

5/17/15 Congregational Annual Meeting Minutes

Location: St. John United Church of Christ

Meeting duration: 11:40 am – 1:00 pm

Opening Meeting opened with a prayer by Pastor Keith. All read the Vision and Mission statements.

Quorum is 20% of total membership or 25 members present, whichever is greater. As indicated by hand count of members present, more than 25 members are present and a quorum has been achieved.

Tim Smith, SLC President, called the meeting to order.

Approval of 2014 congregational annual meeting minutes

Dean Griffith moved to approve the May 18, 2014 minutes as presented; second by Charles Giglia; passed unanimously.

General agenda: Reports, New Business, Sharing

Sandy Kerlin led a celebration of FY2015 accomplishments & successes:

- Elevator, air conditioning, and door security (accessible entrance) completed. Next steps are building out landings and addressing post-renovation flooring needs.
- Welcome Table in back of sanctuary continues to be successful.
- Jeannette Ludwig Media Center – desire to film testimonials, and get the word out to the community about St. John.
- Donna Hoffman is serving as Building Coordinator, desiring to do more outreach to community.
- Avenue Stage has been launched on the lower level, and Women in Theatre (WIT) has presented two productions to date.
- Music on the Avenue continues to be a success
- Giving has increased 8%, although this still doesn't meet operating needs

Reviving Our Community

- Community outreach – senior meals sponsored by OMG have been a terrific success.
- Rummage sales have been very successful, thanks to efforts of Dale Clark.
- St. John is sponsoring a little league baseball team in Bellevue.
- Providing assistance to local HIV testing efforts continue.
- Second year of a Chili Cook-Off will take place in the fall.
- First Friday Communion is a continuing successful community outreach.
- Hosting of the Bellevue Community Nativity scene has been a success.
- Let's all celebrate in holding 52 weeks of continuous worship at the St. John church building!

Stan Bowling spoke on FY2016 plans – a preview of what's coming

- Summer services in our own sanctuary!
- Support for the Red Bike Program in Bellevue
- Capital Campaign
- Addressing needs with sanctuary flooring

- Launch of the Friendship Center
- Naming of the Fellowship Hall
- Fun fundraising events

Tim presented a review and current update on the previous year's building proposal

- The Finance & Stewardship Committee recommended that we not pursue improvements to the sanctuary along with other components of the renovations project. The sanctuary will be addressed in upcoming stages of the project.
- Renovation projects have come in on target with budget. This included unknown additional costs that arose (e.g., blueprints not matching actual).
- Loan was handled through the Bank of Kentucky vs. UCC Cornerstone Fund due to fewer restrictions in providing collateral and more favorable loan terms.
- We will be covering the loan costs through the funds from the Jeanette Ludwig bequest.
- Income from the investment fund will cover our monthly loan payment.
- SLC approved an investment policy that addresses moral and ethical concerns with investments made through Bank of Kentucky and any future investment sources.
- The Ludwig bequest is devoted entirely to servicing the loan at present. In the future, the funds will be used for other strategic purposes.

Tim Smith requested a motion to approve the construction and financing update. Moved by Lonnie Fields, second by Pat Giglia. Motion passed.

Current Finances update

- Mitch Leigh, SLC Treasurer, presented a 10-month actual + 2-month forecast financial report (deposits and budget).
- In total, giving toward the general budget and special gifts has increased. However, at present, FY 2015 gap in giving vs. need for the general budget is approx. \$44,000, with a projected 12-month gap of approx. \$31,000.
- Regarding utilities, SLC adopted a proposal to move to budget-based billing with Duke Energy, which will allow for more predictable costs.
- Cincinnati Bell contract was recently renegotiated, resulting in a lower monthly cost.
- General building maintenance and upkeep is taken out of general budget and funds.
- Mitch spoke in response to questions on expenses. He feels that the major concern is receiving income to cover missions and initiatives we wish to undertake. He strongly suggested that SLC create a committee to address income diversification, with a goal of moving us beyond majority reliance on giving and to identify new and innovative ways to generate income for the church.
- Question on choir expenses. These expenses include copyright, music purchasing, choir section leader fees.
- We continue to have an investment fund with the United Church Funds, which is separate from the Ludwig bequest. Current balance is approx. \$90,000. We draw on this to fill budget gaps.
- Higher utility costs some months due to construction, and workers' use of our electricity.

Tim requested a motion to approve the Treasurer's report. Melissa Stephens moved, Sandy Kerlin second. Motion passed.

