Skyland Community Church

Minutes of the Church Council Meeting of May 21, 2023

Attendees: Reverend Melanie, Reverend Patricia, Anne Evans, Jackie Seymour, Shannon Edwards, Jan Parker, Gerald Alonzo, John Conkle, John Heyes

Call to Order: John C. opened the meeting at 1:07 p.m.

Opening Prayer: Reverend Melanie

Behavioral Covenant: John Heyes

Review and Approval of Minutes: It was noted that Adams is Gina's preferred last name, not Palmer, as appeared in the minutes of April 16, 2023. Gerald moved to approve the minutes of the April 16 meeting. Patricia seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: Gerald reported that financially we are "in fine shape" across the board:

- The operating net is $12,804.
- Missions has a small positive balance.
- As the Missions Board chose not to remain involved in the Africa Library Project, the funds allocated to this endeavor have been sent as a donation to the ALP.

Old Business: Unisex bathroom

A recent entry into this bathroom through the window was reported. As the reason was probably the locked door (contrary to recently adopted policy), reminders will be given to the cleaners and volunteers that the unisex bathroom should not be locked. Gerald reiterated the importance of keeping this facility accessible to those who need it. Shannon cited a recent increase in usage of this bathroom for personal needs, adding that the Council could consider providing portable bathrooms and portable shower facilities.

New Business:

A. Financial Team

Regarding Reverend Melanie's housing allowance, Anne explained that the IRS counts it as an item separate from salary. Her new residence entails a different amount from the one she had previously. On July 1, 2023, Reverend Melanie designates her housing allowance to be $4,800 a month, up from $2,400, though the increase costs the church nothing. The IRS will determine the new taxability.

Anne announced an anonymous, unrestricted gift of stock valued at over $157,000. The gifted stock has been sold, and most of the proceeds have been used to buy a 50/50 ratio of stocks and bonds in ESG exchange-traded funds. $50,000 in cash will be transferred to the Wells Fargo account and held in the Capital Improvements fund.

Anne presented the final draft of the 2023-24 budget that will be shared at the congregational meeting on June 18. Anne highlighted the following items:

- Pledges in the ’23-’24 plan are set at $191,310; total income, at $205,810.
- Upcoming planned trustee projects under the ’22-’23 budget include paving of the slope between the sanctuary and the shed.
- Anticipated trustee projects in ’23-’24 include an annual spring clean-up and grading of the ground near Lower Whitaker.
- Reverend Melanie plans to start a Youth Community Service project in ’23-’24. $500 will be set aside to provide lunch for participants on Sundays during the school year.

Anne moved to accept the proposed budget. Gerald seconded, and the budget was approved unanimously.

Jan Parker expressed gratitude to the entire Finance Team for their excellent work.

B. Missions

Shannon reported that $3,256 is available to spend in the Missions budget. Skyland’s financial and material support of the Watsonville Center for Farmworker Families continued through the spring; however, as the number of needy families increased, serious safety concerns arose, and our church’s involvement has now ended. Providing just food for the Center remains a possibility.

Current pantry needs include socks, underwear, sweat pants and shirts, shoes, blankets, and shirts. All items need to fit inside the outdoor shelves or the shed.

C. Centennial Celebration

Jackie announced that this event will be on Saturday, September 9. Its purpose is to celebrate Skyland Church’s past and its place in the mountain community while attracting local residents and families.

The Summit Sisters have been hired to provide music. Other attractions under consideration are food trucks, a display of significant events in Skyland’s past, art work, the sale of jams, jellies, & baked goods, and activities of interest to children and families.

Several logistical challenges need to be solved, such as parking, making walking areas safe, having adequate security, and providing suitable spaces for art work and the sale of jams, jellies, & baked goods.

Publicity will be essential. We should try to attract visitors who attend the Loma Prieta Club’s rummage sale on the same day.

Closing Prayer: Reverend Melanie

John C. closed the meeting at 2:19 p.m.

Next Church Council Meeting: Sunday, June 18, at 1:00 p.m.

Minutes submitted by John Heyes, clerk