

April 11, 2025 Council Minutes

Present: Pastor Mark Hensley, Moderator-Elect Kay Rowntree, Treasurer Jean Bocker, Secretary Joanne Himebauch, Janine Coley, Karla Pennington, Jamie Pennington, Beth Petersen, Sue Roberts
Absent: Moderator Bob Brandemuehl, Rae-Ellen Preuss

Call to Order - Kay Rowntree

Opening Prayer - Sue Roberts

Devotional Time - Pastor Mark: 1st Corinthians. We walk by faith, not sight. Walter Wangerman story about the Rag Man in the Inner City.

Approval of the March 7th Council Minutes and March 2nd Semi-Annual Business Meeting minutes. Jean moved and Janine seconded to approve all the minutes. Motion carried.

New Business:

Church Growth Plan - What is our WHY? We exist to _____ so that _____.

We brainstormed ideas. Janine wrote them down on the white board. Joanne will type them up and send them out in a document.

We talked about our **plans for Easter** in our campaign to draw in new people to our church. We have Easter invitation postcards, which also went out to the Mukwonago Food Pantry in the Easter Baskets prepared by Missions and church members. We have yard signs, and we have plastic eggs with a message, prepared by the Women's Agape Group. The eggs will be placed around town in public places for people to find. We just need to make sure to pick up the eggs that people don't take, so that we don't litter. That was the Village of Mukwonago's one request to us when we proposed this project. The Food for Families also received invitations to attend our Easter service. We will ask members of the congregation to help put out Easter eggs that the Women's Agape Group stuffed. We will have our breakfast at 8:30, the egg hunt (for adults, too, this year!) at 9:30, with the service at 10.

We discussed how to approach & promote upcoming days - Mother's Day, Pentecost, Memorial Day, Father's Day, etc.

Memorial Committee - Janine. A vacancy to the Memorial Committee occurred when Ruth Rappold passed away. Jamie moved and Jean seconded to approve Claire Albrecht to fill that position. Motion carried.

The Reaching Out in Kindness ministerial team is dissolving. Janine asked to take a look at the ministerial teams and dissolve those that are not active to bring to the Council and dissolve them.

Administrative Professionals Day - Gift & card for the Congregation to sign for Judi. Put a picture of her on the screen. Janine has a card to use. Council members can chip in cash for a gift to Janine.

We received a donation of \$100 for Food for Families from Jane & Doug Owsiany.

Sanctuary Sound System - Our sound system has poor quality and needs improvement. Often people on Zoom can't hear, and we need to provide a better system for people who are hard of hearing. Mark called a Sound company. It is expensive to use them. But they suggested that we could replace all the cracked cables, which are most of them. The Lectern mic doesn't and a cable to a speaker is lost. Speakers are in the back and need to be moved to the front.

The simplest idea is to get speakers on speaker stands up front. We can possibly mount them later. We need to run all new cabling and run a cable up to a mixer box under the piano. We got new connectors on the new cordless mics. Janine asked if this will fix the problems on Zoom and on the phone. It will help. We would eventually add hearing devices, too. We would need to sanitize them after each use. Beth suggested using \$500 of Memorial money. She will talk with Rae-Ellen & Janice B. Karla moved and Sue seconded to spend up to \$1100 with AV and Memorial money for Pastor Mark to fix the sound system. Motion carried.

Roof - Kay, Bob, and Jean got 3 quotes from different roofing companies. The group will spend more time looking through the quotes and report back at the May meeting. The quotes came in between \$30,000 to \$100,000 from Badgerland, SRS, and Semper Fi. All have A+ ratings and do flat roofs. State Farm Insurance approves of Badgerland and Semper Fi. Mark was not familiar with SRS.

HVAC System - We've been having problems with our Compressor and Boiler system. Nick Beilfuss (who works in HVAC) and David Beilfuss (our electrician) came by to look. The compressor and the heat air dryer were put in sometime between the 1960s and 1990s. They are not working. The cost to replace them would be \$7500. We could take it from Capital Improvements. Janine moved and Sue seconded to replace the air compressor and air dryer for the boiler heating system at a cost of \$7500. Motion carried.

Jean will call Nick to tell him. Nick also mentioned the possibility of having an on-going maintenance contract for ALL the HVAC systems. Monthly visits would cost \$6200 (per year). Two visits per year (8 hours each) would cost \$4424. Give thought to it and we will discuss this next month. Nick works for Johnson Controls. Jamie mentioned that we should get several bids.

Vicinity Council, Pastor Mark Installation - Jamie. It was a lovely day! Jamie is relieved that the whole process is over!

WCA (Wisconsin Congregational Association) Meeting - May 3. There is money in the budget to go.

The **NACCC Minister's Convocation** at the end of April in Racine- Mark plans to attend.

MACC would use the Fellowship Hall after the May 9th concert. Joanne filled out a building use form. No one had a problem with that taking place.

Pastor's Vacation. Mark has requested June 30 to July 13 for his vacation. July 6, July 13, and also September 14 would be his vacation days this year. Mark will find pulpit fulfillment.

Treasurer's report. Jean asked to convert our 02 account (savings) to a Money Market account to earn interest. It is just a savings account with interest. Janine moved and Karla seconded to convert the 02 account to a Money Market account. Motion carried.

Beth asked about when the Memorial CD of Perkins & Haeger money will be coming due soon. The bank will call Jean. Beth asked how much interest was earned. Jean told her that it is \$532.80.

Membership Approval. Mark asked to approve membership for Matthew and Renee Kowalik. Mark discussed with them about the Congregational Way and the church leadership flow. They have met with Mark, and owned the covenant. Now the Council has voted to approve them, and then there will be a time for them to go through a formal joining in front of the congregation.

