

KVCC Church Council Meeting Minutes

July 26, 2022

Present: Pastor John Sampson, Debby Rice, Charlotte Lichtenberg, Barbara Merle-Smith, Liz Jaques, Derek Prill, Dre Roebuck, Jimm Collin, Linda Bogardus, Naj Wikoff, Henrietta Jordan, Nancy McArthur, Fritz Sabbow, Pam Gothner, Lynn DeWalt, Rob Hastings, and Deborah Mitchell. Chris Blaicher attended via Zoom.

Absent: Anne Runyon Hurd, Susie Allen, Paul Osenbaugh, and Erica Swift

Debby Rice hosted the meeting at her home in Keene. She opened the meeting at 5:14 PM.

Opening Prayer: Pastor John led the group in prayer, inviting God's spirit to join us and give us inspiration.

Reading of the Creation Justice Church Statement: Debby read the CJC Statement to help keep us focused on our mission and the Church's commitments.

Quorum: We had a quorum at today's meeting.

Approval of Last Month's Meeting: Linda noted that there was a duplication of the Worship Committee's report in last month's meeting minutes. Naj made a motion to approve the last month's meeting minutes, and Dre seconded the motion. A discussion followed, and the motion was passed.

PASTOR'S REPORT – JULY 26, 2022

Worship and Spiritual Development

- Upcoming special worship:
 - July 31 - Celtic inspired worship
 - September 4 – Last Sunday worship before starting sabbatical
- Leading weekly worship at the Neighborhood House. Jenifer Deming will lead while I am on sabbatical.
- The Summer Music program is underway.
- The CPG weekly book discussion group is taking a break.
- Friday morning prayer group has switched its meeting day to Wednesday. The group meets in the VSR, sharing prayers, concerns, and joys of the community.
- Weekly meetings with Dave Craig regarding worship on the Zoom platform. Chris Blaicher is training to be Dave's back-up.
- The Centering Prayer Group (CPG) meets mornings @ 7 AM.

Confirmed Memorial Services and Weddings

- There will be a memorial stone interment for Daniel Wilcox on Tuesday, August 16 in the Memorial Garden.
- October 1 – Michael Caldwell and Patience Whitman. The Rev. Susie Allen is officiating.
- Working with Henri Jordan, and Emily Dwight to schedule dates for placing their memorial stones in the Memorial Garden.

Pastoral Support

- Provide ongoing pastoral support to the church community via Zoom, telephone, in-person meetings, and email.

Book Discussion Group – Tuesday Nights

- The group is taking the rest of the summer off.

Community Support

- Working with members of the congregation on identifying neighbors in need, and supporting them through financial grants.

Essex Association

- Annual meeting held on May 22.
- Black River – St. Lawrence Association (BRSL)
 - Members of the Essex and BRSL Associations have agreed to move forward with merging the Associations. The next step is for each Association to identify representatives to join a working group to come up with new bylaws.

Training

- Sexual Harassment Prevention Training - Lynn to provide documentation that he received the training through KCS in September.

Sabbatical

- Will be on sabbatical September 2022 – mid-January 2023
- Attending Michaelmas Term at Cambridge University, Cambridge, UK
- Sabbatical information session offered after worship on 5/13
- Requested that Council and Sabbatical Planning Committee identify all needs by March 31. Met with Larry S. to review the PDF process. Also requested to kick-off the 2023 Nomination process. No other request made at this time.

Out of Office

- No time out of office planned at this time.

Other Items

- Invited those interested in joining the church to reach out. Three people have indicated they would like to become members. New member welcome date is 8/28.
- Will hosted table at Plattsburgh PRIDE to be held on Saturday, October 1, 12 – 4 PM.
- Participating in monthly meetings of the Plattsburgh Climate Squad, a group comprised of members of houses of worship in Plattsburgh looking to become climate advocates in the North Country.
- Currently serving a 3-year term on the UCC NY Board of Directors.
- Attend Spiritual Direction sessions for the development of my own spirit
- Member of the Steering Committee of the Keene Diversity Advisory Committee (KDAC)

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

July 22, 2022

Attending: Nancy McArthur, Fritz Sabbow, Elizabeth Davidson Derr, Larry Shipps, Debby Rice

The meeting opened with a review of the YTD financials as compared to the budget and the prior year's results.

