

APPROVED Church Council Minutes

August 18, 2020

Present: Pastor Sal, Peter Mueller, Beverly Hawkes, Mary Fechtig, David Geen, Stan Greene, Marty Coffin (via Zoom).

Excused: Gemina Petruzelli

Guest: Mike Boston

1. *Opening Prayer* – Pastor Sal opened with prayer at 6:12 pm.
2. *Welcome and Introduction* – Pete welcomed Mike Boston.
3. *July 2020 Minutes* – Bev distributed final draft prior to meeting.
Motion: from David to approve. Mary second. Motion approved.
Action: Julie Ridl will post in the E-pistle.
4. *Pastor's Report* – Pastor Sal distributed prior to meeting. SEE ATTACHED.
Action: Julie Ridl will post in the E-pistle.

Highlights:

- Our church continues to grow and thrive with our YouTube channel welcoming more than 300 new subscribers in just the last month. Our weekly worship videos continue to be viewed by hundreds from around the world.
 - Stephen Ministers continue their ministry to congregants in need meeting weekly via phone calls. Four new Stephen Ministers will continue with their 50 hours of training next month.
 - Christian Neighbors Food Pantry has completed their move to the Community Church of Douglas. Pastor Sal thanked all who helped with the move. DUCC received a thank you note from Christian Neighbors for our help with their move and for the \$6,150 grant they received from the church.
 - Pastoral Relations Committee met with Pastor Sal and welcomed PRC's two new members.
 - The Creation Justice Team will lead September's weekly worship services with opening remarks and prayers as part of next month's "Creation Justice" season at our church. Next month, the CRT will also be facilitating an online book-read, *The Overstory*, by Richard Powers.
 - On August 22 there will be a small wedding at the church with Pastor Sal officiating as well as a "Celebration of Life" for Jim Lemons on August 29 in Saugatuck. August 24 Pastor Sal will be attending an online UCC "Boundary Training" class for pastors.
5. *Financial Report* – Mike Boston. SEE ATTACHED.

Highlights:

- Income for the month of July was favorable by \$2,269 or 14%. Collections were favorable compared to budget by \$2,985 or 20%. All other categories of income (no retreat house income or memorials etc.) were unfavorable to budget of \$716

or 100%.

- Cash position remains good at \$22,581.

In Addition:

- August income to date is down. Pastor Sal noted that \$1000 for the Retreat House summer interns and \$2,280 of mailed in checks will be deposited this week. There are also two residents at the Retreat House this week.
- Mike is working with Will Gervais on a bank reconciliation adjustment that should be completed this week.
- Pete asked if incoming monies from outside the USA were being tracked as a percentage of total income. Not at this time per Mike.
- Pastor Sal received a letter from the Michigan Conference inquiring about what amount of monies DUCC will be designating for 2020 "Wider Missions." Per Mike \$6,000 is budgeted and normally paid in October.
- Mike shared that he is moving to North Carolina but is willing to continue to assist with the financial reports if council approves noting that Gemina would continue to send him the necessary information. Council thanked Mike for his kind offer.

6. Trustee Report – Marty

- Suggestion from Marty that central air conditioning be installed in the Retreat House. It was noted that window air conditioners are not possible due to the dated electrical and that the installation of central air would not be complicated.

Action: Marty will investigate further and bring pricing etc. to council.

7. Committee/ Group Updates – Mike

- Financial Oversight Committee (FOC) Policies and Procedures Manual continues to be a work in progress. Bob Kenny, Stan and Mike are meeting tomorrow night to review and continue the streamlining process.

8. New Business

- a) Walking the Labyrinth – Pastor Sal requested council's support for the creation of a labyrinth in the underutilized Retreat House unfenced yard. This area would not only be available to the church but also to the surrounding community. Pastor Sal provided a brief history of the labyrinth as an ancient form of Christian prayer and meditation. This spiritual practice of walking the path to the path's center while repeating a mantra, moves one deeper and deeper into their spiritual center.

Discussion:

- ❖ Members shared positive personal experiences of walking different labyrinths around the world. One member found including nature in the design provided for a remarkable spiritual experience.
- ❖ Many designs and patterns that all lead to the center of the labyrinth are available: i.e. concrete with painted paths, concrete with grass or ground cover, gravel walkways surrounded by hedging such as boxwood shrubs etc.
- ❖ Material expenses could be provided by the church and labor provided by members.
- ❖ Council agreed that a labyrinth would be an excellent addition to the church campus thereby giving affirmation to move forward with the

project.

Action: Pastor Sal will explore different designs and obtain the cost for the installation of a Grand Rapids labyrinth done by Jimmy Merino. Mary will try to acquire a video of the labyrinth at “Mothers Trust Mothers Place” in Fennville.

- b) New Douglas Recycling Procedure – Pete questioned what the current procedure is for recycling in Douglas noting that the current situation for the tri-city areas are inadequate, create confusion and are inconsistent.

Discussion:

- ❖ As a Creation Justice church, the lack of an adequate procedure for recycling is unacceptable.
- ❖ It was noted that a tri-city group has been working together to resolve the issue for Douglas, Saugatuck and Saugatuck Township.
- ❖ Reminder that a recycling bin and subsequent costs will become more of a necessity when the church reopens and the amount of recycling refuse increases.

Action: Julie Ridl will be asked to follow-up with the tri-city working group status as well as current recycling options and apprise council.

- c) Strategic Brainstorming – Pete reminded council that DUCC thinks strategically when planning for the future. In 2014 the “New Beginnings” discernment process was ushered in and 2018 saw the introduction of the church growth studies initiative that ultimately led to the capital building campaign.

Question:

Are there additional places where DUCC should be or could be to connect strategically with others?

Discussion, thoughts and questions:

- ❖ Sal shared that in his weekly meetings with other churches most are currently limited to doing Facebook and/or YouTube.
- ❖ Congregants have been inquiring about resuming the capital campaign. When is the time right to resume? Should we be building while in-house services are on hold and the facilities are not being utilized?
- ❖ The pandemic has fast forwarded strategic planning to move beyond our walls. In January we focused on expanding our physical space and now we are still being impactful with our virtual expansion.
- ❖ How do we maintain our essence as a small local church while at the same time broadcast our special message with our special messenger to the world?
- ❖ Should we do both? Continue with the physical expansion while at the same time continue to grow virtually?
- ❖ Perhaps we should broaden our virtual church and support doubling down on spreading our message that way? Is it time to re-examine the expansion of our physical space? By broadcasting our message virtually, we now have a different kind of investment.
- ❖ The discipline of our scenario planning answered the question of how to overcome limits to growth which led to the capital building campaign. We are now more aware than we were a year ago that we still have an

investment in church growth with the expansion of our virtual message.
Action: Members will continue to consider additional thoughts and ideas as well as those shared tonight and revisit them at our next meeting.

9. *Next Meeting Date:* September 15 @ 6pm.

10. *Adjournment –* 7:02pm.

Motion: from Stan. Pastor Sal second. Motion approved.