

**ST LUCAS UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
03/22/2022**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Marty Schmidt, Jeff Wagener, Carol Stelmach, Violet Brooks, Jenny Bell, Marsha Fey, Ken Hamilton, Kathy Herron, Dave Johnston, Jack Laudenslager, Juanita Wagner and Paul Simons

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Joy Dressel and Donovan Larson

**STAFF PRESENT:** Rev Vicki Hampton and Rev. Carol Barner

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The March 22, 2022 Council meeting was called to order at 6:03 pm by Vice President Marty Schmidt.

Marty Schmidt requested a moment of silent prayer in remembrance of Julie Barr.

**OPENING PRAYER:** Jenny Bell began the meeting with an opening prayer.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

February Church Council Minutes  
Membership and Evangelism Minutes, January 2022  
Finance Committee Minutes, February 2022

Marty Schmidt initiated a brief discussion regarding finances related to the cemetery and the office staff. Donovan Larsen was looking into this issue but could not be at tonight's meeting so no action was taken.

The Consent agenda was approved.

**STAFF REPORT:** (Pastor Carole's and Pastor Vicki's reports were sent to the Council before the meeting).

Pastor Vicki and Pastor Carol asked that if you have read her report, were there any questions or concerns that it raised. There were none.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

- **Transition Team:** Pastor Vicki reported that the survey is almost ready to be emailed on to folks on the eblast list, by direct mail and to anybody who wants it. Members are given 2 weeks to reply. The data will be used to prepare for congregational conversations and small group meetings. All this will happen between April and June.

- Lent and Easter Plans: There was nothing new to report. Marsha Fey asked about free-will offering for Ukraine. Carol Stelmach mentioned we had collected diapers in the past. Marsha Fey is working with Lynn on Easter Egg Hunt.
- Heritage Award by Southwest Area Chamber of Commerce: Last Saturday St. Lucas received the Heritage Award from Southwest County Chamber of Commerce. The award was presented by the mayor of Sunset Hills. Marty said it was a lovely evening. Marty stressed in his acceptance that our Church are our people.
- Keeping Religious Communities Safe – Jenny Bell reported that she scheduled a meeting with Theresa Cross from the Mehlville fire department. Jenny asked the council what issues we would like covered. Jenny shared with Marty Schmidt a copy of the emergency response plan for MSD. Carol Stelmach said she thought we should prepare for an active shooter scenario as well as natural disasters. Paul Simons mentioned that a plan was put together in the past for the ushers to handle a fire or other emergency and that practice drills were conducted with the congregation. Jeff Wagener thought that the fire department can help us with fire emergencies, but that Sunset Hills Police might be more qualified to train us on the active shooter scenario. Paul Simons concurred. Paul's son has conducted active shooter training and it should be coordinated through the local police department. Marty Schmidt added that staff and ushers should be trained. Pastor Vicki mentioned that she believes we will need to have congregational drills.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

- Outsourcing Payroll: Carol Stelmach reported that the main reason we should consider outsourcing is for taxes and issuing W-2s. Additionally, we are facing fines for 941s in 2020. Carol has looked at Paylocity and Paychecks. Paychecks is \$25 less expensive than Paylocity. They will cut paycheck, direct deposit, mail or hand deliver payroll paychecks. They charge a batch fee for every run plus they charge for each check. If we split the batch fee with the preschool, the Batch fee is \$35.70 Pre-school monthly fee is \$70/month. Year-end fees are \$137 for preschool and 185 for church for a total of \$1,500/year. Set-up fee of \$200 we would split with preschool

Carol Stelmach moved we outsource our payroll to Paychecks beginning July 1, 2022. Jack Laudenslager seconded. The Motion passed.

- Preschool Liaison: Marty Schmidt mentioned we need a preschool liaison to fill Julie Barr's position. Carol Stelmach graciously volunteered to serve for a time if Marty cannot. Marty is going to check his schedule. Paul reminded us that the preschool meetings are on Tuesday evenings. Carol will cover this until a permanent replacement is appointed. Carol Stelmach reminded the council that the preschool donated \$10,000 to the church this year and that should be made known.
- Revisit In-person Council Meetings: Violet Brooks voiced her support for in-person council meetings. Marty mentioned that there are advantages to in-person meetings, but he knows it

may be a hardship for others. Marty Schmidt is going to speak with Joy to try to find a way to hybridize the meetings.

- Revisit Open Council Meetings: Donovan Larson had raised this issue but could not attend tonight's meeting. Dave Johnston expressed his opinion that open meetings are not a good idea. He came to this conclusion from his experience in the past. He believes things get misunderstood and taken out of context. Dave believes it kept the council from having free and open conversations. Marsha Fey concurred. She said if you want to be involved, you should run for council or join a group that you might have issues with. She believes the congregational meeting is for members. Paul Simons noted we have already have council corner online and members can email council members. He concurred with Dave that having members there inhibits open conversation. Kathy Herron spoke in favor of open meetings. She said she would not say anything in a closed meeting that she would not say in an open meeting. She noted that she has been shut out of council meetings in the past. She doesn't want people to think we are a secret body. Kathy added that we could discuss personnel and other confidential matters a half hour before. Juanita Wagner spoke in favor of continuing the council conversations. There can be a lot of freedom of discussion and gives member an opportunity to speak their piece. Ken agreed with Dave Johnston that open meetings can be a problem and wondered if it made sense to hold a separate for the members. Carol Stelmach agreed with Kathy's opinion and gave the example of school board meetings. Paul Simons noted that school board meetings have gotten out of hand. Paul stated that council members are elected to serve and need to be trusted. Dave Johnston agreed with Paul Simons. Jeff Wagener mentioned that he served on the county council where there was a public forum before the business portion of the meeting. He said he understands Dave Johnston's points but that we should allow members to attend for transparency purposes. Pastor Vicki noted that we are a church. A covenantal organization. The council was not elected to govern but to facilitate the will of the congregation. If our meetings are not open to members, we will have the perception of being secretive. Pastor Vicki stated how we structure the open meeting is important. Pastor Carol stressed the "I speak for me, and you speak for you" covenant. That all opinions should be respected. Pastor Carol said we still have much healing to do at St. Lucas. Marty Schmidt believes we need to have the covenantal statement read before all of our meetings. No decision was made as neither President Joy Dressel or Donovan Larsen were in attendance. The matter was tabled.
- Virus Task Force: Marty Schmidt recommended that we disband the virus task force for now given the improvement on the pandemic. Carol moved we disband the task force for now. Kathy Herron seconded. The motion passed.
- Offering Sign-up: Ken Hamilton stressed the need for council members to sign up for offering collection.
- Juanita Wagner asked about Pastor Vicki's Mennonite experience. Vicki is going to prepare a write-up. It built on the healthy church work and transforming and conflict work. A lot of role playing. How congregations get along and how people react to each other.

Dave Johnston moved to adjourn the meeting. Pastor Carol seconded the Motion. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm with the Lord's Prayer

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Wagener  
Secretary