

ST. THOMAS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES
December 18, 2018

Members Present: Bill Coppa, Pastor Abi Foerster, Brian Johnson, Pat Dodson, Renee Kinnear, Don Rickerson, Lori Perez, Caleb Mathews, Gordon Haines, Leslie Oakes, Joe Steen, George Anderson, Merv Lyle, and Janie Russell. Also present were incoming members Deb Crawford, Roxanne Sutton, Sarah Hammack, Bill Bixby, Rich Banner, Earl Amstutz, and Leonard Fick.

The meeting was called to order at 7:23 pm by Bill Coppa. The opening prayer was given by Pastor Brian.

Devotion: For the devotion, Bill read 1 Corinthians 13: If I speak in the tongues¹ of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. ²If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. ³If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.⁴Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.⁸Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. ⁹For we know in part and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears. ¹¹When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. ¹²For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.¹³ And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

Bill also handed out a devotion and article for everyone to read.

Motions:

- **Motion: Approve contract for audit.** (Finance Committee) Motion passed.

Visitors/Congregation Time:

The incoming members for the 2019 Council were introduced:

- Deb Crawford, Lay Leader
- Roxanne Sutton, Communications chair
- Sarah Hammack, UMW co-chair
- Bill Bixby, Staff Parish Relations chair
- Rich Banner, At-large member
- Earl Amstutz, Alternate Lay Delegate
- Leonard Fick, Finance Chair

Minutes: The November minutes were approved by e-mail.

Celebrations:

- The Angel Shop at Loch Lomond Elementary last night went very well.
- Lori Perez announced that her daughter will be home tomorrow.

Pastor Time:

Abi Foerster:

- There's lots of energy at the church.
- One hundred people came to the Open House at Abi's home on Sunday.
- The Strategic Planning group, calling themselves "Spark Group", will begin meeting in January. Ron Campbell will be the convener and Bill Coppa will be the record keeper.

Brian Johnson:

- Fifty people from Haymarket partnered with Sweet Julia Grace to care for a child who has cancer. About 250 townspeople also participated. Haymarket hosted the group.
- There will be two worship services on Christmas: 4 pm and 7 pm.
- Brian ceded the rest of his time to Merv Lyle.

Discussion: led by Brian and Merv

- Haymarket is ready to launch for their next step for the future of the Haymarket church.
- The Old Bank Building lease will be coming up for renewal soon. Haymarket wants to be self-sufficient but does not know what to do about the lease. St. Thomas has paid for the lease for the past four years.
- Brian has a three-year plan with financial benchmarks. Haymarket needs to become self-sufficient. It's time to sink or swim. When Brian came, Haymarket had to "re-set" after some emotional trauma. The congregation had to heal.
- The three-year plan is really 3 one-year plans. HM will set a goal and have to meet it, in order to go on to next step. They have to show growth.
- The original long term vision was one church, two campuses. Haymarket does not share this vision and wants to be self-sufficient. We need to walk faithfully towards that goal. Brian acknowledged St. Thomas's generosity towards Haymarket.
- We could look at a shorter lease, even as short as 6 months, but this might increase costs.
- At this time, we don't need any motions, etc. The OBB lease will be discussed in Finance Committee and in Trustees Committee. This is also being discussed at the Conference level.
- What we need at this time:
 - A mission statement from Haymarket. What are they trying to accomplish?
 - Any plan needs to also consider St. Thomas, because this impacts where St. Thomas can go, as well. It was mentioned that our financial picture has been impacted.
 - There are four stakeholders in this: Haymarket parishioners; St. Thomas parishioners; Conference; District. All are in the discernment process and all have opinions.
 - We have to be sure the Manassas campus also knows what's happening.

- Brian again stated he's thankful for what St. Thomas has done. He also feels something is happening in Haymarket. The Committee paused while Abi led us in prayer for this important issue.

