

St. Mark's United Methodist Church

Guiding Council Meeting Minutes

July 18, 2022—6:30 pm—Zoom Teleconference

Members Present:

Administration: Betty Schiele, Anne Boyle, Sarah Vaughan

SPRC: David Harmon

Trustees: Laura Godwin, Rob Heare

Finance: Chris Franklin, Kendall Humphries, Kitty Ambers

Lay Leadership: Lynne Kelly, Mark James

Secretary: Dani Corrigan

CALL TO ORDER (6:31)

Betty called the meeting to order and conducted roll call.

DEVOTION – David Harmon

David shared a video of Kara Lawson, the Duke Women's Basketball coach, speaking to her players. The message was "How Hard Better." She explained that as individuals and as a team they all must deal with difficult events. It will never get easier. You need to learn to handle hard better. We need to reframe our mental outlook to handle hard better instead of waiting for one hard thing to pass.

David shared the following verses in relation to this message. Isaiah 41: 13: *For I am the LORD your God who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you.* Joshua 1:9: *Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.* We must reflect on what the church has faced recently including a transitioning between pastors, new contemporary worship leader, HVAC issues, and the Capital Campaign. Through all this God has ensured our needs have been met. It never gets easier. We have become people that handle hard better.

OPENING PRAYER- David Harmon

PRAISES (6:38)

- David shared that Julie's treatments are going well. Betty saw Julie at church yesterday but she had to leave to go preach at Central Baptist.

MINUTES (6:39) -- Betty Schiele

The June 20, 2022, meeting minutes were reviewed.

- Mark asked the finance committee for a clarification about the May highlights regarding the bullet point that lists Net Income (\$2,405.00). It is mentioned as a dollar amount when it is actually a percentage. Kelly presented for the Finance Committee for the June meeting. Chris will look into this.
- No changes were suggested.

David moved to approve the minutes for June 20, 2022, meeting and the motion was seconded by Lynne. The motion was approved unanimously.

- Betty reminded GC members that the minutes are posted on the Church website. They are accessible and reviewed by members. It is important that the minutes are correct.
- Anne asked about the SPR section being confidential regarding staffing changes. Betty explained that so far there has not been anything confidential regarding SPR. If something confidential is in the report, this section will be removed from the minutes available to the church.

SPR (6:42)

David Harmon informed:

- Staff evaluations have been completed and Pastor Justin has been meeting with the staff for one-on-one meetings. This will be finished in early August.
- The church office is closed this week (July 18th). Many of the staff are traveling with Justin. Hannah will be checking voicemail and email.
- Please continue to pray for Julie during her treatments and Selina's recovery from surgery. Betty added that Selina's progression is slower than anticipated.

FINANCE (6:45): Reports in Google Docs

Chris Franklin informed:

- June P&L Highlights:
 - Income is about \$10,000.00 under budget but this is \$1,700.00 better than last year.
 - Expenses are \$2,500.00 over budget. This is from maintenance including buying freezer and power washing the building. This is \$3,600.00 over last year.
 - Net income for the month is \$-1,600.00. This is \$4,200.00 lower than budget but \$6,000.00 better than last year.
- Year to Date
 - Revenue is \$316,000.00 which is \$22,600.00 below budget; but it is \$16,500.00 better than last year.
 - Expenses are about \$295,000.00 which is \$7,200.00 better than budget and about \$18,000.00 higher than last year.
 - Net income is \$57,000.00 which includes the Capital Campaign funds. Finance is still working with Kelly and advisor, Richard Worchester, to decide what is the best and proper way to display this.
- June 2022 Balance Sheet
 - The balance sheet does not balance, and it is unclear why. Kelly is out on vacation and Chris will meet with her when she is back to address this.
 - Total Savings: \$194,000.00
 - Total Assets: \$1.9 million
 - Mortgage: \$1 million

- HVAC Loan: \$46,000.00
- Equity: \$554,000.00
- Total Liabilities and Equity: \$1.9 million
- The two houses in Ohio that were donated to the church have been sold. Laura said the total is \$252,000 but unsure if there are fees due for closing. Betty stated that the email from Justin said we received \$252,000
 - These funds will be allocated in future meetings.
- Capital Campaign
 - Kelly has put together a report to show the amount that is coming in and where these funds are being allocated based on the proposed percentages. This report is in Google Docs.

