Deacons: Jeannette Wackro showed the attractive report put together by Dan Case once he was supplied the data. January saw 250 on site worshipers and 88 Facebook worshipers.

Elders: Pam Lange reported there were 57 communicants on February’s first Sunday.

Search Team Update: Mark Ennis reported they have one candidate under consideration. They have a prepared list of questions to be used. Dan Case related that he spent some time reviewing our profile on the Website. He provided updated numbers from what was used when the search first started. The team has already condensed the profile from the first one and will now update more of the information. Tim Ruffner is in charge of the profile. Currently, the team is advertising and expanding beyond what has been provided by our conference.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Annual Staff Reviews: Harold Fick and Eric Poet are not yet completed.
2. Decision on Council Dinner for 2025: The consensus was to plan a council dinner at a local restaurant. After much discussion, March 8, 2025 emerged as a best date. Sue Mrowka will call some restaurants to find possibilities. The question is whether the council should pay for members and their guests. Sue Mrowka said she would purchase and donate desserts.
3. Decision on Council Retreat for 2025: The Council Retreat was tabled to sometime in the future.
4. New and Old Member Training on Communion: It was suggested that the Elders prepare a step-by-step procedure for pew communion. This item was referred to committee by the President, Tim Ruffner, to be revisited in Old Business at the next meeting. It was noted that we needed 4 people and all should know what they are doing beforehand.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Approve Employee 2025 Handbook: Motion by Dan Case, seconded by Toni Hill, to approve the Updated 2025 Employee Handbook. Motion carried.
2. Council Packet for 2025: Dan Case provided all council members with a packet of church and council information. He urged everyone to read through it.
3. Remembrance Leaf for Barbara Schultz: All agreed that a leaf should be prepared to remember Barbara Schultz for her dedication, service, and devotion to the church. Dan Case will arrange for the leaf for the Tree of Faith

ROUNDTABLE

Dan Case related information he gathered from UCC website with Lillian Daniels offering information on various topics. One of special interest is how churches are changing. Emphasis here is on the building rather than mission. We should be thinking more about what we can do for the community. We have lagged miserably in our outreach such as Christnet and Fish & Loaves.

Sue Mrowka related a mission project her sister's church was doing at Fish & Loaves. That project needs someone to organize and manage. (Preparing a bag full of food stuffs to make a dinner, enlisting volunteers to fill each bag, and volunteers to distribute at Fish & Loaves on a particular date.)

Dan also said he listened to a Zoom tape on UCC pronouns which helped him understand those concepts.

Mark Ennis related that when he, Fred Miller, and Pam Lange began a membership evaluation, they did not know the people. Therefore, they felt they could not make an informed decision. The proposed meeting for the Executive Committee and Elders to review the membership issue will be a starting point. The issue then goes to the Elders.

Motion by Toni Hill, seconded by Wendy Warner, to adjourn. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m. followed by the Lord's Prayer recited in unison.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane L. Dykowski
Recording Secretary.