Kay asked Mark if he would like to look at the membership SOP and come up with a more streamlined membership format.

Janine moved and Joanne seconded to approve full membership into First Congregational Church of Mukwonago for Renee and Matt Kowalik. Motion carried.

Sensory safe space in the Sanctuary. Sue and Mark have been looking at creating a sensory safe space in the back of the sanctuary for special needs folks. Jess Ballard provided a list of resources for it. Council thought it would be a great idea. We would need to run it by the congregation.

We discussed different seating in the back of the sanctuary, and a coffee cart. We had a discussion about what makes people comfortable to want to come to a church.

Last year, we ended up with a surplus of \$25,427. That has now been moved to the Reserve Account, totalling \$87,027.99 in Reserves.

Janine moved and Joanne seconded to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

(Don't forget to submit money for Judi's gift to Janine.)

Respectfully submitted,
Joanne Himebauch
Council Secretary

We Exist.....

So that.....

1. To grow the Kingdom of God

1. People know God's love.

2. To impact our world for Christ

2. We grow together in faith, love, and service.

3. To reflect the love of Jesus

3. Others may experience His love.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 4. As a Christian community | 4. We build bridges of love, hope, and faith. |
| 5. To shine the light of God's love
(in the community) | 5. We illuminate the path to Christ. |
| 6. To touch lives | 6. Others know Christ. |
| 7. Glorify God unconditionally | 7. We can build circles of hope, faith, and love. |
| 8. To be Christ's hands & feet to
a broken world | 8. We can serve God faithfully.
8a. We reflect the face of God.
8b. We reflect the face and love of God.
8c. We reflect the light and love of God. |
| 9. To share God's love in (as) a
Christian community | 9. We give in faith, love, and service. |

April Directors' Reports

Christian Ed - Sue Roberts

Nursery - nothing to report.

Youth Sunday School - nothing to report.

Congregational Care - Janine Coley

Welcome/Hospitality - Joanne Himebauch

We revamped the recipe pages, added new notebooks & pens, changed the popcorn source to the Elegant Farmer, and added a page from our website about What is a Congregationalist. I have bags lined up at the back of the Sanctuary for anyone to hand out. Just be sure to grab a bag of cookies from the freezer in the kitchen. Our hope is to hand out many bags on Easter Sunday.

Fellowship:

We will be seeing the "King of Kings" animated movie at the Hillside Theater on Sunday, April 13. More events are coming up soon. Ideas? Get them to me.

Prayer Chain - Beth Petersen

Nothing from Prayer Ministry

Funeral/Wedding Hostess/Archives - Rae-Ellen Preuss

We learned of the death of our member, Judith Birich on 3/23/25. Judith joined in 2021. Pastor Mark had reached out to the family. But there was no response. I found the obituary on the Schmidt & Bartelt funeral home website. It just said there would be a visitation on 4/15/25 from 4-6pm. I am reading that we will not be doing a meal for the family.

I also just updated the Memorial Book for 2024 and 2025. In the span of a year, we have had 7 members pass away.

Donna Greenwald (3/31/24)/, Jim Schuett, Karen Thomas, Dorothy Schrader, Kathy Clark (all in 2024). Shirley Manion and Judith Birch (3/23/25) passed in 2025

Visitation - Janine Coley

Thank you once again for everyone who has visited members of the Church.

Missions Ministerial Report - Beth Petersen

Food for Families: Joanne Himebauch

Food for Families will have their Easter food box pick-up on Tuesday, April 15, instead of us putting food in the lockers that week.

Missions: - Beth Petersen

On March 28 we once again served dinner at the Hope Center. I spoke with Karen Jones and she said there was enough milk and desserts, but they could have used a few more people. We will have another opportunity to serve at the Hope Center in October.

On March 23, we had a great church-wide turn out to fill 60 Easter baskets that ultimately got delivered to the Food Pantry in Mukwonago. It was a wonderful feeling seeing so many of our FCC ladies and a few husbands getting together to work on a project that will affect 60 children's lives this Easter holiday season.

I am going to try to fit in a Missions meeting before the end of April. I'd like to check with Brenda Linzmeier about making Blessings in a Bag to hand out to homeless individuals. This is something our whole church could get behind.

Property & Grounds - Rae-Ellen Preuss

Although I am unable to be at this month's Council meeting, I do have a report to offer.

Last week, the day before we hosted the Lenten service, I received a text from Joanne. Two of the wall sconces lights were not working.

With the Lenten service the next day, I contacted David Beilfuss to come for a repair service call. Evidently, the circuit breakers had tripped during the thunderstorm we had. He said with the age of the breakers, we could have more outages. So I directed him to replace all ten breakers in the boiler room that run those lights. Breakers are about \$8-\$10 each. With new breakers, we shouldn't have any more issues when we have a potential for bad weather.

While working in the boiler room, David noticed the pneumatic compressor constantly running. He found a hole in the tank. So the compressor never shuts off and we are constantly heating our building. He was able to patch the hole. But it is only a matter of time before it doesn't hold. This will need immediate attention. However, we are very close to shutting the system down with warmer weather coming.

On Saturday, the day of the Vicinage, David's son, Nick came out to look at the system. Nick is a skilled tradesman in HVAC and works for Johnson Controls. He will come up with a plan for us to fix/replace our system. I told Jean about this. She has invited Nick to present a written proposal on 4/11/25 at the meeting on Friday.

Again, my apologies for not being at the meeting. I would be interested in having a copy of Nick's plans and Council's thoughts (through Minutes)