SAINT LUCAS UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 23, 2023, 6:00 pm - ZOOM

**This meeting was called to order at 6:03 pm by President, Marty Schmidt.*

MEMBERS PRESENT: Violet Brooks, Phil Denton, Marsha Fey, Katy Forand, Kathy Herron, Donovan Larson, Jack Laudenschlager, Marty Schmidt, Paul Simons, Barbara Smith, and Juanita Wagner

STAFF PRESENT: Rev. Dr. Carole Barner, and Rev. Vicki Hampton

OPENING PRAYER:
The meeting was opened with a prayer said by Jack Laudenschlager

COUNCIL COVENANT:
After a brief discussion about the Council Covenant, Marty asked if there were any questions from the 2023 Council members concerning this item. There were none. Members present this evening unanimously answered the Covenant Call with *"I will with the help of God".*

REVIEW OF DECEMBER MINUTES:

Two typos were noted. (1) Add an "e" to Pastor Carole's name in paragraph one of the 12.27.22 Executive Session, to distinguish her from Carol Stelmach. And (2) remove the "o" from the word Church in the title of the 12.29.22 Executive Session meeting minutes. With those updates in place, Paul moved and Jack seconded that all December 2022 meeting minutes be approved. The motion was accepted unanimously by a show of hands.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- A.V. Meeting - January 4, 2023, Minutes
- Council Meeting - December 27, 2022, Minutes
- Council Meeting -*Special*- December 29, 2022, Minutes
- Finance Committee Meeting - December 28, 2022, Minutes
- General Endowment Meeting - October 20, 2022, Minutes
- Mission & Outreach Meeting - January 12, 2023, Minutes

Barbara moved and Jack seconded that the Consent Agenda be adopted as submitted. The motion was accepted unanimously by a show of hands.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Paul Simons updated The Council with preliminary figures as of January 17, 2023.

The final transfer from PET in the amount of $17,223 is not included in the 2022 figures and will be accrued in the final statements. In addition, the total 2022 transfers from PET, GEF, and the Beyersdorfer Fund do not reflect actual transfers from these funds. When corrected, an additional $34,026 will be added to the General Fund Income.

The first quarter of 2023 insurance payment was recorded in December 2022. When corrected to reflect this as a 2023 expense, General Fund Expenses will be reduced by 11,324.

The net result of these corrections will be to reduce the 2022 Deficit by $62,573, resulting in a 2022 General Fund Deficit of $237,436 which is $14,158 less than originally budgeted. The greatest factor causing this less-than-budget deficit is program expenses being under budget for the year.

Questions - Donovan asked if Regular Offering figures will be published to the congregation. Paul answered "Yes" they will be made available in the form of a table.

Employee Retention Credit -
Jeff Wagener is *closely* monitoring and working with The Provisum Group. St. Lucas has commissioned them to file the necessary paperwork for reimbursement by the federal government. Their contracted assistance is an extension of the prior Payroll Protection Program. Their work could potentially result in a $100-$150K payment to St. Lucas, of which they would receive a fee of 15%.

STAFF REPORTS:

Pastor Vicki -
There were no questions or comments about Pastor Vicki's report.

Pastor Carole -
There were no questions or comments about Pastor Carole's report.

OLD BUSINESS:

>Building & Grounds - Parsonage Status: An update on the plumbing work needed in the parsonage was given by Donovan who is the council liaison to Building & Grounds. Work is currently being completed by Bieg Plumbing within the kitchen wall to replace the sewer pipe to resolve leaks in the crawl space. A tie-in into the kitchen drain will be added. A cut-in into the vertical stack in the garage will also be added. All of the leak work was officially approved by the council at an earlier meeting. While on-site, it was determined by Bieg the replacement of three toilets is strongly recommended to support the current leak work being completed. The current toilets are not flushing well, especially with active use by ten residents. This extra work will result in an additional $3K added to Bieg's current bid. This necessary work is an unexpected expense in an already tight church budget. Today, Bieg was advised the vote for that additional fee will take place at this evening's council meeting.

Donovan made the motion and Jack seconded approving the additional $3K work needed for the installation of three toilets by Bieg Plumbing. The motion was passed unanimously by show of hands.