TRUSTEES (6:52)- Report in Google Docs

Laura Godwin informed:

- Water heater in nursery hallway is rusting through and leaking. Initially the problem was thought to be an HVAC issue. James River inspected and determined it was plumbing so they sent out their plumbing division. Stacy followed up with James River and was able to have them honor the HVAC discount for plumbing as well.
- The new freezer is in the kitchen and the ovens have been repaired.
- Safety and security: The cameras have been ordered but will take two months to arrive in the US. They should get here in August with plans for installation in September.
- The bus needed an annual inspection and it desperately needed new tires. They had not been replaced since 2011. The bus is currently being donated for use by Camp Rainbow this week. The Youth will use it for their mission trip in August to Virginia Beach.
- Vector is the current fire and smoke alarm company. There was a call one night that the smoke alarm was going off in the sanctuary. Laura drove over to check in the middle of the night and thankfully it was a false alarm. Vector will be coming to do an inspection. There has been some difficulty in getting Vector out. Laura asked staff if there is need to investigate a new company. The church switched companies about four years ago and have been happier with Vector. In addition, if the church switches vendors then all of the alarms will need to be replaced since they are specific to Vector.
- The lighting in the library cannot be upgraded to LED. The current installation is failing and will need whole new installation. Laura would like input on the current lighting from anyone who uses this space daytime or evening time.

Deciding

- Bathrooms in the hall are backed up. A previous issue of the storm water drain being on top of the sewer pipe in the courtyard area had been corrected. Flinn's came out today, July 18, 2022, and further down the storm drains there are tree roots growing into the sewer line. When there is a large rainstorm then it is backing up which occurred with the most recent heavy rain. Flinn's has quoted \$3,500.00-\$4,200.00 to fix this. The price is dependent on how far the roots go into the storm drain. If the roots are removed, then this should fix it otherwise the alternative is tearing up the entire courtyard for additional access. This is unbudgeted repair. We may not

have the money for this, or it will be really close if we do all of this right now. Now that this is a known problem that will continue to occur, Hannah is suggesting that we fix this now and put other projects off. Laura opened up the floor for discussion.

- Chris had no comment from Finance Committee.
- Betty asked for Anne's input. Betty asked if we could talk to Kelly regarding current finance and then vote by email.
- Laura shared that Flinn's could complete repair this Friday if approved. They will send a bill to be paid later.
- There is concern regarding if it is not fixed then there will be additional maintenance issues inside the church. Another concern is that all the staff is out of town this week.

Chris moved that Flinn's come out to fix the plumbing problem this Friday and the details of the payment will be worked out when Kelly is available. Anne seconded the motion. The vote was passed unanimously. Laura will work with Hannah and they will have Flinn's address the problem.

Questions

- Betty inquired about the status of inventory. Trustees have completed their part and are awaiting staff for inventory of music items. Also, they are awaiting the Relevant team as Amy is new to the team and the inventory project.

VISION COUNCIL (7:09) - Report in Google Docs

Sarah Vaughan informed:

GROW

- Children Ministry Team
 - New curriculum started this Sunday.
 - Flat Jesus is still traveling this summer.
 - Children are having a half lock on August 14.
 - Goal to have four classes with Fall kick off on August 28.
- Student Ministry Team
 - Lots of youth volunteered at VBS. They had three outings on nights after VBS
 - Mission trip in August and retreat in the Fall.
- Adult Ministry Team
 - They did not meet in July due to Kara Walsh's dad's death.
 - Getting everything running for fall
 - Young adult book club met twice. More attendees at the second meeting.
- Worship Ministry
 - Plans for a crossover of Traditional and Relevant worship on August 28.

LOVE

- Congregational Care Team
 - They supplied door hanger for homebound members on July 4th. "Where the spirit of the Lord is there is freedom."
 - FACES' fundraiser has been rescheduled due to COVID concerns.
- Service to Others

- Evergreen Elementary school supply drive is coming up.
- Upcoming events include Rise Against Hunger, Turkey Bags, and Christmas Mother.
- Wednesday night mission dinners starting back this fall. If you are in a church group interested in hosting, talk to Jane. They want church groups to have priority in hosting before opening it up to outside groups.
- Outreach and Witness Team
 - Vacation Bible School had 40 campers. One of the smaller attendances but lots of energy and excitement. Many campers brought friends throughout the week.
 - 61 free Kona ice coupons were given to youth volunteers and VBS campers and 51 of these were redeemed on Friday food truck night.
- NLI
 - Justin talked about bringing NLI to a close. We are the first church in the district to start this. September 18 will have an NLI celebration including a townhall after the 11:00 service to highlight the NLI achievements. The District Superintendent and Maria Maxwell will be at St Mark's.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE (7:14)

Anne informed:

- Annual Conference was held in June in Hampton. The theme was “United as One in Worship.”
- It was the first conference that was held in person in three years.
- The conference was recorded, and Anne included the link to view it in her report.
- Kay Kotan talked about reenergizing the church with a focus on becoming community centric not church centric. She encouraged a sense of unity. Anne purchased her book, “Leading a Church in the Post Pandemic World” if anyone would like to borrow it.
- There were multiple wonderful sermons throughout the conference.
- The Cabinet presented on business matters. The Cabinet is composed of all the “head honchos” including the Bishop, District Superintendents, and selected Lay Members like conference treasurer and lay leader.
 - They presented the churches that will be closing due to decreased membership. One in Richmond District is Brookland Methodist where members will be transferred to Lakeside UMC if they choose. Rev. Burt Brooks, who assisted with our Capital Campaign, was serving as interim minister.
 - Three churches disaffiliated from the conference. These were approved by the conference. These 3 churches disaffiliated using 2549.3 of the Book of Discipline, which covers disposition of property of closing local churches. This states that the property becomes the property of the Annual Conference of the UMC. At least 2 of these churches are now identified as community churches.
 - The districts merged from 16 to 8 districts. Richmond is now combined with Charlottesville. One question regarding the merger was about youth member representation. By rule, each district previously had 2 youth representatives for a total of 32. Would the number of youth members of Annual Conference be decreased to 16? While too late for a rule change this year allowing increased youth numbers per district, the district superintendents agreed that youth could be added as at large members until a proposal for rule change can be considered at next year's Annual Conference.

- There was a motion about the Bishop's handling of complaints against clergy, which was ruled out of order. This led to a protest by some members who gathered at the front of the meeting hall and refused to sit down. The underlying issue occurred about three years ago when a clergy person in Northern Virginia performed a same sex marriage. Someone filed a complaint, and this complaint has not been heard or dealt with. The person filing the motion and additional protestors felt it was not fair for this clergy to be kept in limbo and were upset that the motion would not be heard. After much deliberation, a motion was passed to refer the matter to the Judicial Council. Anne is unsure of the timeline with the Judicial Council. Link is included in the report with more details.
- Rev. Dr. Pete Moon spoke about supporting military chaplains to attend the Doctor of Ministry Degree program at Wesley Theological Seminary. He was a Navy pilot and previous Richmond District Superintendent.
- Rev. Dr. Clarence Brown gave a sermon on Friday morning in which he stated that "we are so busy fighting with each other that we don't have time for what we are supposed to be about."
- There was a recognition of retirements including Rev. David Burch, a former St. Mark's pastor. He was unable to attend but was celebrated.
- Due to time constraints, the Team Jeremiah question and answer session was not held on Friday as planned. The Bishop announced that it would be held via Zoom within 30 days. Team Jeremiah is made up of 15 theologically diverse people. Rev. David Bonney is a member of this group. The purpose of Team Jeremiah is to help make transparent the process for any churches that wish to disaffiliate from the United Methodist Church using 2553 from *the Book of Discipline*.
 - *The Book of Discipline* states that if a church leaves, they will owe apportionments for two years. If they have already paid apportionments during the year they disaffiliate, they will only owe the remainder of the year plus all of the next year. They will also have a liability related to pensions. This process was established in 2019 but ends in December, 2023. It is believed that a new procedure will be put into place. Churches that want to disaffiliate must contact their District Superintendent, who will meet with them to give information. There will be a minimum of 30 days to pray for discernment before anything happens. If approved by the congregation, it goes to Annual Conference for a vote. There will be periodic Annual Conferences meeting over Zoom throughout this year and next, as needed, to vote on churches who desire to disaffiliate. October 29, 2022 is the first such scheduled. meeting.
 - There is a Disaffiliation Task Force that is working on this as well.
- Many people spoke at the conference on a "moment of personal privilege." One of these included a conference member who stated the conference owed the Bishop an apology for not sitting as requested by her during the protest on the previous day.
- Next Annual Conference in 2023 will be held in Roanoke. Betty will represent St. Marks.
- The Book of Reports is available to read.
- There was a big emphasis on youth. The youth that were present were very enthusiastic. It was very positive to see and hope that continues in the church.
- Anne enjoyed Annual Conference including the music, the people, and the messages. She thanked the team for allowing her to represent the church.

MESSAGE FROM JUSTIN

- Be thinking of what we should do with the money from the sale of the houses.

- September 18 is the closure of NLI. Dr. Lee, our superintendent, and Maria Maxwell will be at the 11:00 worship. There will be a townhall meeting after the 11:00 service. Justin would like the leaders of the NLI committees to be present. Plans will need to be made for food since it will be after the 11:00 service.

DEVOTIONAL SIGN UPS

- September: Rob Heare
- October: Kendall Humphries
- November: Chris Franklin
- December: Kitty Ambers

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REMINDERS

Anne wanted to make sure the Annual Conference report is available to the church. She recommended attaching in weekly email with This Week at St. Marks. Betty recommended having hard copies at church for those who do not use a computer.

CLOSING PRAYER AND ADJOURNMENT

Betty led the with closing prayer and adjourned the meeting at 7:41 PM.
Next Meeting: August 15, 2022, at 6:30 PM on Zoom.