

APPROVED Church Council Minutes

December 21, 2021

Present: Pastor Sal Sapienza, Peter Mueller, Beverly Hawkes, David Geen, Stan Greene, Marty Coffin. Stacy Honson and Jim Kern attended via Zoom.

1. *Welcome and Introduction* – Pete
2. *Opening Prayer* – Pastor Sal opened with prayer at 6:02 pm.
3. *November 2021 Meeting Minutes* – Bev distributed the final draft prior to the meeting.
Motion: from Stan to approve. David second. Motion approved.
Action: The minutes will be in the E-pistle and posted on the Friendship Hall bulletin board.
4. *Pastor's Report* – Pastor Sal distributed the report prior to the meeting.
Highlights:
 - a) Thank you:
 - To all who purchased and donated holiday gifts to the Christian Neighbors Holiday Giving Tree Drive.
 - To the Art Guild for the Advent/Christmas altar decorations and to David for the church door planters.
 - To the Afghan Task Force and Bob Kenny for the preparations needed to receive the Afghan family we are sponsoring and moving temporarily into the Spring Street house in January.
 - For the \$10,000 gift from the estate of church member Walt Lawrence.
 - For the \$3,000 donation from Anne and Doug Peterson in support of our Afghan family.
 - b) YouTube end-of-year analytics show that our videos had more than 179,000 views and that we gained another 1.1K subscribers to our channel in 2021 for a total of 3.57K subscribers.
Action: The detailed report will be in the E-pistle and posted on the Friendship Hall bulletin board.
5. *Financial Report* – Stacy distributed a summary prior to the meeting that showed overall that we are slightly behind budget on the bottom line because the spend rate for mission/social justice has been faster than budgeted. Other expenses are lower than budget for the most part. A Profit and Loss Comparison, July-November 2020 and 2021 will be forthcoming.
 - a) Michigan Conference UCC Courage Grant has allocated that \$2,000 be given to each church within the Conference with no deadline for its use. Requirements include filling out an online form and stating what the funds would be used for.
Motion: from Jim that we apply for the grant to be used for church building renovations. Pastor Sal second. Motion approved.
 - b) Sunday counting procedure during Jim's absence- Jim reviewed the procedure with Council Sunday Counters and will ask Julie to scan and send to him the count sheet with the required information in addition to making the weekly bank deposit.

Action: Jim will confirm with Julie the procedure and send to Council the updated process.

6. *Trustee Report – Marty*

- a) Installed a key pad on Pastor Sal’s office door.
- b) Working on Spring St. washing machine spin cycle water removal.
- c) Will repair missing shingles on back roof of the church building.
- d) Suggested that the Spring St. keypad door code be changed after the Afghan family moves in.

Discussion: Marty reminded Council that his term is ending this month having started in the position 6 months ahead of the normally scheduled term.

- Marty expressed an interest in staying on as Trustee and would be honored if Council agreed. Council thanked Marty for his service and requested that he continue in the position for the additional 6 months as Trustee.
- Council visited the past discussion of the Trustee position with regard to having a team to assist.

Action: Pete and Marty will collaborate in putting together a team to assist the Trustee while working on the development of more structure for the position.

7. *Committee/Group Updates*

8. *Ongoing Business- Pete/Pastor Sal*

a) Additional December 2021 Council Meetings:

- 1) December 1 meeting at 6pm via Zoom (Pastor Sal, Pete, Jim, David, Stan, Bev). At a previous meeting, council voted that the Afghan Task force begin assisting Bethany Christian with the offer of support for one Afghan family, housed elsewhere. In the interim period, due to both short supply and high costs in West Michigan, Bethany is having difficulty locating appropriate, affordable housing. Bob Kenny is requesting that Council approve the use of 88 Spring St. for a period of one year.

Discussion:

- Does 88 Spring St. meet Bethany’s housing requirements (i.e. access to public transportation, Bethany’s ability to meet their obligations to Afghan family if located in Douglas, social and cultural bonds with other Afghan families etc.)?
- Would there be disruption to groups that meet at Spring St.?
- What needs to be done to ready Spring St. for occupancy?
- Congregational approval would be requested at the Mid-Year January meeting before committing 88 Spring St. for a one year occupancy.
- Council needs additional fact finding to make an informed decision.
- **Motion:** from Stan that we empower Bob on behalf of the Afghan Task Force to inform Bethany Christian that we have a house for them to evaluate for meeting the needs of an Afghan family. Pastor Sal second. Motion approved.

Action: Pete will notify Bob to advise Bethany that we have a house at 88 Spring St. that they are welcome to evaluate. The

Congregation will be updated at the Mid-Year Meeting on January 9th with Congregational input requested on the use of 88 Spring St.

Motion: from Pastor Sal to adjourn at 6:45pm. David second.
Motion approved.

- 2) December 6 meeting at 3pm at the request of Bob Kenny to discuss the evolving Afghan support situation.

Present: Pastor Sal, Pete, David, Bev. Stacy and Jim attended via Zoom.

Guests: Bob Kenny, Pat Denner (Afghan Task Force).

Considerations:

- DUCC returns to Plan A, we will provide support for a family of four, housed in Holland for a year.
- Offer the use of 88 Spring St. on a temporary (1-3 month) basis during which time Bethany would locate suitable housing in Holland.
- The family's ETA is thought to be December 13- January 31.
- Bethany's objective is to form a community of approximately 20 domiciles in Holland, ultimately able to gather and work using public transit.

Discussion:

- Holland UCC found permanent housing in Holland for the Afghan family they are sponsoring. This family has extended members (2 adults, 1 child) that need temporary housing (until they can relocate to Holland) and are due to arrive in January.
- What is best for this extended family?

Motion: from Pastor Sal to offer 88 Spring St. as temporary housing for the extended family members of Holland UCC's sponsored Afghan family. David second. Motion approved.

Action: Bob will update the Congregation at the Mid-Year Meeting on January 9th. Council will request Congregational support at that time and address the possibility of additional housing commitments at 88 Spring St.

- b) Facility Plan B – Pastor Sal

- 1) Spoke with Bud Baty regarding the use of wallpaper rather than paint in the sanctuary during the last renovation many years ago. Bud shared that the condition of the wall plaster is poor and recommended using wallpaper again, suggesting that it be done professionally with colors that will blend with the stained glass windows.
- 2) Bud also suggested that the wainscoting and pews only need a high quality polish rather than refinishing and could be completed by volunteers.
- 3) Sanctuary flat screen TV ideas shared such as: located over each door or behind the altar curtains etc. Noted that the screen size(s) will need to be seen from the back of the church which will determine location(s).

Action: Bud Baty will bring sample wallpaper swatches to a Council meeting for us to consider. Facility Project Plan B will be on the Mid-Year Meeting agenda.

- c) Mid-Year Meeting agenda review – Pete distributed a draft of the January 9th agenda prior to the meeting. Agenda was reviewed and updated with suggested additions.
- 9. *New Business*
- 10. *Next Meeting Dates* – January 9 @ 11:30am Mid-Year Meeting.
January 18 @ 6pm.
- 11. *Adjournment* – 7:06pm.
Motion: from Stan. Pastor Sal second. Motion approved.