

## CONGREGATION COUNCIL MINUTES

Date: 9/25/24

The September Congregation Council Meeting was held on 9/18/24

Council Members Present: Pastor Bannister, Ashdon Bobbie, Kiran Bodamer, Melanie Boyer, Alan Divver, CJ Hamilton, Shannon O'Neill, Barbara Quinn, Bruce Roper, Carol Schlegel, Jenn Shaw, Tom Smith, Maryanne Sweeney, Ken Woods, and Louise Woods.

Absent: Bob Muller, Anna Sweeney

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Shannon O'Neill at 7:00 p.m. The scripture was read by Carol Schlegel 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 August 2024 as presented without changes. The motion was made and seconded by Tom Smith / Barbara Quinn.  
MOTION CARRIED

### REPORTS:

President – Shannon O'Neill gave a brief update. Once the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration is over, she is planning on starting a Fellowship Committee as a continuation of those efforts.

Pastor Bannister – Attached.

A Motion was made to go into Executive Session.

It was moved and seconded by Bruce Roper / CJ Hamilton.

A Motion was made to come out of Executive Session.

It was moved and seconded by Shannon O'Neill / Bruce Roper.

Attendance – Attached

Finance Committee – Attached – Carol Schlegel spoke to the congregation at both services this past weekend, giving a financial update. There was a \$47,000 deficit projected as well as a \$50,000 expense for the roof maintenance. The roof has been paid off, leaving an actual deficit of about \$48,000 total. As of August 1, we used up our actual operating money and had to start using money in restricted funds, taking away from our reserves. Church council reserves are being used first, then memorial funds, etc. She noted that the congregation has been helping but it's not enough to cover actual expenses. We currently have less than \$200,000 in restricted funds. We are moving in the right direction (reducing expenses and thereby our deficit) and need to continue to watch our expenses very carefully.

Carol explained that income from donations is enough to cover salaries but then there are operating costs that cannot be covered and that is where our deficit is coming from.

Carol was asked if she can project how long our current reserves will last. She explained that either we need a significant increase in donations or we have to do something different. She is currently working on the budget for 2025 which will be presented to the congregation in December of this year.

Carol is also working on a 5-year projection for the budget which will include capital expenses such as three roofs that need addressed, the HVAC system which is long past overdue for a complete overhaul, and a new server which desperately needs replacing. She has applied for a grant for a new server, which is projected to cost about \$2,200.

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

#### OLD BUSINESS:

75th Anniversary Update – Shannon and her team had a meeting and they are finalizing details now. It is all coming together and they have fund raised enough money to support all the activities. The Needleworkers have made 300 crosses as favors. Maryanne Sweeney is doing decorations.

Carol pointed out that it would be nice to have a list of which committee or organization does what. E.g. the difference between Social Ministry, Outreach, Fellowship...

Tom Smith asked if bylaws have been turned in. Shannon thinks so. A redefinition of the bylaws/constitution is needed.

Continuing Resolutions – to be continued next month when Bob Muller is back.

Staff Job Descriptions – Ashdon has most of them and Council will talk about them in October's meeting. She will send them out to Council members prior to the October meeting.

Outreach Committee – Shannon would like to see us get out and known in the community more. Possibly make it a Publicity or Evangelical committee.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

A Motion was made to go into Executive Session.

It was moved and seconded by Shannon O'Neill / Bruce Roper.

A Motion was made to come out of Executive Session.

It was moved and seconded by Shannon O'Neill / Bruce Roper.

Basement – Carol explained to everyone that the pantry has a mouse problem. Carol had Orkin come in to assess the building. They found significant issues in the basement. In particular, the storage room smells of mold and has had previous water damage which is an environment that attracts mice and that room needs to be taken care of. Mice have also infested the small closet in fellowship hall which needs to be cleaned out and cleaned up. Ken Woods and Joe Kircher have since cleaned that closet. Regarding the basement, it was suggested that if it can be cleaned up maybe we could rent it out or at least use it more for the Halloween Haunted House, Scouts and other groups/events. The downstairs kitchen was not being used and it was damaged from a flood so the plan was to gut it and simply not use it. If we can use it for storage, we can keep the Christmas decorations there.

Alan got quote to clean out closet from Regan. Pastor said that the basement will take work, but it could be useful and would like to be able to use it as necessary since we have it. Shannon said that the Scouts offered to see about install a handicap chair for access to the basement as a project. But we don't know if that would be feasible.

