

# Church Council Minutes - Approved

December 12, 2023

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Present: Pastor Sal Sapienza, Mark Johnston, Jim Kern, Kelly Wright, Stan Greene, Mike Mok, Mike VerMerris.

Excused: Stacy Honson, Bernice Lopata

For Pastor Sal's Final Church Council Meeting, we gathered at Mark and Jeremy's home where they prepared a meal for us to share. We were able to comfortably gather, reminiscing about our memorable times together. Thank you, Mark and Jeremy, for making the evening so very special.

1. *Welcome and Introduction* – Mark called the meeting to order at 6:45 pm.
2. *Opening Prayer* – Pastor Sal opened the meeting with prayer.
3. *November 2023 Meeting Minutes* – Mike V. distributed the final draft of November 14 council minutes prior to the meeting.  
**Motion:** from Jim to approve. Mike M. second. Motion approved.  
**Action:** The meeting minutes will be in the E-pistle and posted on the Friendship Hall bulletin board.
4. *Pastor's Report* – Pastor Sal distributed the December report prior to the meeting.  
Highlights:
  - a) On Sunday, December 17, we will officially induct 13 new members to our church. Each will receive a membership certificate and pin from the United Church of Christ.
  - b) Our church member, Peter Mueller, has been selected to serve on the UCC Michigan Conference Board. He will serve as a liaison between the Michigan Conference and the Grand West Association. We are grateful for his leadership and service.
  - c) This is my final Pastor's Report for Douglas Congregational United Church of Christ. These ten years have been among the greatest blessings in my life, and I am so grateful to all of you for your leadership, guidance, and support. Mahatma Gandhi once said, "*There are no goodbyes; wherever you'll be, you'll be in my heart.*"  
**Action:** The detailed report will be in the E-pistle and posted on the Friendship Hall bulletin board.
5. *Financial Report* – Stacy distributed November's financial reports prior to the meeting: Profit and Loss Comparisons; Monthly Balance Sheets; Budgets vs. Actuals FY24 P&L.  
Highlights:
  - a) Collection plate income is below budget for the month by \$7,600 and YTD by \$29,000. But only \$3,000 YTD behind last year...so budget may have been a bit aggressive.

- b) Expenses mostly below budget except for worship expense which includes \$1,400 for new filters for the air purifiers.
- c) Income and expense net of capital campaign is as follows:

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Income	19,832	26,640	126,843	149,904
Expense	22,691	29,050	127,602	145,249
Net Income	(2,859)	(2,410)	(759)	4,655

**Motion:** from Pastor Sal to approve the financial reports as presented. Kelly second. Motion approved.

6. *Trustee Report* – Kelly distributed the report prior to the meeting.

Previous Business & Recent Activities:

- a) A steering team formed and held an initial meeting, consisting of Wendy Hamlin, Mike VerMerris, Peter Muller & Kelly Wright to organize our approach to Safety & Wellness.
- b) Requested quote from Haveman Electric to install lighting along walkway to front door of Isabel Graham House. There will be three 6” soffit mounted motion activated angled LED fixtures to light the entire walkway to the front door. As this is a safety issue, I accepted the estimate and scheduled installation for December 29. Also adding a second switch in garage & adding motion sensor to Retreat House entry vestibule light (per request): \$1520.00 total
- c) Received quote from VandenBerg for church/Friendship Hall pest mitigation:
  - \$350.00 for initial site visit (one time)
  - \$130.00 for quarterly service
  - \$870.00 first year, \$520.00 annually after that
 No commitment was made regarding this quote, though this is under consideration.
- d) Repaired damaged pew.
- e) Repaired church front door lock.
- f) Contacted painter (TMT) to refresh repainting estimate of Isabel Graham Center as the original is almost a year old.
- g) Contacted carpenter to schedule review and request estimate for exterior repairs of Isabel Graham Center.
- h) The city completed inspection of the church, and no lead lines were found.
- i) Numerous small items addressed: light bulbs replaced, batteries changed, etc.

Upcoming Activities & New Business:

- a) Complete electrical upgrades per above.
- b) Meet with carpenter to review Isabel Graham Center repairs.
- c) Expect revised Isabel Graham Center paint estimate in the early part of 2024.
- d) Continue Safety & Wellness steering team organization.

7. *Committee/Group Updates*

Grant Committee Request - Allegan Community Foundation, Pride Fund:

- a) Mark will email a copy of the application to all council members for their review. Discussion is tabled until the January meeting.

8. *Ongoing Business*

Campus Stewardship Drive – Jim distributed the report prior to the meeting.

a) Highlights:

- Pledges to Date = \$226,500 (82.3% of goal)
- Pledge Goal = \$275,000.
- Number of Members Represented = 124 (45% of membership)
- Pledge Fulfillment to Date = \$108,571 (39.5% of goal)
- The November 15 mailing to 300+ generated approximately \$1,600 in new pledges/gifts from 5 respondents.
- Pledge acknowledgement/appreciation letters will be mailed by December 16.
- Year-end letters of total gifts received in 2023 (general support, special collections, and/or Drive) will be sent in January by Julie. These are the “official” documents for tax purposes.

Interim Pastor Planning:

- b) No decisions were required at this meeting. Stan provided an update on the process for reviewing interim pastor candidates. Discussion focused on the timeline for hiring, and possible responsibilities of, the interim pastor.

9. *New Business*

10. *Next Meeting Date* – Council Meeting, January 9, at 6 pm

11. *Adjournment* – 8:00 pm.

**Motion:** from Jim to adjourn. Mike M. second. Motion approved.