

APPROVED January 2020 Mid-year Congregational Meeting Minutes

January 5, 2020

1. Call to order – Pete Mueller called the meeting to order at 11:28 am.
 - 94 total congregants present including 88 church members. Quorum established.
2. Welcome and Prayer – Pastor Sal reminded attendees that the meeting is being shared via Facebook Live. Sal then opened the meeting with prayer.
3. Constitution Update – Pete
 - History: Constitution found to be out of date regarding the practices and function of the church. Greg Plowe and Karen Clark worked on updating for the past 2 years.
 - Copies of the updated Constitution have been available for review the past few weeks in the Friendship Hall.
 - As a result of member review, Article VII 2.C was found to be in error. Article VII 2.C stated, “The Treasurer shall keep an accurate account of all receipts and disbursements and shall present a written financial report at each monthly meeting of the Church Council, as well as a yearly written and reviewed (by the Council) report at the Annual Meeting of the church.” The correction should read that this yearly report be “...reviewed (by the Financial Oversight Committee)...”

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:

- Questions asked regarding doing an outside audit verses an inside audit and the role of the Financial Oversight Committee (FOC).
 - Mary Fechtig explained the background and rational for the formation of the FOC and the committee’s responsibilities.
 - It was noted that the FOC does not vote on the destiny of the church where as Council does thereby making the annual financial review by FOC more appropriate.
 - Mike Boston explained the separation of powers between the Treasurer, and FOC’s oversight with emphasis that the FOC has no access to the monies and are independent of the Treasurer.
 - It was noted that the expense of an outside audit would cost 5-10% of the current budget.
 - Pastor Sal discussed how highly qualified and committed the FOC members are representing both the financial and legal communities. These members are invited and appointed by Sal to be part of the FOC.
 - Church members were reminded that they are always welcome to examine the financial records kept at the Spring St. location by contacting the Treasurer, Gemina Petruzelli.
 - Pete reiterated to the attendees that today’s voting to approve Article VII 2.C of the Constitution updates the Constitution to current practice. Additional suggestions regarding future changes can be brought to Council for consideration.
- Suggestion from Fred Hamlin that the Treasurer be bonded to protect the interests of the church and the Treasurer.

MOTION from Laurie VanDenBeldt to correct Constitution Article VII 2.C to read "...reviewed by Financial Oversight Committee..." Dennis Konarski second. Motion approved.

ACTION:

- Pete suggested member's concern regarding an outside audit being done verses the current procedure of an inside audit be brought to Council for further consideration especially in light of the financial feasibility study and capital campaign about to get underway.
- Council will explore the suggestion of bonding the Treasurer.

4. Pastor Sal Sabbatical – Sal

- Sal thanked the congregants for the gift of the sabbatical referring to this time as "our" sabbatical.
- Sal introduced a poster chart that will be displayed in the Friendship Hall which lists the names, dates and assignments of the 40 volunteers that will be leading the worship services for the next 12 weeks.
- A second large poster was shown that included the name and photo of the speaker for each service (12 in total) with the title of each talk. It will also be displayed in the Friendship Hall.

5. Appreciation – Sal/Pete

- *Facilities Committee* – Sal thanked the team with gifts and reminded all of the dedication and work done by the committee including meeting at least 2 times per month since 2018 that started with a vision which led to where we are today. Members include: Dan McGavin, Mary Fechtig, Floyd Fleming, Bud Baty, Jodi Berault.
- *Karen Clark* – Sunday Treat Coordinator. Sal thanked Karen with a gift (accepted by Chris Clark) and reminded all that her term has ended and a replacement is needed.
- *Larry Fuerst* – Trustee. Sal thanked Larry with a gift for his 4 years of dedication while recognizing the challenges and work the position requires.

6. Council – New Trustee Candidate – Sal/Pete

- Marty Coffin has been invited and has accepted the position of Trustee. Discussion regarding Marty's qualifications and extensive background as a contractor in construction, including plumbing and electrical make him well qualified for the position.

MOTION from Chris Clark to nominate Marty Coffin for the position of Trustee.

Bob Kenny second. Motion approved.

