**Official Board Minutes**

United Church of Christ (Congregational)

**November 23, 2021**

The meeting was called to order by Official Board secretary Irene Joyce at 7:06 p.m. Pastor Heidi led the group in prayer. Present were:

Jennifer Barry

Elaine Coffey

Greg Dickson

Ingrid Dickson

Cathy Hawk

Sarah Hayes

Jim Heinrich

Sharon Heinrich

Sally Herzog

Irene Joyce

Pastor Heidi

**Minutes of the 10/26/21 meeting** were approved in a motion by Sharon Heinrich, seconded by Cathy Hawk.

**Treasurer’s Report:** Sharon Heinrich--**Beginning balance: $7,005.54**. Income: $50.00 donation for Live Nativity. Expenses: $610.00 to Spring Mist Farms for Nativity Animals.  **Ending balance: $6,445.54.** The report was approved in a motion by Ingrid DIckson and seconded by Elaine Coffey.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Advertising/Technology Committee**: Tom Gaumer was unable to attend, but the ads that were approved at the last meeting were placed in the electronic *Strongsville Post*.

**Church Treasurer/Financial Secretary**: Sally Herzog reported that the PPP loan has been forgiven and the payments we made have been refunded. There is one payment left on our Cornerstone loan. Kenn Oerkfitz discovered a mystery account, which he closed and the $500 was deposited in the Operating Fund. As of this meeting, checking account: $27,666.36; savings: $37,787.46; rental property account: $14,093.19. Mike Elkins sent financial reports.

**Diaconate:** Jen Barry reported that the Diaconate worked on preparation for the Live Nativity/Open House, including decorating the interior of the church and passing out candy canes and ornament kits to the visitors on that day. Plans for Advent and Blue Christmas are underway and the Diaconate will provide cookies on Christmas Pageant day, December 19th. Poinsettias will be $6.00 and ordered through Maria Gardens. They have moved their meeting to Monday, December 13th.

**Dinners/Free Lunch:** Betty Craig sent a report that Free Lunch for all is doing well. This week is off to a slow start but have a few stragglers calling. She stressed how much we are appreciated for doing this outreach. A donation from the SWINE (Successful Women Impacting Neighborhoods Everywhere) Sisters, Inc. of $400 was received for the lunch program.

**Fit Club:** Irene Joyce reported that they started meeting again, but attendance is sparse and they may have to look for a better time-slot. They will not meet the Wednesday before Thanksgiving.

**Minister’s Report:** Pastor Heidi reported that the Children’s Pageant will be during worship on December 19th. Blue Christmas will be Sunday, December 19th at 7 p.m.; and Christmas Eve services will be on Friday, December 24th at 7 p.m. and 11 p.m. and December 26th will be a casual Hymn Sing service. She has lined up people to light the Advent candles each week.

**Mission Outreach:** Sarah Hayes that 60 bags were put together for the veterans by committee members and Sunday School kids. The kids also made cards to put in the bags. Mitten Tree will be up through December 5th. 140 pairs of socks, 145 candy bars, and $150 were collected to go to Church Street Ministries and the veterans they serve in Cuyahoga County.

**Music Committee:** Ingrid Dickson reported that our choirs continue to practice and perform in masks, and the general consensus is that though it's not an ideal situation, we are just happy to be singing/playing together to the glory of God. Christmas Jazz concert set for December 17th, with reception to follow. We would like the portable sign up to advertise the concert. Irene Joyce will be printing tickets to begin selling on Sunday. We will be seeking donations of snacks to be determined. Bell Choir plays December 12th. Chancel Choir is beginning prep for Christmas and the Music Ministry is adding some special guests for the Advent season. Any costs associated with guest musicians will come from the designated Music Line item. Payment Request Forms must be submitted in a timely manner so that the check is ready on the day that the guest is with us. Children's Choir will be part of the Sunday School pageant on December 19th.

**Organ Preservation Committee:** Jim Heinrich thanked Jim Joyce for continuing to administer the gift card program. Please order your Christmas gift cards early.

**Stewardship Committee:** Judi Pavisich sent a report that we have received 51 pledge cards as of this date.

**Sunday School/Christian Ed:** Linda Elkins sent a report that another painter came to see the second floor to make an estimate, and there may be another one. The all students decorated cards that were inserted into the packets for veterans from Mission Outreach. Rachel Zielinski and Sarah Hayes are working on the Christmas pageant.