>Building & Grounds - Campus Sidewalks: An update regarding the condition of the sidewalks near the Preschool was given by Donovan as council liaison to Building & Grounds. A parent of the Preschool tripped on an uneven sidewalk slab approaching the Preschool entrance on November 18, 2022. It was determined that many of the slabs in that area of the campus are uneven. There are two methods to correct this problem - (1) scarifying the slabs or (2) mud-jacking the slabs. Donovan contacted someone he used at his own home for scarifying. The bid received was for $2,325 for the three sidewalks near the Preschool entrance on the west side of the building. That bid was given to the Buildings & Grounds Committee for review in mid-December. At the December meeting of Buildings & Grounds -which Donovan and Marty attended- Karl G. presented a bid from another

contractor to mud-jack all of the sidewalks around the entire church. The bid totaled approximately $25K. It is the opinion of that committee to do *all* the sidewalks or *none* of the sidewalks. Note - per Donovan, there was a portion of the mud-jacking bid that would address the immediate problem near the Preschool. That amount was approximately $10,400. Although there was no bid supplied by the Buildings & Grounds Committee devoted to the Preschool work only. Therefore it is difficult to compare each bid against the other.

As an attorney, Phil Denton reminded the group that we have been *"put on notice"* with this problem and therefore we need to correct the issue to avoid any additional liability against St. Lucas Church/Preschool.

When asked his opinion as an engineer, Donovan recommends scarifying for $2,325 over mud jacking. This work would cover all three sidewalks between the west parking lot and the Preschool building. Plus, Donovan will follow up with the contractor about the warranty to be applied for their work. No vote is needed for the $3K amount, however, the group agreed the work needs to be started immediately.

>Term Limits/Bylaws Task Force: A good portion of yesterday's retreat was spent discussing governance structure and the organization of church committees. The consensus of the group at the conclusion of that discussion is we need to move forward with some reorganization of committees and restructuring of the bylaws to relate to the direction the church is moving into and not what is currently in place. To begin this process, Marty feels a task force composed of past presidents would be a good place to start. For example, Joy as the immediate past president, and Paul Simons in addition to Bill Brinkhorst as a well-versed parliamentarian, come to mind. Marty will reach out to Dave Johnston, although he doesn't expect him to accept as he did not want to run for re-election in 2023. Marty also feels Steve Sobo would be a good addition. This short-term group would be viewed as a task force, one that will present their findings to the council once their research is completed. Paul suggested Phil Denton, as an attorney, would be a good choice as well. Phil has agreed to help. Pastor Vicki interjected that *"with the understanding, we are a church and not a corporation"*. This led Marty to share with the group that in the future he would prefer to use the word ministries rather than committees once the restructuring gets underway. Marty will reach out to those individuals to get this process started.

>Home Encroachment on Church Property: A former neighbor by the ballfield had landscaping done that had encroached onto the church property. Those homeowners sold their house and the new homeowner has since put a fence around that landscape. Therefore that fence now encompasses part of our church property. With his legal background, Jeff W. has since approached the new homeowner to explain this situation. The new owner was very reasonable and understands the situation. She is willing to comply and sign whatever legal documents Jeff presents to her in order to not make this a liability issue for St. Lucas and also not allow the church to surrender that piece of our property to the homeowner.

>Ballfield Stewardship: Katy summarized the activity spent over three Saturdays last fall of concession sales to Lindbergh Schools soccer families. She considered it a trial run. They sold candy, pretzels, doughnuts, and water. Even with minimal effort, she feels it has the potential to show St. Lucas in a favorable light. Noted is one mother forgot snacks one weekend, so she was able to load up with Katy's snacks. Some people even donated cash amounts over what was due as they knew the money was going to a church. It's a great opportunity to serve our community's families. It was a very positive experience. Violet added we may even have the opportunity to expand to weekday night practice times if it grows as anticipated.

Vicki is cautious about beginning this endeavor since our volunteer base is already limited these days. She would like to hear from the congregation about their buy-in as volunteers. Donovan is wondering how we can make it easier for our members to volunteer. Perhaps we can ask for "donations" rather than selling a product. Jack

brought up the point of a license to sell… sales tax issues, etc. Phil offered to research this with The City of Sunset Hills since St. Lucas is a 501-3C Non-profit. The consensus from the group is to continue on Saturdays and per Pastor Vicki to Katy, "whatever doesn't burn you out".

