

Minutes of the Leadership Council
September 15, 2021

Present: Pastor Ben, Pastor Rachel, Pastor Lacey, Robert Curtis, Kathy Bell, Linda Roa, Joyce Cox, Kathy Matthies, and Chris Chang Weeks. Larell Fineren and Tom Terry joined us via Zoom.
John Henel was absent

The meeting was called to order by Moderator, Robert Curtis.

Pastor Rachel opened with a prayer.

Robert asked the council members to review and agree the agenda topics and times. This was done and no changes were made, so we proceeded with the meeting.

Check -In & Connect: We spent a few minutes checking in with the person next to us.

Approval of Minutes: M/P Kathy Bell to accept the August 18, 2021 minutes.

Financial Report: John was absent but in his email he gave the following summary of August financials: After hanging in there all year with a positive end of month balance, we have slipped (as expected) into negative territory, ending August with a negative \$6,585. Local Church Pledges and Other Gifts (including Plate, Overpaid Pledges) continue to shine, exceeding budget expectations. Expenses are staying under budget which helps. We have not yet pulled any of the authorized funds from Reserves to cover the deficit, and will probably not do that until late in the year. We continue to await relief with FICA reimbursements from the government that should reduce or perhaps even eliminate our shortfall by year-end. Chris added that Memorial Hall basketball rentals have started up and Rotary is late with a large rental amount due, both of which will boost our facilities income.

2022 Pledge Updates: Bobbie Johanson, chairman of the Gratitude & Generosity Team, joined us with an update on the 2022 Pledge Drive. The pledge drive theme for 2022 is "A Future with Hope." The idea is to encourage each other to "Be the Church" in new ways while continuing to let resources flow toward what matters most. A packet will be sent out to the congregation asking them to join in reaching a goal of 140 households pledging \$365,000 to local church ministry and \$35,000 to our wider mission for a total of \$400,000 (5% increase over 2021). She passed out pledge cards to the Council to be turned in by October 3rd to jump start the 2022 pledge drive. Gratitude Sunday will be November 10 and the hope is to receive the congregation pledges by then. The members of the G & G team are: Jeff Boal, Sheina Curtis, Terri Harper, Allie Hole, Sara Margulis, Destiny Stone, Chris Chang Weeks, Pastor Benjamin and John Henel

Anti-Racism Updates: Pastor Ben reported on a group of "power house" women working thru North Bay Organizing Project Immigrant Defense Task Force advocating for language justice. They are following up with the Board of Supervisors and making sure they keep their communications in languages that all can understand.

Budgeting Values and Communication (Big Picture): We broke up into small groups and revisited the values we came up with at the Leadership Retreat. After getting back together as a group, there were 3 standout points:

- Extravagant Welcome & Hospitality
- Recommitment to our Open & Affirming statement
- Outreach

There were many ways suggested to meet these goals.

- Use publicity to let our community know who we are and what we offer as a church.
- Use the website and the newsletter to encourage engaged membership and investment of your talents in your church.
- Embrace multi-generational events.
- Re-invent who and how we are worshipping in this time of Covid separation.
- Promoting the analogy of being an owner in your church, not a renter.

Engaging Congregation in Budget Challenges: The question is: How do we engage the congregation in these budget challenges? It was decided that after church forums would be helpful to give people a time to ask questions and see how the church operates. It would be helpful to bring the conversation to the congregation. One suggestion was to make the financial report available to those who request it.

Budget Priorities 2022: Council members were asked to share some of the budget priorities for their areas and teams. Linda shared that the Worship & Arts budget will probably increase 10%. Personnel portion of the budget will need to increase to accommodate the Chancel Choir Director's salary. Joyce mentioned some goals that Mission & Outreach hope to achieve. Robert has a document online for council members to fill in with their priorities for budget 2022.

Tree Trimming: Tom reported that the Facilities committee has been working on getting bids to trim some of the trees and branches on campus per county recommendations. He had sent out an email detailing the cost and possible accounts to pull the money from. Due to some unexpected expenses, the Property Upkeep and Reserve funds are low. It was decided to table the discussion until the October Council meeting to give the Facilities committee a chance to meet again and to prioritize their projects.

Thank you notes: Kathy Bell brought up the subject of Thank You notes and how we might make the process more personal. It was suggested that we take some time at each meeting to mention anyone that has done something that we would like to acknowledge. There would be a list for Chris to put in the newsletter and thank you cards would be available to council to send personal messages. The Council was encouraged to let the Pastors know when they know of someone who deserves recognition.

Rebuilding and Reaching Out: This will be an ongoing discussion about how do we rebuild our congregation after being unable to meet in the sanctuary these past months. Many of the ideas are very close to what was discussed in our Values and Communication segment.

Highlights/Quick Updates:

- Kathy Matthies reported that she attended a conference called Faith, Food, & Equity. She came away feeling proud to be a part of our Church's outreach to the homeless community. There was interest in having our church host a conference to show some of our programs and how they work.
- Pastor Ben reported that the Personnel performance reviews are almost done.
- Pastor Rachel reported that she has some continuing education opportunities coming up.
- Kathy Bell reported that the placing of the recycling Kiosk has been delayed to December.
- Joyce reported on the following:

- Conestoga Huts construction will start soon!
- Adult Mission to Paradise is planned for September 19
- Women's Retreat one day gathering is Oct 9 at Westminster Woods

Reflections and Appreciations: Denelle mentioned what a great blessing it is to have Andy DelMonte directing the choir.

Kathy Bell closed the meeting with a prayer
The meeting was adjourned by Robert

Respectfully submitted,
Denelle Tognozzi, Clerk