

Minutes

Kent United Church of Christ Council Meeting (via Zoom)

February 23, 2021

Present: Jaime Baughman (past moderator), Karen Carmany, Becky Dunlap, Glenn Hanniford, Barb Hanniford, Donna Hess, John Hetrick, Sue Otterson (vice moderator), Jackie Peck, Jeff Roeger (moderator), Sally Saltzman, Dick Symons, Julie Wallace, Barb Werstler, Pastor Amy (ex officio), Pastor Kim (ex officio)

Jeff opened the meeting at 7 p.m. with prayer. Sue Otterson then read our mission statement.

Minutes Approval

The minutes of our January 26 meeting were approved (Dick, Jackie).

Status of Payroll Protection Program (PPP) loan

Dick reported that we had received forgiveness of our first loan and had applied for a second loan. *A motion was made that we pursue a second Payroll Protection Program loan* (Jaime, Dick). Dick indicated that the amount requested is somewhat more than last year. Discussion ensued about whether or not we should pursue the loan. Reasons voiced in support included the fact that our projected income is down, which has impacted our ability to pay raises, forced us to make substantial cuts, and may limit our outreach contributions. Last year, we had a one-time gift of \$27,000 which greatly helped in balancing the budget. On the other hand, our deficit was not that large last year (thanks to the one-time gift), and any loans taken will add to taxpayers' burden. After discussion, the motion passed, and we will pursue another loan. Dick also reported that we are getting a \$40,000 line of credit from Hometown Bank for the sanctuary lighting project. The paperwork for a Cornerstone Fund loan was too cumbersome.

Pastor Amy's report

She began by explaining why we are celebrating Sophia Hayden, who will be attending seminary next year. Pastor Amy provided background and described the discernment process in the United Church of Christ. The local church has a role in approving someone to become a "member in discernment." As Sophia's local church, we then have a role to help support her. She has already formed a small discernment support group that includes Pastor Amy, Pastor Kim, Jackie Peck, Jen Case, and Kelley Gifford. Sophia has chosen to attend Iliff School of Theology in Denver. Our only financial commitment is to support one-third of the cost of a required psychological evaluation. The following motion was made (Donna, Sue): *Sophia Hayden is a member in good standing of Kent United Church of Christ. We affirm her gifts for ministry and commend her as a member in discernment.* Pastor Amy shared that Sophia is interested in chaplaincy, inter-religious dialogue, and Pauline theology. Motion passed.

Pastor Amy had provided a written report. She highlighted five objectives for the coming year, all in alignment with our strategic plan. They are:

- Spiritual development and growth
- Keeping us all connected
- Becoming a WISE congregation
- Becoming an anti-racist congregation
- Participatory, elicitive, and visionary leadership and governance, including examining our governance model

She encouraged us to look at our strategic plan again and keep it before us in our own groups' work.

Jeff commended Pastor Amy for her relationships with other pastors and churches.

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Pastor Kim's Report

She had also provided a written report. Jeff had asked her to talk about what was inspiring her. She has been inspired by our adult education participation over the past year. We have had over 40 participate in at least one activity over the past year. "The spirit is moving!"

Treasurer's Report

Sally shared that we had never really reconciled since we moved from one accounting system to another. She has reconciled back to 2016, which has taken a lot of time. Certain expenses had never been recorded properly. We have not budgeted for the church's accounting software, and the cost has gone up. She noted that our money market account needs new signers. She also commented that Diane Drewette was still being paid, although we had discussed discontinuing payments in 2021 until we resumed meeting in person. Becky will communicate this to Diane, and Pastor Amy will let Heather know. Sally encouraged us to get in touch with any questions.

New Business

COVID Task Force

Jeff reported that the task force reaffirmed our protocols for any building use or outdoor events as the pandemic continues. Also, the task force and the Personnel Ministry both recommend that Pastor Amy and Pastor Kim should avoid all in-home or general public contact for situations that may be more safely scheduled in the future, such as baptisms.

Special Council Meeting March 22

Jeff announced that we will have a special meeting on March 22, 5-6:30 with Rev. Nayiri Karjian, Association General Minister of the Living Water Association. The purpose will be to learn more about alternative governance models, how they might fit our own context, and what the next steps would be in considering and implementing a change. Please let Barb Wertsler know of any questions for Rev. Karjian by March 15.

Ongoing Business

- 1) Jeff encouraged us to include him in our groups' Zoom meetings. Please send him the link and he will attend if he is able.
- 2) He also emphasized that stewardship is in all we do—let's remember this and keep weaving the theme into our work and messages.
- 3) Sue will be setting up a meeting for the Budget Committee as part of the quarterly budgeting process.
- 4) John reported that the contractor has not yet given us an installation date for the new lighting. Also, we have some AEDs that are obsolete and need to be replaced. The cost is about \$2,000 each.

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- 5) From Worship and the Arts, Glenn commented that we will need to make some decisions on what we want to do in the future regarding technology for worship.
- 6) Karen announced that the Kent Environmental Council and Kent State are collecting old electronics on four Wednesdays in March.
- 7) Outreach is asking members to create Easter baskets to donate to Kent Social Services.

Other/Highlights:

Payroll Protection Program loan application, Sophia Hayden's discernment, COVID protocols continuing, Pastor Amy's objectives in coming year, upcoming meeting with Rev. Karjian.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m. with a benediction. Our next regular meeting will be **Tuesday, March 23** at 7 p.m. via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Hanniford, Clerk