



Church Council Meeting January 21, 2024

Minutes

Council Members in Attendance: Joe Stobaugh, Emma Williams, Brooke Messer, Lee Wiley, Thomas Wainscott, Joe Brannon, Ann Parker, Scott Gregory, Dawn Moore, Knox Hickey, Early Denison, Mike Bennett, Noah Stinchcomb, Constance Harp, Lauri Hainsfurther, Jillian Bunn and Diane Brooks

Brooke Messer welcomed everyone and thanked them for their service.

Joe Stobaugh opened the meeting with prayer. He asked everyone to share their name and one instance of how the church has touched them in the last six months. Then, he read Ephesians 4:11-16 and asked everyone for the words that spoke to them. Several shared the part of the passage about unity in faith in Christ. And Joe concluded with, "God has made us to complement each other and work together". He then passed around a sheet for Council members to sign up for an opening or closing prayer at our meetings this year.

Ann Parker presented the PPRC update saying Emma and Joe will be conducting staff evaluations next week. The church was glad to have Amanda Hollis serving as the Executive Assistance. UPUMC has a great staff. Mike Bennett asked about the evaluation process and Joe answered that the process involved self evaluations including ratings against goals.

Jillian Bunn presented the Lay Leader update beginning with the February 4 Senior Reception and UPUMC hosting the Metro District Lay Leader Training. The Grand Opening of the Youth Center will take place on February 18 during the Sunday School hour and come-and-go tours after the 11:00 Worship Service. UPUMC will host on February 22 "Wonderfully Made, Loved by God" for fifth and sixth graders led by Kristen Lane from Grace Avenue UMC. If you are able to volunteer, please contact Jennifer Scott. Filling of Easter eggs will occur on March 3 and the Easter Egg Hunt will occur Easter during the Sunday School hour. She encouraged everyone to sign the staff anniversary and birthday cards and the Prayer Chapel list. Brooke shared that Jill Fleming and Ann Wiley are offering a Mahjong evening at the Wiley's on February 11.

Joe Brannon presented the Finance update saying the 2023 deficit was due to higher insurance costs. 2023 ended better than expected. Revenue was up 3% and expenses were up 11.4%. Insurance will be higher in 2024. 2023 deficit of \$205,986. We will use these five accounts to offset the deficit: Forward Together, RBS Account, Innovative Ministries, Memorial Garden and Other Investment Income. The amounts used will be less than one-half the amount in the accounts. The 2024 budget will be presented next month. Our giving this year was better than recent years. Constance added that three large unexpected gifts were made at year end. We experienced a 95% return from pledges last year, higher than 2022. Joe added we have demographics of those giving.

Thomas Wainscott presented the Trustees update saying this year has mainly involved deferred maintenance because the facility has not been maintained. A task force was formed after the freeze damage. He provided a Deferred Maintenance Project handout including projects for the fire system, gutters, roofing, elevators, roofs, Pickwick sidewalk and chillers. \$2.2 million was approved to repair these projects. The final fire inspection is next week. Lee Wiley said the church wants to be more pro-active rather than reactive. He reported on the status of the Youth Center. It is very near completion. Furniture to be installed February 1. The goal is to have the youth move in on February 2.

Joe presented a brief review of The Mission of the Church which is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world and we are called to embody the love of Jesus Christ for the good of our communities. He shared the primary responsibility of the Council is clergy evaluations measured by Marks of Fruitfulness, performance accountability,

complying with all rules and regulations, fiduciary responsibility, representing the church as one voice, and trusteeship of the mission of the church.

Joe asked everyone to share their takeaways from The Seven Trends that Will Disrupt the Church.

Joe gave a review of Check-Out Day information, which has six pages of statistics on our church. Our accurate number of members is 923. The value of the property is \$45 million. We are suffering the same challenges as other churches, but compared to other churches, he thinks we are doing well.

Joe asked what might be the two most important things we do as a Church Council this year. Suggestions offered were: How do we grow the membership and stronger fellowships? We need to look at demographics in our communities and how do we connect with them? Where do we come up short and make improvements? We need to address it by bringing people together. What are other churches doing to help their youth, children and young adults? What are the best practices that might work for us and might inspire what we can do? How do we adapt as our own? We need to educate the congregation of what our church has done. How does that communication work? How can we tell the story of what God is doing in our church? Maybe using a different pipeline for each generation. Is our membership growing? What makes pledges increase? What was different in the Stewardship Campaign? Joe said we need to figure out how to merge these suggestions and ask development teams to work on these?

Joe said on Easter Sunday there will be a Sunrise Service and 8:30 and 11:00 services.

Beginning February 18, here is the new weekly schedule:

- 4:00 - 5:00pm - Joe is teaching a church wide Bible Study for adults
- 4:00 - 5:00pm - Youth
- 5:15 - 6:00pm - Collin leads evening intergenerational worship. Establish alternative worship community in the Youth Center
- 5:15 - 6:00 - Yoga for littles

Lee encouraged Council members to help in communicating to the membership in preparation of the capital campaign.

Brooke asked everyone to highlight our church's strengths, forward thinking and planning, and more ministry focus.

Emma Williams announced a lay leadership appreciation luncheon on February 25.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Brooks

Lay Leader