New Business

1. Elections and Appointments
 - a. Melissa Stephens reviewed what the bylaws states regarding elected SLC members.
 - b. Continuing SLC members are Melissa Stephens (President), Theo Baldwin (Secretary), and Stan Bowling (Member-At-Large). Service is through 6/30/2016.
 - c. Louise Hall was presented as nominee for Member-At-Large. Service is through 6/30/2017.
 - d. Melissa spoke to the need to fill the two open nominations, President-Elect and Treasurer. She asked all to make prayerful considerations regarding these leadership roles.
 - e. **MOTION** Mary Ann Reilly moved that the congregation elect the 2016 slate as recommended by the nominating committee, with nominees for remaining open positions to be appointed by the SLC, per the bylaws. Second by David Hiser. Motion passed
2. Pastor's Report: Highlights
 - a. Full Pastor's report will be distributed by email.
 - b. Pastor Keith has been very active in stewardship efforts, including bimonthly communications to the church.
 - c. Pastor Keith spends 20% of his time in external community engagement.
 - i. Is developing an Outside Church Donor List (OCDL) with staff to assist with promoting giving by those outside of the congregation.
 - ii. Working on building networks with the unchurched community.
 - iii. Each month, Pastor Keith has a table at Northern Kentucky University's Student Union to be present with students and others in a no-pressure environment.
 - iv. Pastor Keith must deal with daily issues relating to the church facility.
 - v. Building Use Application and Agreement created; Donna Hoffman coordinating building requests and needs. Goal is to promote the church building as an asset available to the community.
 - vi. Illumination Youth Ministry (IYM) update: Pastor Keith shared that St. John's Newport has withdrawn from the partnership, due to dissatisfactions stated in their letter. Pastor Keith clarified that this withdrawal is specifically due to the open and affirming stances of St. John Bellevue and IYM. Great concerns have been raised regarding the effect and lack of input from St. John Newport youth who were active in IYM, and impact on shared confirmation program. Pastor Keith asked for prayer at this difficult and trying time.
 1. St. John Bellevue and Christ Church (Ft. Thomas) will be hosting IYM meetings at St. John Bellevue starting in July.
 2. 8-20 youth are active in IYM at any one time.
 3. Alicia Taylor-Byers works 10 hours/week as coordinator, funded by the two remaining partnering churches.
 4. At the request of those at the congregational meeting, Pastor Keith will share correspondence relating to St. John UCC, Newport's withdrawal.
 - vii. Ecumenical efforts:
 1. Marriage equality
 2. Homeless LGBTQ youth in Northern Kentucky
 - viii. New members: six will join on May 31, and six more will join on June 14
 - ix. Pastor Keith writes a monthly article for the Bellevue Community News, and has received many responses from the community from these columns.

- d. Pat Giglia moved to accept the Pastor's report. Diane Cottingham second. Motion passed.

MMAP (Ministry & Mission action Plan) for FY2016

- Proposed budget covers the period of July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016
- \$10,821 budget increase (5.3%) over last year – total of \$214,646
 - Most of the increase is for monthly loan servicing (to be paid back by Ludwig bequest).
 - Anticipate increases in utilities costs, due to air conditioning and elevator.
 - Staff COLA increase of 1.5% is in this budget. Increase process to be determined by SLC.
 - Reductions in many areas to actual spending levels.
- MMAP major changes
 - Small reduction in staffing costs, based on actual work hours of staff.
 - Building and Grounds budget increases due to new facility needs.
 - Tim reminded those attending that voting to approve this budget includes a commitment to raise income that meets this budget, including both giving and fundraising.
 - \$12,000 in fundraising is goal for next fiscal year.
- Dean Griffith moved to adopt the mission and Ministry Action Plan for FY2016, in the amount of \$214,646. Donna Hoffman second. Motion passed, with two abstentions.

Gift from the Community

- Melissa Artepoeus presented a gift of a decorative tile showing a pen-and-ink drawing of the Marianne Theater in Bellevue. Image drawn by Diane Witte, community member and supporter of St. John church.

Future Meetings

- For future meetings, there was a suggestion to have print copies of financial report handouts available on day of the meeting.

Wrap-Up and Gratitude

- Thanks were expressed to Tim Smith for his leadership of SLC during the past year.
- Thanks were given to Mary Ann Reilly for her leadership during the construction projects.
- Pastor Keith announced a potluck dinner and celebration of completion of the renovations will be held on Sunday, August 23.
- Thanks given for the Chancel Committee's work.
- Thanks given to Donna Hoffman for revitalization of the church stage.
- Tim expressed his thanks to Mitch Leigh and Sandy Kerlin for their leadership through the change in fiscal year and extended time of service.
- Diane Cottingham moved that the meeting be adjourned. Tom Vossmeier second. Motion passed unanimously.
- Pastor Keith offered a benediction.

Minutes recorded by: Theo Baldwin, SLC Secretary

Note: These minutes will be filed electronically with all handouts distributed at the meeting. Minutes will be approved at the May 2016 congregational meeting.