

## **CONGREGATION COUNCIL MINUTES**

Date: 3/20/25

The March Congregation Council Meeting was held on 3/19/25

**Council Members Present:** Pastor Bannister, Ashdon Bobbie, Carolyn Cutilli, Alan Divver, Shannon O'Neill, Barbara Quinn, Bruce Roper, Carol Schlegel, Jenn Shaw, Anna Sweeney, Janice Vallone, Mark Vallone, Ken Woods, and Louise Woods.

**Absent:** Kiran Bodamer, Tom Smith

The meeting was called to order by President Shannon O'Neill at 6:00 p.m. The scripture was read by Ashdon Bobbie and the prayer was offered by Pastor Bo

### **PERSONS WISHING TO ADDRESS COUNCIL:**

None

### **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:**

\*It was moved and seconded to accept the minutes from February 2025 as presented with a spelling correction change. The motion was made and seconded by Ken Woods / Barbara Quinn. MOTION CARRIED

### **REPORTS:**

President, Shannon O'Neill –Attached

Pastor Bannister – Attached

Attendance – Attached

Finance Committee – Attached – Carol continues to work on auto-pay. She anticipated the first quarter to be the largest contributor to our deficit but donations were down \$6,500 from last year for February. There is no explanation, as attendance was not down.

Carol renegotiated our contract with Aplos for a \$2,000 savings which will begin in April.

Mark asked if the memorial funds are in an interest-bearing account. Carol explained that our checking account has no interest, our TD savings account has minimal interest, and that the \$120,000 in Thrivent money market does generate interest.

Carol has not been able to get a copy of the original charter for St John's.

Carol also brought up that our snow removal bill came in for February, and that we were charged \$455 rather than \$755 per salting, for a total of \$3,000 rather than \$5,000.

Discussion of the current snow/landscaping service was brought up and whether or not getting quotes from other companies should be sought for next year. Carol explained that the service is currently through a member of the church, but she will be pursuing other bids for next year.

Carolyn pointed out that the volume of snow and whether it needs to be removed is contextual, depending on the weather.

In addition to the snow removal and salting, landscaping is also handled by the same contract and also will be looked at to renegotiate and get additional bids.

\*It was moved and seconded to accept the Finance Committee's report as presented. The motion was made and seconded by Ken Woods / Alan Divver. **MOTION CARRIED**

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

Directory Update – Shannon explained we did get it on time, but it was returned for some edits and we do not have a new date at the moment for when it will be finalized. Also, we are still receiving information updates. Shannon would like the directory to be sent out electronically and if a paper copy is needed, people can request it from the office.

Carol asked if we should be reaching out to shut-in's or other members to be sure they are getting the communication and are included if desired. Shannon suggested a notice go out to the home-bound. Shannon will also try to get a list (from the anniversary celebration records) of people that do not get electronic communication to be sure they are also notified.

Staff Job Descriptions Update – Shannon has made the suggested updates but there are a few more that she needs to add and then get approval from the staff and mutual ministry. Once approved we can finalize them.

ICE Procedures – Louise asked if we would have to give the list of clients to ICE – yes, unless it is locked up in a private office. Shannon did not send the procedures to the Executive Committee for review but she will so that next month it can be presented to Council for approval.

Easter Dedications Update – Last month it was brought up that we do not actually donate to anyone and this is not clear on the donation forms. This is because the costs for the flowers are higher than the donation price because while costs have risen, the donation price has not. Going forward, the forms will make it clear so that everyone is aware. It was suggested to cover the cost and if people would like to give an additional donation, tell them where it will be going. Since the next Holiday flowers event will not be until Christmas, we will decide on what the price should be set at in a future meeting.

A Motion was made to raise the alter flowers price to \$25 which will cover their cost, to be effective 4/1/25.

\*It was moved and seconded by Shannon O'Neill / Louise Woods. **MOTION CARRIED**

### **ONGOING BUSINESS:**

Security Check Updates – Ken said that the team has been finding many small issues. (Lights left on, doors not locked, etc.) The checks have been effective. And there are now enough volunteers.

Strategic Planning – Tom brought up last month that as the congregation ages and new members do not give as much as older members, we need to continue to think creatively on how to grow the congregation and finances to sustain ourselves. We need to continue to think about fund raising or other ways to generate income. (Bingo, St John's calendars, etc.) A games of chance certificate is needed for bingo and Shannon can get that from the borough.

Carolyn asked if the synagogues are also struggling and Bo said that he believes they are, even though they tend to have a very tight knit group.

Growing Kids and Family was brought up and is something to think about and consider as a group, including new curriculum.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Alter Flowers – See above. The group also discussed using artificial flowers and/or better communication to the congregation to see if others are willing to cover the costs of fresh flowers. Carolyn will investigate sourcing artificial flowers and costs. This topic will be brought up at the next All Committee Meeting in April so that Christine Brinkworth can be brought into the conversation.

Mother's Day – Alan thought it would be nice to bring back Mother's Day breakfast and also add a Father's Day breakfast. He suggested a breakfast pot luck. His hope is to have people cook dishes and bring them in. The breakfasts would start at 8:30, before service. He would also like to get carnations to give to the mothers. We will need to look for volunteers to cook or help and a sign-up sheet to get an idea of attendees will be posted.

We are selling Mother's Day flowers again this year with proceeds going towards St John's fellowship activities. An announcement will be going out shortly.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- Community Outreach Ministry – No report
- Constitution and Bylaws – No report
- Fellowship – No report
- Hatboro Community Cupboard –See report – Carol said that the number of clients is still going down. Donations have also been down. Drivers are still needed.
- Kids & Family Ministry –See report – Lenten Family Night is coming up; additional people are needed to sign up for the chili contest. Bible school dates have been determined and yard signs have been ordered for the event. They are also hoping to get volunteers to post the yard signs in their private yards for more exposure. Snack/craft/supply needs will be posted shortly. Ashdon is also working on recruiting volunteers for the program. For the Easter Egg hunt, bags of eggs will be made available for congregants to take and stuff so that it does not all have to be done here at St John's
- Memorials –See report
- Mutual Ministry – No report
- Property – See report – Shannon asked if we ever report miscellaneous repairs to the insurance company and Ken said no. Carol also said that the insurance company would probably raise our rates with additional claims.
- Social Media – No report
- Stewardship – No report
- Women's Ministry – No report
- Worship & Music – No report

## **CORRESPONDENCE:**

None

## **CARES AND CONCERNS:**

Pastor Bo and council members shared their cares and concerns.

**NEXT MEETING: Date: April 16, 2025**

Meeting Leader: Alan Divver

Scripture: Pastor Bo

Prayer: Janice Vallone

Refreshments: Mark Vallone

**\*It was moved and seconded by Ashdon Bobbie / Ken Woods to adjourn the meeting at 7:24 p.m. MOTION CARRIED**

Respectfully submitted,

Bruce Roper

Council Secretary