

Minutes of Church Council Meeting – February 14, 2021 by Zoom conference

Present: Josh Andrews, Tom Barefoot, Michael Black, Julie Childs, John Copeland, Sybil Davidson, Karen Horace, Sandy Kruger (Chair), Kate Merrihew, Madeline Mulkey, Chris Opstad, Rev. Dalton Rushing, Rev. Blair Setnor and Denise VanLanduyt

Dalton opened the meeting with prayer.

The January minutes were **approved unanimously** as distributed on motion by Karen, seconded by Chris.

The first item of business was Dalton's report on the meeting of the Public Health Advisory Committee (PHAT). The drop in new coronavirus cases is encouraging although it is not yet clear what impact the new strains will have. For now, PHAT is watching reports. There is comfort with small groups meeting outside and the staff is discussing outdoor services as the weather warms and giving youth access to the gym which has good ventilation. Opening for worship is a priority due to concerns about mental illness resulting from Covid isolation and concerns of parents who are anxious and angry. We want to engage children and youth as soon as safe. The city only allows indoor meetings of less than 50 people although churches are excluded from this. Plan is to move in steps from A to Z with many steps required before we are back to "normal." As with school, it is hard to use specific matrices to determine when to open so the question is what mitigation can be done. Need is to manage the risk. We need to communicate with the congregation as much as possible. Staff is planning a letter to the congregation to come from the Council and PHAT to outline where we are and what the plans are to work toward reopening.

Daniel and Catherine are looking at screens and cameras for the sanctuary to improve streaming ability. Regardless of reaching "normal," streaming of services will continue, probably permanently. This equipment will be purchased with an anonymous grant from a member who agrees. Three bids have been obtained.

Tom made the financial report. The funds from the sale of the Sycamore property have been received and deposited. The reports are attached. There is a new format because of improvements to the software so there is more information and comparisons. The current statement for January show a loss because income is always low in January. The District apportionments were paid in January and the Conference apportionments will be paid February through November.

Pre-school – There are some concerns with breaking even due to lower enrollment because of Covid. However, the pre-school staff has done a great job of managing expenses and there are ample reserves. There is not a loss at this time.

Balance sheet – The year 2020 has been closed out subject to any adjustments the auditors might make. Number for the Endowment and the Sycamore sale have been added.

PPP loan has been forgiven.

Pre-paid pledges as of January 1 are about \$73,000. This number will be frozen as of March 31, the number will be recorded on the statement and a plan to allocate to income will be made.

The John Lewis Memorial Fund has been transferred to GSU and future receipts will be transferred quarterly.

The finance report was **approved unanimously** as distributed.

Team reports are attached.

Chris reported that Connect is sending a letter to each member to stay connected. The staff has sent each member a Lenten book.

The Grow team has approved **Amplify Media** which will provide virtual Bible studies and other small group materials. Janice Yates will coordinate.

Engage - Michael Black reported that Decatur First provided meals for Hagar's House for two weeks. The monthly donation drives continue to be successful. The team is planning how to administer the Gary mission fund. There has been an energy audit of the facilities which has been provided to the Master Plan Team to review and implement for savings. Engage has connected with GSU about the Lewis Fund and the plan is to begin scholarships in the fall of 2022 to allow the fund to grow. Decatur churches are planting white flags on the lawn of the Christian Church to recognize Covid deaths in Georgia. Engage is beginning to plan for Easter.

Sandy reported that we are working with our Boy Scout Troop No. 175 to reach agreement on the administration of the BSA camp at Lake Altoona. The camp is on 10 acres owned by the Army Corps of Engineers and has been leased for about 70 years. The lease has been transferred to the church and there needs to be a committee to oversee its use and maintenance. Michael moved to have a committee appointed through the Nominating Committee and Denise seconded. In the following discussion, it became apparent that a number of issues needed to be addressed so the motion was withdrawn, and it was decided the Denise and Julie would meet with Daniel and Dalton to hash out the issues and make a recommendation to the Council.

On motion by Michael, seconded by Chris, the Council moved into executive session at 4:30 and Blair was excused.

Upon resumption of regular session, someone asked about plans for General Conference and Dalton said there may be news in a week or so.

Meeting adjourned at 5:00

Submitted by
Julie Childs