

**ST LUCAS UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
06/28/2022**

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

STAFF PRESENT: Rev Vicki Hampton and Rev. Carole Barner

The June 28, 2022, Council Meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm by President Joy Dressel.

OPENING PRAYER: Jeff Wagener opened the meeting with prayer.

PRESENTATION OF THE TRANSITION TEAM. Transition Team members Jeff Heutel and Steve Sobo were present for the purpose of presenting the findings from the Congregational Survey. Other Team members present were Janet Smith, Karen Litzsinger and Dan Herron. Jeff Heutel began by stating that the Transition Team was charged with creating a Church Profile of St. Lucas UCC. to be used by the Search Committee in calling a new pastor. The survey responses will be used as a baseline for the Church Profile. Jeff noted that the presentation is the culmination of the hard work of all members of the Transition Team. He added that 492 members received the survey. That 416 received the survey via e-mail and 75 members received it by mail. The Team received responses from 132 members. This equates to a participation rate of 27% which is considered a relatively high rate for surveys of this nature.

Jeff and Steve presented a slide deck containing the response statistics for each survey question with a brief comment on each. At the conclusion of the slide presentation, Jeff explained that the next steps are to present these findings to the congregation and conduct 2-3 Congregational Conversations to better quantify some information. Thereafter, the Church Profile will be created for use by the Search Committee. A copy of the slide deck used in the presentation will be made available to all members. Steve Sobo added that, as a Team, they are trying to determine who we are as a church. He added they want to make sure they get an accurate profile, so we can call a Pastor who understands who we are as a church. The Team is also utilizing the Transition Timeline and is interested in what members will add to it.

Marty Schmidt saw that many of the results break down 65/35 or 70/30 and he wondered if the Team looked to see if these were the same members in the 70 and 30 percent on each question. Steve Sobo responded that the committee did not look at that.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Church Council Minutes, May 2022
Finance Committee Minutes, April 19, 2022
Finance Committee Minutes, April 25, 2022
Finance Committee Minutes, May 18, 2022
Finance Committee Minutes, June 2022
Membership and Evangelism Minutes, May 3, 2022
Cemetery Board Minutes, May 2022

The consent agenda was approved unanimously.

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

Pastor Vicki

- Pastor Vicki referred to her report in the council meeting packet.
- The main event has been the Transition Team and getting the survey responses out and getting the next steps figured out. In a couple of weeks, we will schedule a meeting after worship to present to the congregation. We plan on making the slides available to the congregation through our e-blast.
- Pastor Vicki noted that we have experienced a gain and a loss with Jeff Wagener departing council but joining us a Church Administrator. His first project will be to work with Debbie Heagle and Charley Singler to assemble the vendor list that council has asked for. Jeff will also continue to familiarize himself with ACS and get his office in order.
- The Church Administrator will be the backbone of the administrative process for St. Lucas. The Administrator will interact with the Senior Pastor and get things organized. The Administrator will be involved with the chairs of the committees but there is no intent that he be involved in committees, other than Finance. He will keep people informed and facilitate communication.

Pastor Carole

- Pastor Carole referred to her report in the council meeting packet.
- Pastor Carole emphasized that the Intergenerational Vacation Bible School is off and running. There were 30 plus in attendance last Sunday.
- Youth Ministry – We continue to work toward mission trip. Pizzas are in!

Juanita Wagner asked about the difference between the Committee on Ministry for preparation and oversight. She said it used to be just one committee. Pastor Carole explained that The Committee on Ministry is split between oversight and preparation.

OLD BUSINESS:

Finance Committee.

- Late Report. Donovan Larson announced that the last Finance Committee meeting was delayed because the committee was told by Supporting Strategies that their Kansas City office was closing. Because of that, Zody, the individual at Supporting Strategies who was doing our bookkeeping, was no longer available. Our account was transferred to Supporting Strategies' Chicago office and our bookkeeping is being done by a new employee named, Yvonne. Because of the transition, Yvonne sent materials to the Finance Committee late delayed their meeting this month. Donovan said he does expect that the quality of our bookkeeping will improve.
- Bank Change. Our change from BMO Harris to Enterprise Bank & Trust is still in transition. We should be writing checks on Enterprise account by next week.
- Paychex. Transition of our payroll to Paychex should be online by mid-July.
- Accounts Payable Process. The Finance Committee has proposed a new accounts payable process to make it easier for the church to pay routine bills like utilities. Rather than approving each invoice, there will be a simple way to approve these routine bills. Carol Stelmach said we are going to start using ACH payments and have the bank write most of the checks, so we needed a way to approve these routine bills. Paul Simons clarified that it is not autopay because there will still be a review of invoices paid. Carol said that was correct.

Marty Schmidt asked for a clarification regarding the Church Administrator position. He noted that the job description mentions he will handle financial statements. Marty asked if we would continue to outsource the bookkeeping or if the Church Administrator take this over. Donovan said that at the point Jeff gets up to speed, he may be able to take over the bookkeeping duties.

