

# APPROVED January 2022 Mid-year Congregational Meeting Minutes

January 9, 2022

1. *Call to Order* – Moderator Pete Mueller called the meeting to order at 11:33 am (via Zoom video conference) with over 60 participants. A slide presentation began with a review of today’s agenda.
2. *Welcome and Prayer* – Pastor Sal Sapienza thanked everyone for coming and opened the meeting with prayer.
3. *Pastor’s Report* – Pastor Sal’s 2021 end of the year video was shown and will be available in the E-pistle.
4. *Financial Update* – Pete (Report prepared by Stacy Honson -Treasurer).  
End of December:  
Income YTD is \$22,739 or 18% over budget.  
Expenses YTD are \$16,159 or 11% over budget.  
The increase in expenses include:
  - a) Return to in-house worship.
  - b) Increase in insurance costs.
  - c) Wi-Fi installation.
  - d) The new furnace and central air conditioning for the Retreat House.
5. *Facilities Project Plan B* – Pastor Sal explained that Plan B came about as a result of the 2020 campus expansion being placed on hold due to the pandemic.  
Plan B for 2022:
  - a) Church entrance doors to be refurbished.
  - b) Polishing the church wainscoting and pews.
  - c) Replace the wallpaper in the sanctuary.
  - d) Replace the drapery behind the altar.The financing of Plan B will be facilitated by a \$2,000 grant from the UCC Michigan Conference and from the generous \$10,000 donation given to DUCC from the estate of Walt Lawrence. Church member Bud Baty will present to Council bids for the church doors and sanctuary wallpaper replacement. Church member Jim Bailey will offer ideas for the altar drapes.
6. *Afghan Family Support Task Force* – (Report prepared by Bob Kenny) Pastor Sal thanked the Task Force for all their work that has resulted in the upcoming arrival of an Afghan family to DUCC’s 88 Spring St. house this week. In collaboration with Bethany Christian Services, an Afghan mother, father and their 2-year-old daughter will be given temporary housing (1-3 months) at the Spring St. location in addition to our helping with transportation, employment, food, clothing, medical appointments, permanent housing etc. A small group from DUCC will be picking them from the airport this week.

**Noted:** A reminder to all that 88 Spring St. will be temporarily occupied as a personal residence so please be respectful of the family's privacy. We will have an opportunity to meet the family when they are ready.

**Donations:** A separate fund has been created to assist with the family needs. Designate Afghan Family for an online donation or on the memo line of your check. The E-pistle will continue to provide Task Force updates and contact information.

7. *Grant Proposal Committee* – Karen Clark gave an update on GPC activity during the first half of fiscal year 2022.
  - a) Current committee members include Karen, Sue Fleming, Tim Lemanski, Peg Donahue and Bev Hawkes (Church Council liaison).
  - b) Congregational approval of the budget for FY 2022 allotted the GPC \$35,000 to award this year.
  - c) So far, the GPC have awarded \$9,875 to new organizations not previously funded. These organizations include:
    - 1) Lighthouse Immigration Advocacy
    - 2) Step-up Muskegon
    - 3) Lifeline Ministries
  - d) Organizations that have received Isabel Graham Funds in the past have been awarded \$11,250. These organizations include:
    - 1) Christian Neighbors
    - 2) Saugatuck Douglas Rotary Club
    - 3) 70X7
    - 4) Southwest Michigan Interfaith Action

In sum: GPC have awarded a total of \$21,125 with \$13,875 still available to award in the second half of FY 2022.
8. *Retreat House Update* – Kathleen Mueller (Retreat House Coordinator) gave a brief history of the 120-year-old Retreat House including it once being used as a Parsonage. With the mission of “serving those who serve their church”, DUCC’s Retreat House offers a place of “spiritual rest and renewal.” Free advertising, with the newly designed Retreat House flyer, in the UCC Michigan Conference Newsletter sent regularly to over 200 churches, has led to the 76 nights that the Retreat House was occupied between March and December. DUCC has also received over \$4,700 in donations over the past 2 years from grateful guests. Numerous pastors have expressed their gratitude for this “place of respite.” In addition to the refreshed interior and updated decorating, a new furnace and central air conditioning were added this year.

In sum: Kathleen reminded us that DUCC’s Retreat House is a “place with a mission we can be proud of.”
9. *Covid-19 Strategies* – Pete reviewed the Allegan County “Public Health Covid-19 Advisory” that DUCC continues to follow. These include the wearing of masks and being fully vaccinated.

In addition, DUCC:

- a) Purchased “Surgically Clean Air” purifiers that are strategically located throughout the sanctuary and the Friendship Hall. These purifiers provide 6 stages of purification with HEPA filtration systems.
- b) Hand sanitizer stations are available as well as masks.
- c) Individual prefilled communion wafer and juice cups continue to be utilized.  
Noted: DUCC will continue to follow the Allegan County Health Advisory and provide updates in the E-pistle.

10. *Security* – Pete described the positive relationship between DUCC and the Douglas Police Department’s liaison, Corporal Mark Giles. This included a walk through and security assessment of our physical plant, greeter training (i.e., what to look for such as suspicious behavior, unknown persons etc.), providing increased patrols and parked cruisers when circumstances warranted etc.

In addition: Reminder that an AED is mounted on the wall by the kitchen entrance in the Friendship Hall.

11. *Appreciation* – Pastor Sal

Thank you to:

- a) Ruth VandenBosch for her efforts and leadership as Christian Neighbors’ Coordinator as her term comes to an end.
- b) Joyce Wright who is stepping into the role of Christian Neighbors’ Coordinator.
- c) The estate of our deceased church member Walt Lawrence for his generous donation to DUCC of \$10,000.
- d) Everyone who contributed to today’s meeting.
- e) To the congregation for their continual presence and support.

12. *Questions, Closing Comments, Adjournment* – Pete

Questions:

- a) Request to review the names of Church Council Members:  
Answer: Peter Mueller, Stacy Honson, Jim Kern, Beverly Hawkes, David Geen, Stan Greene, Marty Coffin.  
Noted that Mike Vermerris has provided new name tags for Council Members that are blue in color and which show their name and Council position. The DUCC website also provides this information.
- b) What amount of money has been raised thus far for the Afghan family?  
Answer: Pastor Sal did not know the exact amount at this time but will have further information after the Afghan Task Force meeting scheduled for this Tuesday.

Comments:

- a) Church member Laurie reminded us all of the many “behind the scenes tasks” that Mike Vermerris undertakes to keep DUCC running smoothly. Appreciation to Mike was expressed by all.
- b) Thank you to all for attending today’s Mid-year Congregational Meeting and for their continued support.

Adjournment – 12:20 pm.

**Motion:** from Dennis Konarski. Brenda Marcy second. Motion approved.

