

Minutes
Little Home Church Council Meeting
December 10, 2013

In Attendance: Sandy Antonelli, Kathy Haben, Lori Haseltine, Kathleen Sullivan Kaska, Louise Aughnay, Susannah Lesswing, Jan Marchese, Ann McLaughlin, Ron Purser, Susi Winquist, Art Zwemke Guests: Maureen O'Donnell, Nancy Graham, Gail Zwemke

Absent: Valeri Baldwin, Carol Berger, Anne Bouchard, Jane Shelton

Moderator Kathy Haben explained that the purpose of inviting new church members to the Council meeting was to inform them what the Council does and to have each Ministry explain their purpose. Art gave a history of his long time involvement as Treasurer for the church. Kathy also explained the Congregational Meetings and the information available on the website. Maureen asked what the biggest challenge was for our local church and it was agreed that the growth of our membership is our biggest challenge right now as it is for many churches at this time. Pastor Ron explained that the United Church of Christ is laity run. Kathy began the meeting at 7:30 and welcomed everyone. She read one of her favorite Bible passages, Isaiah 9:6, and asked for prayer requests. There were quite a few. Pastor Ron then gave the opening prayer.

Approval of Minutes: Kathy asked if there were any changes or corrections to the November minutes. Some minor changes were requested and a motion to approve the minutes was made by Susannah and seconded by Lori. The November minutes were approved unanimously.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Ron informed the Council that he has been visiting and counseling members and also getting ready for Christmas activities. The Fox River and Countryside Fire Rescue District is reviewing our preparedness. Pastor Ron said we do pass inspection every time but fire departments are trying to stop candlelight services everywhere. Last week was a bad week for working with furnace issues and then we also had trouble with the water pressure where pipes were frozen due to the Guild House furnace. The church furnaces are just in a bad location that causes excessive wear. Snow removal has also been taken care of now for the year. Pastor Ron also passed around a framed poem acknowledgement from the Bridge Communities which is one of our Outreach Agencies.

Treasurer's Report: Art informed the group that through November 30, receipts are higher than previous years. We have collected \$197,634 which is 92.1% of our annual total receipts budget of \$228,700. Our YTD deficit is (\$39,093) would be much worse without the castle fundraiser. We are still paying bills on time and not borrowing from the bank, but we need to sell the real estate in order to stay in this position. Almost \$10,000 was charged to Capital Assets and our

Building Maintenance and Repairs was \$8,000 because our facilities are antiques and we always have something that is a challenge. Art will put something together for the next council meeting. Ann reported that we have received 36 pledges for a total of \$123,574. There are still 31 members who have not yet pledged this year that had pledged last year. Kathy moved to approve the report, seconded by Ann. The Treasurer's report was approved unanimously.

2014 Budget: Art has received only 2 ministry budgets and still needs five more. He asked the chairs to email their budgets to him.

Peterson House Update: Art explained that the listing agreement has been signed with Leslie Ebersole and it is now on MLS listed at \$185,000. Art would like approval to list the Dixon property at \$85,000. The current renters are about 5 months behind on the rent and are leaving at the end of the year. He would like to have the house listed on the MLS on the first of the year. Kathy is working with the renters on the payment plan for the rent that is owed. Ann moved to have the house listed with B&W at \$85,000 for January 1. Lori seconded and the motion was unanimously approved. Art is working with Rik Alex to have the 10 feet of the Peterson property added to the Guild House and Church property. He is proposing to have the Guild House and the church be all one consolidated property. The Dixon property has a small 'notch' that the property owners to the north would like to purchase. Art feels that 'notch' is worth \$5,000. Art asked Pastor Ron to find out if the neighbor wants to purchase the 'notch'. The Dixon property would have to be restated, it would not change the price of the home. Art will try and negotiate a price for the surveying of the properties. Gail said we should research with a title company and we may not have to do the surveying for all the properties. Then Art will pursue changing the properties. We need a new legal description for the Peterson home. Currently we know of no legal descriptions of the properties. Art explained that another issue we have is the joint use of the septic for the Peterson house. We also need to determine where the septic tank is located that is used by the Peterson property. Art would like to clear up the issues before the end of the year and will contact everyone by email. He will also need some signatures from the officers of the church for the bank and he wants to get a credit card for the church that requires approval. Carol moved that the church get a credit or debit card for the church, 2nd by Louise. Unanimously approved.