Mary Densmore is planning a whole Sunday School project for January about Heifer International. Since students will be encouraged to save money for that project after that lesson, we are asking that donations for the February Penny Sunday be made for Heifer International.

**Thrift Shop:** Cathy Hawk reported that the Thrift Shop had a great day of sorting on Monday and the have cleaned up a good portion of the back room. They were able to pack a lot of our spring clothing up in bins & packed away under the stairs to make room for the abundance of clothing still coming in . They made another large donation to downtown. As the shop will be closed on Thanksgiving, the ladies are possibly thinking of a “pop up sale day.”

**Trustees:** Greg Dickson reported that the Memorial Fund is contributing $2008.40 towards Nativity Scene upgrade. Painting bids are being received for upstairs painting with the Trustees assisting. The sidewalk extension towards the Pomeroy parking lot is complete. Thank you to the Sobeks for organizing and contributing to the sidewalk extension project. The sidewalk leveling bid is lower due to the extra sections of sidewalk taken out. The Pomeroy House is contributing $1,000 toward sidewalk improvements with the caveat that their parking lot “donation” amount remains unchanged for a few years. Thank you to John Toth for repairing section of fence at the Royalton Rd rental house.

**Women's Fellowship:** Elaine Coffey reported that thanks to Joyce Reed and her crafting skills, they made beautiful centerpieces for our Christmas Tea and also held the election of officers. Their December "meeting" will be the Christmas Tea on Sunday, December 5th at 1:00pm. We will have fun, food and fellowship. There will also be a Christmas Carol game and Barb Fraunfelder will have the tone chimes ready for people to play Christmas favorites.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Retreat update: We have booked Heritage Hall and Memorial Lodge for our accommodations. We will only have 14 rooms, so we will have to do our planning accordingly. Price will be $75 per person (up $5), $20 for kids 6-11 and free for kids under 5. Sign-ups will be posted in the next couple of weeks.

Thanksgiving “Basket” project: 29 families were given gift cards through Muraski Elementary School, SMS, and our own church referrals. Thank you to our generous congregation!

Live Nativity and Open House was a success in the altered format of 2 hours and no indoor activities. Thank you to Dale & Cathy Hawk, Rachel Zielinski, Doug Thorn, Jim Heinrich, and the crew for putting together this event. Also, thanks to Bruce Keenen for organizing the singers, who were terrific.

Nativity set: The camel has been ordered from Bronner’s in Frankenmuth, MI. It will be paid through Memorial Funds and a donation from the mayor. Cost was $2,608.40. We received a 15% discount, but had to pay Michigan tax since we are picking it up to save the $275.00 shipping cost. (Original price $2,895.00)

**Nominating Committee**: Greg Dickson, Judy Gaumer, Sally Herzog, and Irene Joyce volunteered to serve on the Nominating Committee. They will be meeting soon. They have already been talking to people and are compiling a list of willing candidates.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Rachel Zielinski sent a message that we will need to send a $100 deposit to Spring Mist Farms for next year’s Live Nativity. She mentioned that we should expect a price increase in 2022. Jen Barry moved to send the $100 deposit; Cathy Hawk seconded and the motion was approved.

Annual Meeting will be on January 30th. We can do the pancake breakfast on that day. Cathy Hawk moved to allot up to $200 for the breakfast, seconded by Sharon Heinrich. Motion carried.

**Audit Committtee:** Rachel Zielinski said she would serve and ask people who have served in the past to volunteer.

Sally Herzog brought up that the Insurance Board has sent a detailed survey, which must be filled out by the beginning of the year. The Executive Team needs to meet and address the questions and complete this task.

Elaine Coffey moved that the Official Board not meet in December, seconded by Ingrid Dickson. We can call a quick meeting in the coming weeks if something pressing arises. Motion passed.

Betty Craig motioned for adjournment at 8:01 p.m. (via phone), seconded by Sharon Heinrich. Motion carried.

The next regular meeting of the Official Board will be **Tuesday, January 25, 2022, at 7:00 p.m.**

Irene Joyce, Secretary