Status Reports:

Lay Leaders: Nothing further

Outreach and Evangelism: Renee Kinnear

- We had 43 people at Movie Night on November 30th.
- The Drive Through Nativity went well. We had an increase in people coming through. There were 320 cars with about 900 people.
- The banners are up.
- We've ordered pens with our name and address on them.
- We have three new members joining the Committee in January.
- There has been some discussion about training greeters. Although this isn't under Outreach, we might consider it.

Missions: Lori Perez

- We disbursed funds to ACTS, Prosperity House, Brighten House (adults with special needs), and the Angel Shop.
- Missions meeting is moving to the third Tuesday of the month.

Finance: George Anderson

- Check approval procedures have been approved and will be followed starting January 1st. Abi mentioned that new chairs will be getting a list of committee members. At the Orientation Training on January 8th all these forms and procedures will be explained.
- We are also working at decreasing the number of designated funds.
 - Under the new financial policy, designated funds may fall under Stewardship.
 - We need a specific number of accounts in order to make it less difficult to handle.
 - We need to communicate this to the congregation.
 - We may also need gift acceptance policies.
 - Finance Committee will bring lists of designated funds for discussion next month.
 - Finance has approved Robert Morrow to do a full audit. Cost will range from \$9600 to \$12800. Trustees will sign the contract.
- **Motion: Approve contract for audit.** (Finance Committee) Motion passed.

Education: Leslie Oakes

- We currently have 31 small groups. Leslie is working with them.

Youth Ministry: Caleb Mathews

- Family Advent Night was attended by 87 people.
- The Children's Christmas service will be this Sunday at 9:40.
- Sixty-seven advent bags were donated to the Food Pantry.

- At the Christmas party with the Pack tonight we had two girls attend, as well as the boys. We had a “Sock” exchange.
- Confirmation Classes will start after Christmas. January 20th is the orientation. February 1st will be a retreat. Confirmation is May 19th.
- Children and Youth Councils will begin meeting in January on the first Tuesday of the month.

Trustees: Don Rickerson

- The estimate for repairing the arched sanctuary window is \$675. We will proceed with the repair.
- Lease on the Old Church building will be expiring. Instead of an increase in rent, we asked them to do \$200/month work which was accepted.
- The food warmer in the kitchen will be repaired for an estimated cost of \$470.

Stewardship: Abi Foerster

- Pledges totaling \$650,000 have been received.
- So far we’ve received 115 pledges and 50 were first time pledges.

Communications:

- Roxanne Sutton will be the chair as of January 1st.

Sunbeam Children Center: Report sent by Natalie Martin

- Current Enrollment is 125 children; 87 registered in Day Care and 38 registered in Preschool.
- Staff numbers = 30.
- On December 5th the four-year-old classes visited Birmingham Green to sing to the residents and assist them in creating ornaments for their Christmas tree.
- The Advent bag mission went well, with 24 families donating bags. A few more may still be turned in by the end of the week.
- The Classrooms will have a birthday party for Jesus at the end of this week.
- The Board met on November 27th. We approved the following:
 - Move enrollment to early January to align with area centers registration dates.
 - The 2019-2020 Budget was also approved, including merit-based raises; cost of living raises; tuition increases.
 - The Board will meet again on January 29th with our new members.

Worship:

- We will have an Epiphany service in January.
- The February sermon series is on “Neighboring”.
- In March we will ask Ernest Hogg to come back. He was the planting minister.

SPRC: Gordon Haines

- We finished all the year end paper work.
- We put together job descriptions for part time Youth and Food Pantry positions, as well as finishing anything on other job descriptions.

UMW: Pat Dodson

- Sarah Hammock and Donna Williams are taking over as co-chair for UMW.
- Both the Bazaar and the Christmas Party went well.
- The next general meeting is January 26th. We'll be making prayer beads to use in Tuesday Night worship.

Old Business: None

New Business: None

Bill Coppa thanked the 2019 Council for their service and the Committee members expressed their thanks to Bill for all he has done for the past two years.

The meeting adjourned at 9:23. Merv gave the closing prayer.

Church Council meetings are moving to the 4th Tuesday of the month. The next meeting will be January 22 at 7:15.