Moderator's Report: Kathy reported December Council Updates were distributed in advance. Dixon house update: The renters owe July-Dec rent and Kathy wants to know if we should charge a late fee. Barkley submitted a bill for \$360 for collection charges although he has not collected any rent. It was agreed that we should not pay Barkley if they are not collecting rent. Our recourse with the renters is to take them to court and wait.

Moderator Elect Report: Susi has worked with Jane to get the new calling tree computerized. Susi asked if anyone received a working timeline for their ministry chairs, a report of what happens throughout the year to forward to the next chair in June. Kathy suggested that the chairs keep this information and start thinking of the chair responsibility for next year.

Ministry Reports:

Christian Education: Lori said she is still working on the February 1 tour of Fermi Lab. If there are more than 20 we would have to pay a fee. A sign-up sheet will go out. The camping trip is still in the works.

Congregational Life: Susannah said the Christmas Caroling party on December 20 is underway and the hope is that there will be many different ages involved. The Advent Tea was a success with about 50 in attendance and many guests. The Chili Cook-Off is February 8. Making God Laugh at Pheasant Run Theatre was a great success as well as the brunch at Colonial Restaurant before the play. An outing to the movies for 'Noah's Ark' was suggested as a possibility for another activity. The lasagna dinner after the Christmas Pageant is also a great, well attended event and needs some volunteers.

Evangelism: Carol wrote notes to everyone that visited the church since September. Her focus has been personal follow-ups with our visitors. She would like to have a plan in order to increase our membership. Her concern is how to get everyone to complete a visitor card. It seems that we receive cards from about 50% of the visitors. Carol wants to make the church a presence in this community.

Facilities: Kathy reported for Anne Bouchard. Repairs have been done on furnaces, a toilet, the motion detector light and the electric piano in the Sanctuary.

Outreach: Valerie had sent her report. There were 45 Thanksgiving meals for food pantry with a surplus of \$224. We have received the names of five children from Wayne school for the giving tree. We have 60 dinners to complete for the food pantry for Christmas.

Stewardship: Ann McLaughlin said the Christmas Fund mailing will go out and the collection will be on the 22nd. The individual statements will go out in the mail also. Kathy said the 22nd Christmas Cantata will be a big turnout and we need to make sure the sound system is working in the parish hall and that we have extra chairs ready. We may possibly need more ushers, too.

Worship & Spiritual Growth: Sandy said Larry has a \$12,000 donation for next year's music. Sandy will talk to Rich Doerr regarding ushers and pulpit associates.

Members at Large: Kathleen has been reaching out to people not seen in church.

Old Business: Kathy is still looking at new chairs for the Parish Hall. The New Beginnings Program is reasonable and she will get a copy of the brochure to Carol for review. The sound system is still being looked at.

After ONA: Kathleen outlined the proposed addition to the front signage of the rainbow/spectrum bar to identify our ONA status. The Council agreed with the proposal and she will

proceed to have the artwork sent to the sign maker and the sign produced for installation within a week. The website and email templates will also be updated. Kathleen would like to put an item in the January BTW regarding the graphic element.

New Business: We have had 25 Endowment Fund surveys returned. There was no option: “I choose not to participate”. Kathleen has been contacting former members regarding the ONA process and outcome. Her goal is to communicate and let them know what is happening at our church and that they are welcome.

Kathy made a motion to adjourn and Jane seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Pastor Ron gave the closing prayer at 9:26.

The next meeting is January 14 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Marchese
Church Clerk