7. Facility Presentation – Sal/Pete/Dan/Mary

- Sal reviewed background that led to the current 2020 vision for DUCC.
 - 2013 church attendance was 20-30 people prior to Sal being called to become the pastor.
 - March 2014 the "New Beginnings" discussion group began with members that were true visionaries who saw possibilities for a brighter future for the church.
 - Even though operating expenses were tight, the Retreat House and Friendship Hall were renovated and updated including fresh paint, new light fixtures, a sound system and video camera.

- Five years later:
Upwards of 250 members.
DUCC is now firmly established in Douglas, Saugatuck and Holland with members traveling from Grand Rapids and South Haven,
The Retreat House generates income and the Friendship Hall hosts several outside groups.
DUCC is active in Social Justice and Creation Justice activities and publicly advocate for the LGBTQ community. The church is recognized as the place where all people are welcomed and celebrated.
\$30,000 is donated annually to local groups.
Sunday messages for 2019 had over 100,000 views on YouTube and are now available as Podcasts.
Sunday service attendance has gone past capacity even when utilizing the Friendship Hall space.
 - Suggested plan for expansion and growth
 - September 2018 -2019 *DUCC*'s visionary team met with UCC's Conference Minister and strategic planner. With Council's approval, this led to the creation of the Facilities Committee.
 - Facilities Team met every other week to explore possibilities to manage the church expansion. Challenges include:
Additional Sunday worship seating.
Utilization of the current church campus.
Maintain as much as possible the historical integrity of the church.
Neighborhood appropriate.
Continue with community outreach that utilizes the facility Mon – Sat.
 - Meetings included consultation and discussions with:
 Studio Two Architecture, Douglas
 Mayotte Group Architects, Lansing
 Buildings by Holmes, Macatawa
DUCC congregant discussion groups
 - 2020 Vision for *DUCC* – Power Point slide presentation of Architectural Bubble Diagram of the new building concept followed by an Animated Video of the inside and outside of the facility.
8. Comments and Questions (in house and online) – Pete/Dan/Mary
- How many additional Sunday worship seats are added?
 - There are 36 additional seats bringing capacity up to 158 (average weekly church attendance is 135). Rather than increase that number of seats, having two Sunday services would be a better solution. This results in maintaining the character, quaintness, and spirituality of the church environment while accommodating growth.
 - Focus is on the importance of the activities between Sundays. The new design accommodates internal group meetings, speakers, and programs as well as external outreach.
 - Where will we meet during construction?
 - New construction will be done in phases. We can still meet in the sanctuary while the new building is under construction.

- Will the memorial garden be affected?
 - New building has several large windows with seating that face the garden. Moving the brick wall in the garden to the street side will make the area larger with a sense of being sheltered.
- How will parking be accommodated?
 - There will be additional angled parking on Chestnut St. Potential for additional parking spaces will be assessed at a later time. The City of the Village of Douglas allows a 200 – 250 ft. radius around the church for parking and has accepted the current practice of DUCC. There have been no complaints from residents.
- Is the Retreat House part of the expansion?
 - No. The facilities committee mandate did not include the retreat house.
 - An analysis of what to do with the Retreat House property will be addressed as project moves forward.
- Has fire and safety issues been addressed?
 - Yes.
- Will historical character of the sanctuary be kept?
 - A committee will be formed whose sole function will be the aesthetics of the new construction and the historical character of the church.

Note: Purpose of today's meeting is to share the vision and outcome of the facilities team.

- Construction renderings will be displayed on large posters in the Friendship Hall for review. To receive a view of the walk-through and PowerPoint slides contact Julie Ridl at julie@douglasucc.org.
- No construction decisions will be made today.
- Stan Greene thanked everyone for their courage and reminded attendees that there are more questions than answers at this point in the process as we step forward into the shared vision.

Next Steps: Council would like to move ahead by:

- Meeting with lead donors who have indicated as such.
- Initiating the feasibility study and move forward into the capital campaign. This study will include consultation and assistance from UCC resources.

MOTION from Dennis Konarski that gives Council congregational support as they move forward with the feasibility study and capital campaign. Wendy Hamlin second. Motion approved.

9. Adjournment - 12:34 pm.

MOTION from Fritz Royce. Second Wendy Hamlin. Motion approved.