Session Highlights for June and August 2023 (No July meeting)

Mission Strategy Steering Committee members have met with churches that have done creative things to meet the needs of their areas. Here as in many other areas, affordable housing and childcare are the greatest needs. One of the possibilities under discussion is the repurposing of our property. The south wing, for example, is highly adaptable. The Committee plans to bring in experts to provide professional guidance on what we might do and how we might proceed. One very good indicator that we are on the right track is that potential partners and developers are very interested in working with us.

We'll cultivate learning opportunities for the congregation through the summer to illuminate the needs in the area. "Linger and Learn" sessions are scheduled for July 16 and August 13.

A motion was made and seconded to schedule a joint meeting of the Session and Trustees for September 18, for a briefing and to choose or at least narrow down specific directions. The motion as adopted by unanimous consent. Any decisions will be presented to the congregation in a town Hall meeting.

A motion from the Personnel committee to approve the Reverend Dr. Richard Smith and the Reverend Dr. Virginia B. Smith as Parish Associates carried unanimously.

A motion to approve tuition and extended care benefits to preschool employees carried unanimously.

A motion to approve January 1, 2023 as the start date for accrual of personal days for church and Preschool staff carried unanimously.

The annual Reading of the Minutes was held in Lehighton on June 10.

Session members should reinforce that people should let the church office know if they are going into the hospital. The dedicated volunteers on the front desk call daily, but not all admissions are reported.

Session approved the contract with MKSD Architects to conduct a feasibility study on the possible co-location of a local nonprofit partner in our existing building. The study will cost $19,800 plus no more than $300 in reimbursable expenses. (It was noted that Laura Clifton works for MKSD Architects. Their bid was the best of many, and Lindsey recused herself from the vote.)

Session approved the engagement letter from Mark Aurand with Greater Good Legal to offer necessary counsel as needed, including the formation of an adjacent, nonreligious 501(c)(3) to support FPCB's strategic missional work at a rate of $500 retainer; $160/hour.

J.C. praised the Mission Steering Committee for its excellent work.

A motion from the Covid Task Force was amended to change "CDC" to "government" And the motion carried as amended. The Personnel Committee will use this language in the employee handbook and in job postings. The policy states that Covid vaccinations are recommended, but not required, for all employees of the church and preschool as well as childcare volunteers, with the understanding that employees and childcare volunteers stay home if sick. The policy requiring immunization could be reinstated if conditions and government recommendations change.

Session approved the Preschool Advisory Board request to hold a logo-branded fundraiser. The new logo was designed by Kari Keyock.

Session approved J.C.'s suggestion to allow the Worship Committee to schedule the change from a single service to the usual two services, when weather permits and without further Session action.

Work on a new membership directory is in progress.