- Giving is on par with 2021 after allowing for the special funding of the worship broadcasts. Plate giving has increased resulting in slightly higher overall giving that in 2021 net of special gifts.
- Rental income will be interrupted when the tenant vacates at the end of July since reconditioning the manse will require several weeks before it may be relet.
- Summer music and ministers are being charged by week to allocate these costs to the periods incurred.
- Grounds Interest Group charges have been corrected.

The balance sheet requires the following corrections as recognized by Fritz Sabbow:

- Payroll Corrections should be shown on the Income Statement and not as a negative asset.
- Funds due to the endowment should be recognized as income along with the monthly endowment transfer.
- The Flower Fund should instead be an income statement item.
- The Ukraine Fundraiser balance of \$251 comprised of recent gifts has been sent to World Central Kitchen.

Investment performance remains a concern of the Committee as the coming year's endowment draw will be significantly reduced. The fund has lost 17% from yearend; however comparable results are being experienced by other investors, so no changes are planned by the committee at this time. Assessment of the performance will continue. Expense reductions will be needed in the coming year.

The Solar Panel Reserve will be used to improve the energy efficiency of the church property and has been accounted for as totaling \$17.8M after recognizing that one donation was not received as previously documented. The balance will be transferred to a Reserve of Energy Improvements and administered by Dan Mason and Derek Prill.

The group discussed Nancy McArthur's proposal for a new CPA/bookkeeping firm to replace the current bookkeeper. The group will finalize the selection after meeting the principal of the firm.

Stewardship campaign plans center around in October. Thanks to Debby Rice, Little Green Light, our stewardship accounting program, will enable significant improvements in our accounting for gifts as well as outreach to our donors.

Attached is the income statement for the first six months of 2022.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

GROUNDS REPORT

Pam mentioned there are some problems with the sprinkler and it may have to be replaced. She will also be offering perennials at the Annual Church Bazaar and ought feedback around what to charge for each plant.

BUILDINGS REPORT

Derek said building projects are progressing as planned.

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

There is no new information since the last Council meeting.

MISSION AND SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE

There is no new information since the last Council Meeting.

FLOWER COMMITTEE

There is no new information since the last Council Meeting.

RE-OPENING TASK FORCE REPORT

- Group continues to monitor updates to health guidance, and the state of the pandemic.
- Meeting monthly.

2022 BAZAAR COMMITTEE REPORT

Dre was pleased to report plans are coming along smoothly for the Bazaar, and everyone on the Council is playing a role in the planning and organizing of the event. Barbara is relocating and is not available for that reason.

The Manse Discernment Group

Debby said the current tenant is expected to depart the apartment at the end of July. The short term use of the space will be another rental; long term use of the space is to be determined.

SABBATICAL REPORT TO THE COUNCIL

JULY 2022

There will be a Sabbatical Q&A after worship on July 31. The two-page Information sheet that was sent out in email and posted in the Van Santvoord room will be made available to the congregation. It will also go on the website and periodically in a Community News.

Since Barbara is moving in September, Leslie Shipps has agreed to join this committee.

Pastor John mentioned how the Council's presence during the Sabbatical is important and how we can role model how the Church can still function and participate in the life of the church during his sabbatical. Henrietta recognized Pastor John for his leadership, and the Council thanked him as well.

PERSONNEL GROUP FORMED TO CARRY OUT EVALUATIONS OF THE PASTOR, CHURCH SECRETARY, MUSIC DIRECTOR AND MUSIC ACCOMPANIST

Report submitted by Debby Rice (who will not be a part of this group)

—3 of 4 people have volunteered

Deb Mitchell

Fritz Sabbow

Larry Shipps

To be determined

Below is a suggested approach for the Pastor evaluation based on Lorraine Duvall's evaluation tool from 5 years ago and UCC guidance.