Offering Envelopes – Some members have expressed interest in getting rid of them while others do not. Carol said that it costs \$2,000 a year for the distribution of the envelopes which go out to 269 families. Thoughts brought up were; the envelope numbers are not needed, postage continues to increase, the Posters need the envelopes to post, and some members cannot use electronic giving. Proposed by Carol Schlegel and Joe Kircher that we can design/change the envelopes however we'd like. We would have until 11/15 to change them which is when we would need to order a new batch. Currently, only 45 members give electronically. The cost to print lose envelopes is \$660 plus shipping to us. We could have the envelopes available in the Narthex for people

that want to continue using them to help themselves when they get the attendance card and handout for the service. We can design the envelope however we want. In addition, we can put holiday envelopes out when appropriate.

Jenn Shaw asked about shut-ins. It was suggested that the Visitation team would be willing to take the envelopes to them. Some already do.

A Motion was made to stop the current envelope process

It was moved and seconded by Carol Schlegel / Alan Divver.

MOTION CARRIED.

Tom Smith asked how frequently contribution statements are mailed. Ashdon Bobbie said that it is yearly, but that it was quarterly. Tom thought it might be better to be more frequent than yearly as a motivator/encourager for giving.

Benevolence Budget – Carol explained that benevolence has never been budgeted but we will start this coming year. Income is good, but as an expense, benevolence is a general account, not specific. Currently, we don't know where the money is going so we would need to say what we're putting it towards. How do we divie it up?

Synod payments/benevolence was strongly encouraged to be sent to synod. Tom asked if our synod produces an annual report. Pastor said that they do. Tom asked if they also have a deficit and Pastor said that he did not know, but that they also struggle. Carol said that she would like church council to approve distribution of benevolence funds and be more transparent about it. Tom would like benevolence to the synod to be a commitment that must be honored in some fashion. Carol suggested that where and how distribution of the funds go be part of the December Council meeting. Tom would like to see us appeal to the congregation specifically to reduce the budget. Maybe have a special service specific for the deficit reduction.

Shannon asked about Pre-K and it was explained that we are down to two rooms and it would likely be cost prohibitive.

Caroling – Alan Divver passed around a signup sheet for Council to make suggestions on. He is moving the date for caroling to Sunday December 8<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 with a possible rain date of December 15<sup>th</sup>.

Trunk or Treat – Alan also proposed a date of Saturday October 26<sup>th</sup> from 2:30-4:30. He would like to see signs put up to invite the community.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Community Outreach Ministry – No report
- Constitution and Bylaws – No report
- Fellowship – No report
- Hatboro Community Cupboard – See report. Carol said we got another grant from Montgomery County. CJ said that they still need drivers for pickups from a couple locations. Carol said that we had put it on our Facebook page previously and we got help for Sunday drivers. We should try again targeting for specific days/times drivers are needed.
- Kids & Family Ministry – See report. Ashdon said that we had 43 people step up for bible sponsors.
- Memorials – No report
- Mutual Ministry – No report
- Property – See report – Ken Woods asked about the security walkthrough. Ashdon said Shawn is doing it, maybe not nightly, but as often as possible. Garden cleaned up was done by CJ and Ken.
- Social Media – No report
- Stewardship – No report
- Women's Ministry – No report
- Worship & Music – See report.

## CORRESPONDENCE:

Scout Troop 81 Girls and Boys (about 15 people) would like to sleep over in St John's Friday evening Sept 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> and October 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup>, both from 9:00pm-7:00am because they are here helping Friday night and leaving early the next morning.

A Motion was made to allow the Scouts to stay in St Johns for the above dates.

It was moved and seconded by Shannon O'Neill /Alan Divver. MOTION CARRIED.

AA group would like to meet on Wednesday nights from 7:00-8:00 pm using one of the open class rooms. Council agreed we should suggest a charge of \$30 per month.

A Motion was made to approve the use of a back Sunday School room for the AA group meeting.

It was moved and seconded by CJ Hamilton / Ken Woods. MOTION CARRIED.

CARES AND CONCERNS:

Pastor Bo and council members shared their cares and concerns.

NEXT MEETING: Date: October 16

Meeting Leader: Alan Divver

Scripture: Shannon O'Neill

Prayer: Alan Divver

Refreshments: CJ Hamilton

\*It was moved and seconded by Ashdon Bobbie / Melanie Boyer to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m. MOTION CARRIED

Respectfully submitted,

Bruce Roper