>Alcohol Use on the Church Premises: Per Marty "we don't have to nail this down tonight". Amy and the youth leaders are asking for permission to serve beer and wine at the March 11th Trivia Night. Marty sent a note about this to the congregation via the e-blast. He also posed the question to the Tuesday morning coffee group. No true opposition was received. Some have wondered if it would be in violation of Keeping God's Children Safe. There is no content that addresses this. Marty has advised a short-term/one-time insurance policy would be needed. Phil asked for Pastor Vicki's opinion.

She has no problem with it as long as "our bases are covered". Plus, Pastor Vicki does not want to accept any free alcohol to offer the guests. Pastor Carole has been involved in fund-raisers where wine or beer are included in the price of the ticket without it resulting in any trouble. Per Marty, we don't want to sell it because a liquor license would be required. Donovan offered to try it out as BYOB. Barbara asked if some type of insurance policy would be needed in that instance. Pastor Vicki will contact the church's insurance agent for guidance. Kathy asked if there is anything in our constitution that would keep us from doing this. That answer was no. Katy asked if we can use this event as a one-time/trial run. Also adding to allow Amy and Lynn to run it as they feel needed for the best result. That will give us background information for consideration of future events. The event will be strictly BYOB by the players for their own consumption.

Jack made the motion to allow the Youth Group to grant permission for BYOB of wine and beer only, as a one-time trial for the March 11, 2023 Trivia night. Plus a liability insurance policy/rider will be in place. Marsha seconded his motion. The motion was passed unanimously by show of hands.

NEW BUSINESS:

>VENMO - Jeff is researching securing a Venmo account for St. Lucas. Prior to December Venmo did not offer its product to nonprofit organizations. However, their new platform now allows it for nonprofits. Their fee of 1.9% of the sale plus $0.10, is very reasonable. It's owned by PayPal. We can offer the church QR code online or on the sanctuary screens. It would be advantageous for us. Most people carry less cash these days. For a one-time visitor who wants to contribute it would give them that ability. It will streamline things -especially with a Trivia night or concession sales for example- all while granting us the opportunity to increase our revenue.

>PAYROLL ADMINISTRATOR - There have been multiple issues with Paychex this past year. Tax withholdings have been inconsistent for our staff. When asked why it occurs the answer given is not consistent and often does not make sense. Pastor Carole and Pastor Vicki have had errors on their W-2s. Twice for Pastor Carole. "What they did is ridiculous, we'll leave it at that" per Pastor Vicki. The Preschool has had payroll cost amounts taken out of the church bank account rather than the Preschool bank account when making payroll for the Preschool. Plus they will not separate the accounts into two general ledger entries one for the church and one for the Preschool. Therefore, Marty will be seeking bids for a new payroll administrator to take over from Paychex.

Note - In full disclosure, Marty's wife works for a company that provides the same services. If future bids declare her employer as the chosen organization, she would not be assigned nor be privy to our church business.

>FUTURE A.V. EQUIPMENT - Per Marsha, the committee is not looking for $60K in their budget anytime soon. Marsha's interpretation is they are researching what may be needed down the road to promote a quality product for St. Lucas. They are attempting to be forward-thinkers.

>VACANT COUNCIL POSITION - Slot #12 is vacant due to Jenny Bell's January resignation. Her job responsibilities will not allow her to continue in her role with the council. Marty asked if anyone had someone in mind to suggest. Barbara offered the Dalgaards. Per Pastor Vicki, Joan is a no as she's on our search committee. Vicki requested any suggestions be submitted to the Vice President/Donovan for consideration and future discussion.

>IN CLOSING -

*Reminder - Per Kathy Herron - The Opioid Presentation is scheduled for 1.30.23 at 7:00 pm, in the sanctuary.

*Reminder - Per Barbara Smith - Please review the Council Contact list sent by email earlier this evening.

*Marty asked for a motion to adjourn. Barbara made the motion and Paul seconded it in order for the meeting to be adjourned. The motion was accepted unanimously by a show of hands.

The Lord's Prayer was said in closing for this meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Smith,
Recording Secretary

*(*The length of this meeting was 1 hour | 50 mins.)*