The Personnel Group will make final decisions. Note: Tool and process not set yet for Church Secretary and Music staff.

1. PASTOR

The UCC states in their guidance document on Pastoral Evaluation that "the purpose of clergy evaluation is to assist the clergy in being the most effective pastor possible in the particular church being served. Also, it is to help the pastor in her or his growth and development within the ministry."

We recognize and agree that such an evaluation is highly subjective and that representational, thoughtful input is key to this being a useful exercise.

Suggested Steps (refer to UCC)

Step 1: Why do we want to evaluate?

- It has been **5** years since the prior evaluation—OVERDUE (need to establish frequency and be sure to stick with this.). An evaluation provides feedback and an opportunity for conversation to reinforce areas of strengths and identify areas for improvement.

Step 2: Determine what you want to evaluate.

- Using the various roles of our pastor, we want to understand and evaluate each dimension using a standardized format that is flexible so that broad input is provided (see attachments)
- There is a choice of tools:
 - 1) Previous tools provided by Lorraine Duvall (used in the Pastor evaluation 5 yrs ago)
 - 2) An updated tool based on current UCC guidelines
 - 3) Other?

Step 3: Choose data collection technique (Suggestion)

- **Administer by 4-person Personnel group:** Deb Mitchell, Fritz Sabbow (Pastor Relations Committee rep), Larry Shipps, TBD
- **9 representatives of the Congregation provide performance feedback.**
 - Who: (3 chosen by Pastor John, 3 chosen by Personnel committee, 3 Council members), a mix of long term members, new members, demographics
 - Recommended Tool: Reflective Questions for Members (see attachment) + Duvall evaluation modified
 - Approach: each member of the Personnel Ad Hoc group will divide the 9 members and interview either by phone, in person asking them to complete the form. After they have had a week or so to complete the Reflective Form, the contact ad hoc team member will review the form, follow up with any clarifying questions, and of course, thank them for this contribution to our church.
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Step 4: Determine how to use the collected data in the evaluation.

- Transparent reporting of how evaluators are chosen
- The personnel ad hoc group will assess the raw data, discern the deeper meaning of this input, and present it in an interactive open way to our minister following Sabbatical.
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Step 5: Formulating the results of the evaluation

- Understand that the data is for John Sampson's and Council's use in setting future priorities in deepening and broadening KVCC's future....."It is all about growing and developing John's already very capable ministry with our Church."
- Consider adding any learnings from the Sabbatical

Note (again): an evaluation process needs to be developed and executed for the Church Secretary and the Music Staff. The recent Music survey is a good start on quality input from (organ) survey results.

Music Program Survey: Debby expressed her appreciation for all of the time people took to fill out the music program survey. The Council invited Rob Hastings and Lynn DeWalt to today's Council meeting to ensure they were a part of this important discussion. Based on the survey results, it is clear the KVCC music program is loved by all. This would include the choir, the music selection, the music variety, live musicians, and the bell choir. The Council noted the hard work and dedication of those people involved in the music program, especially Rob and Lynn. Other survey results indicate there is not a strong desire to purchase an organ, some of which is because of the original cost of the organ. Other organ options were discussed, to include a Hammond organ which is less expensive and has desirable functions. We may have most of the cost of a Hammond organ on hand, based upon a generous donation. Naj made a motion to have a more thorough evaluation of a Hammond organ, and Jimm seconded the motion. Rob, Chris, Liz and Lynn volunteered to complete this task and report back to the Council. A discussion was made and the motion passed. Other topics of discussion about the music program included ways in which to involve younger people and

modernize our music program. Naj felt the Mission and Social Action Committee could partner in some of these endeavors.

Plattsburgh Pride Event: Debby said the KVCC will have a presence at the Pride Event held in Plattsburgh on Saturday, October 1st.

Other Business: None

Next council meeting is Tuesday, **August 23, 2022** (fourth Tuesday of the month) at 5:00 PM in person at the Keene Valley Library.

Deborah made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Mitchell, Clerk