- Procurement Policy. Donovan noted that the Finance Committee weighed in on Building and Grounds procurement policy. The Committee supports the \$3,000 break point. There are two minor changes the Finance Committee would like to see. In the text, it mentions Building and Grounds establishing "relative" charges. That should be changed to "related" charges. The other change is at the end of the policy where it talks about the liability of contractors using church equipment. The Committee feels the language should specifically say that church tools shall not be used by tenants or contractors.
- Confidentiality of Member Giving. The Finance Committee considered this issue at its last meeting and the committee recommends to the council that the senior pastor, council president and the treasurer of the church all have access to all information regarding member giving. We feel that is a valuable tool for those individuals to have and be able to make good use of it.
- 2023 Budget. The 2023 budget will be coming out soon and the deadline for the committees to provide budget information will be early August. A letter to that effect will be sent out to all the committees.

Paul Simons said he believes the Building and Grounds guidelines still need to have term limits. Donovan said he will include that in the proposal to the council.

Joy Dressel mentioned that the council has not discussed the term limit issue. But we have discussed the rest of the policy including the \$3000 break point and language that we are not going to allow tenants or contractors use church equipment and tools. We can approve the guidelines and later adjust the term limit issue.

Ken Hamilton moved to approve the Building and Grounds Guidelines and Jack Laudenslager seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Donovan Larson and Joy Dressel noted that Building and Grounds Committee was given opportunity to have input. They did suggest the breakpoint be \$5000.

Access to Donation records. Joy Dressel raised the issue of access to donation records. She stated that at this point, we don't have a clue as to how much we can expect to receive for budgeting purposes. Some people have left the church and we heard from some people that the biggest givers have left but we really don't know. We need to be able to analyze the data. Joy said that we have discussed that it makes sense for the Senior Pastor to have this information in conducting her pastoral duties. If someone has been a consistent giver and stops, it could be a sign that this individual could be having problems.

Kathy Herron said she has had time to think about this issue and believes it would be a good thing for Pastor, council president and council treasurer have access to the information.

Jack Laudenslager mentioned that the Church administrator and Debbie have access to the software so they can see donors but don't act on that information. The distinction is the Senior Pastor and President of the Council could use this information as a helpful tool to look at trends rather than just guess on what the giving is going to be.

Marty Schmidt agreed but stated that confidentiality of the information will be of utmost importance given the fact that anyone who assumes the office of president or treasurer over the years will have access to the giving information.

Donovan Larson moved that the Senior Pastor, Council President, and Council Treasurer have access to donor information. Paul Simons seconded the motion. Donovan thinks that it is important we notify the congregation in the Council Corner in addition to the council minutes regarding this change. The motion passed unanimously.

Open Meetings. Joy Dressel brought up the issue of open meeting for discussion. The rules used by the Lindbergh School Board will be used to assist in coming up with Open Meetings Guidelines for St. Lucas Church Council Meetings. Joy went over the Guidelines document that was included in the council packet and asked for questions or comments.

Kathy Herron asked if we would still have quarterly Council Conversations. Joy responded that we would and that that will be added to the Guidelines document. Marty Schmidt moved to approve the Open Meeting Guidelines. Jack Laudenslager seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Stewardship Committee. Joy Dressel announced that Don Sabbert has decided to step away from the Stewardship Committee due to health problems and other obligations. Ken Fey has decided to join the Committee and Jim Kaiser is thinking about it. The Committee has not met yet. Joy stated that the Stewardship Committee will be asked to develop more than a one-time stewardship project but an on-going stewardship program. The Senior Pastor will be an ex-officio member of that Committee.

At this time, the Council went into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters.

Keeping Religious Communities Safe. Joy Dressel stated that we need to have a workshop on safety. We are trying to get our ushers in place. In the Fall, when we expect to have more people in town, we will have a safety workshop session. Donovan Larson asked who is responsible for moving this forward. Joy responded that Jenny Bell has contacts and is willing to set up the session(s). Violet Brooks asked to be a part of the discussion.

NEW BUSINESS

Election of a New Council Recording Secretary. Joy Dressel mentioned that with Jeff Wagener's resignation from the council to accept the position of Church Administrator, the council needs to elect a new Recording Secretary. Kathy Herron graciously agreed to fill the position.

Carol Stelmach moved that Kathy Herron be elected for the position of Council Recording Secretary. Marty Schmidt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Special Events Committee. Marsha Fey mentioned the Special Events Committee (Michelle Ottinger and Marsha Fey) will be having a Homecoming on September 11th.

Social Hour. Marty Schmidt wanted to discuss who opens the church on Sunday mornings and will we continue to have coffee hour? Marty was a little concerned from a social distancing standpoint with everyone congregating outside of the sanctuary last Sunday. Maybe we could have a social hour in social hall to avoid Covid issues. Violet Brooks concurred. Joy Dressel and Donovan Larson were concerned about who is going to take charge. Donovan has sought volunteers and will do so in the eblast.

Jack Laudenslager promoted idea of specifically targeting people who are not that engaged in the church to help with the social hour. Give them an opportunity to get involved and know people. Donovan will work with Megan Ligeti. Violet Brooks liked the idea of having a coffee hour sign-up sheet out on Sundays.

Pastor Carole mentioned that the Spirit has been very much a with us tonight with the Transition Committee presentation and the council meeting and all the efforts of leadership and volunteers.

Marty Schmidt moved to adjourn the meeting. Ken Hamilton seconded the Motion. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 8:41 p.m. with The Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Wagener
Secretary