

Plymouth Congregational Church of Fort Wayne  
United Church of Christ  
**Annual Business Meeting**  
January 23, 2022

The Annual Business Meeting was held in person and virtually via livestream online. The number of voting attendees in person was 59. Attending in person was required for members to vote. Moderator Ahnee Conner called the meeting to order at 11:10 a.m. Moderator Conner confirmed the voting quorum had been met.

Rev. Timothy offered an opening prayer.

**ACTION ITEMS**

Beth Walker motioned to approve the consent agenda, including the 2021 Annual Election Meeting minutes, the 2021 Annual Business Meeting minutes and the 2021 Annual Report. The motion was seconded by Kirby Volz and approved by vote.

**2022 Budget**

Treasurer Laura Coon presented the proposed 2022 Budget. The 2022 Budget projects income of \$832,196 and expenses of \$832,159 leaving a small surplus of \$37. Treasurer Laura Coon moved that the 2022 Budget be approved. Dick Conklin seconded. The proposed 2022 Budget was approved by vote.

Treasurer Laura Coon also gave a brief overview of the 2021 Budget and the 2021 Actual Financial Statement. For the year 2021, actual income was \$803,920 and total expenses were \$795,645 leaving a surplus of \$8,275.

**Safe Church Policy**

Moderator Ahnee Conner and Rev. Timothy Murphy introduced the Safe Church Policy designed to prevent harassment and abuse of children and youth in the church and designed to respond in a structured way if there were an allegation. In prior months, numerous discussion forums were held at Plymouth regarding the proposed Policy.

During the Annual Business Meeting, discussion focused on the conditional, case-by-case potential for limited and monitored inclusion of a prior convicted sex offender in certain church activities. This included such themes as the Church's "No matter who you are...you are welcome" statement; logistics for protecting the vulnerable; and challenges of providing a minder whenever the convicted sex offender is present. After Kirby Volz made a motion to adopt the Safe Church Policy and Terry Dougherty seconded, the Safe Church Policy passed by vote.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

## **New Staff**

Nakia Brabham – Media Specialist for recordings, graphics, and broadcasts  
Rev. January Simpson - Associate of Pastoral Care  
Elizabeth Pruitt - Communication Specialist for online publication, graphics and the Bell  
Jake (Jacob) Slone - Receptionist in front office Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday  
Steve Cook – Financial Administrator usually works mid-late afternoons in the office

## **Summary of Governance Structure**

Assistant Moderator Scott Avery presented an overview of Plymouth's governance structure.

## **Growing Hope Globally**

Rick Schilb gave a brief report on Growing Hope Globally. This program uses proceeds from crops raised and sold in the U.S. to fund agricultural development programs overseas. In 2021, Plymouth UCC contributed \$7,417; and Peace UCC contributed \$1,030 to the area farms. This year was a good growing season for the farms in the program. Total amount raised after crop sales was \$18,436. After years leading this effort at Plymouth, Rick and Peg Schilb are unsure if they can continue to lead the project. They are asking if anyone is willing to step into this position.

## **527 W Berry Property Update**

Rev. Timothy Murphy updated attendees about the adjacent building at 527 W Berry that Plymouth purchased two years ago. Leasing to a nonprofit organization that would use the property for residential housing hasn't yet been successful; therefore, search for a renter will be broadened to include a nonprofit organization that would use the building as office space. Several nonprofit organizations seem interested. The goal is to break even financially, while supporting an organization that is consistent with Plymouth Covenants.

## **Sanctuary Technology Upgrades**

Rev. Timothy Murphy also described system upgrades accomplished by the Sanctuary Technology Task Force. Ability to livestream in the sanctuary and in the Folsom Room is now more stable. For a more interactive remote experience, Plymouth will eventually be able to conduct virtual Zoom meetings in the Chapel and Folsom Room.

Assistant Moderator Scott Avery led those present singing "Blessed be the Tie that Binds" accompanied by Music Director Bob Nance.

Rev. Sara Ofner-Seals offered a closing prayer.

Moderator Ahnee Conner concluded the meeting at 12:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Katie Carboneau, Recorder