**Official Board Minutes**

United Church of Christ (Congregational)

**October 26, 2021**

The meeting was called to order by Moderator Rachel Zielinski at 7:06 p.m. Pastor Heidi led the group in prayer. Present were:

Jennifer Barry

Elaine Coffey

Greg Dickson

Ingrid Dickson

Linda Elkins

Tom Gaumer

Cathy Hawk

Dale Hawk

Sarah Hayes

Sharon Heinrich

Sally Herzog

Irene Joyce

Pastor Heidi

Rachel Zielinski

**Minutes of the 9/28/21 meeting** were approved in a motion by Sally Herzog, seconded by Tom Gaumer.

**Treasurer’s Report:** Sharon Heinrich--**Beginning balance: $7,004.68. Income: $.86 interest on 10/20/21. Expenses: None. Ending balance: $7,005.54.** The report was approved in a motion by Irene Joyce and seconded by Elaine Coffey.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Advertising/Technology Committee**: Tom Gaumer recommended advertising the Live Nativity and other Advent events in the *Strongsville Post*, which publishes online only. One week of a ¼ page ad is $375 and the second week is $189. Cathy Hawk moved to advertise for two weeks, beginning November 12th. Jen Barry seconded and the motion passed.

**Church Treasurer/Financial Secretary**: Sally Herzog reported that the church’s checking balance $20,996.40, savings is $37,698.60 (which includes the PPP loan), and the rental property account is at $13,405.75. The application for loan forgiveness for the Payroll Protection Program loan has been submitted.

**Diaconate:** Jennifer Barry reported that the Diaconate focused on the Christmas Open House and the changes that we will be making. Also, they will be purchasing donuts from Donut Scene to pass out after church on Halloween; each donut will be bagged separately. They will decorate the church on November 17th. Linda Ponstingle found some boxes marked “Church Archives” and “Historical Documents” while organizing the Pilgrim Hall upstairs balcony. They will ask some long-time members to go through them.

**Dinners/Free Lunch:** Betty Craig sent a report that the 1st Free Lunch For All went very well. We served 22 in the hall and 2 carry out, which included 2 electricians that were working in the Thrift Shop and 8 volunteers. The people were very appreciative and thanked us for bringing the lunches back. The senior center only offers carry-outs and you pay for them. Here, they could visit with their friends. In fact, at the end of the lunch Betty’s “magic apron pocket” had $30.00 in it. We make plenty and freeze left overs and believe it or not they love what we call “clean the freezer” soup! Betty feels that we are doing what Jesus said in Mathew 25: 40. “In as much as you have done this for one of the least of these who are members of my family, you have done it to me” Penny Sunday on October 17th collected $607.40 for the Free Lunch Program.

**Fit Club:** Irene Joyce reported that it’s time to "Work-y off that Turkey." Fit Club will be starting up again on Wednesdays with a meeting for interested folks on November 10th at 5 p.m.

**Minister’s Report:** Pastor Heidi thanked the congregation for their unwavering support of and caring for her and Chuck as they navigate his healthcare journey. November 7th is All Saints Sunday; 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.

**Mission Outreach:** Judy Carte sent a report that they will be concluding their collection of socks, candy bars, and money donations for Veterans October 31st. The Mitten Tree will be in place for the first week of November. The last day for Neighbors in Need collection is also October 31st.

**Music Committee:** Ingrid Dickson thanked Mike Elkins, Sharon Heinrich, and Richard Densmore for providing music while Tom Foley was recuperating from surgery. Nicki Haire has been filling in for any missing parts in our Bell Choir rehearsals; we are tentatively planning to play on November 14th. We are in the planning stages of the Christmas Jazz Concert, scheduled for December 17th; tickets will be $10 and we will have a safe reception afterward. The choir has been and will continue to sing wearing masks for the time being.

**Organ Preservation Committee:** No report.

**Stewardship Committee:** Judi Pavisich sent a report that The Stewardship campaign is underway. Bill Schneider has taken the lead on the campaign: “God’s Work…Our Hands” Pledge cards and stewardship letters are available for pick-up, but some have been mailed. Stewardship Sunday is November 14th.

**Sunday School/Christian Ed:** Linda Elkins reported that The Illustrated Ministry curriculum is working out very well. Six Confirmation books have finally arrived. Her call for substitutes netted three more to the list: Rachel Zielinski, Cheri Teagno (willing to substitute for the youngest group only) and Jennifer Sekorky. She had a painter, her new neighbor, Jason Hamer give an estimate of $3,000.00 for painting the upstairs, which would include filling cracks with an epoxy filler—especially needed in the boys’ bathroom—as well as a very loose spot on the ceiling between the classrooms which needs a drywall repair. Sharon Heinrich moved that the paint color be white/neutral, seconded by Dale Hawk. Any changes must be approved by the Board of Trustees. Mary Densmore has planned some great Halloween and pumpkin decorating activities for October 31st. Serena Abruzzino has volunteered to lead the Christmas Pageant, but more information is being gathered prior to rehearsals beginning in November. A previously crafted script may be a good option this year. The Pageant will be during worship on December 19th.

**Thrift Shop:** Cathy Hawk reported that September was a record month with income, sales & donations $ 2,144.70. New signs arrived and are being used (need to get “sign sleeves” put in lawn on side and front of church). Lighting updated on south side door entrance. The Thrift Shop paid for exit signs in church and emergency lighting in kitchen.

**Trustees:** Greg Dickson reported that they are looking to purchase two new laptops for the Financial Secretary and Treasurer. Current laptops are a decade old. New leases were signed for the rental properties. Property tax levy on rental properties received. Pearl Rd. property remained unchanged. Royalton Rd. house increased 22%, or $186. We can still appeal the increase within a certain timeframe. Memorial Committee donated $200 to the Free Lunch program and $200 to the City Mission of Cleveland. Updated lighting installed in various areas around the church. A cleaning service has been contracted for regular weekly cleaning. Irene Joyce will be paid to maintain cleanliness between weekly cleanings. The carpeting in the Gathering Area and Parlor are going to be professionally cleaned.

**Women's Fellowship:** Elaine Coffey reported that their next meeting is Wednesday, November 3rd at 10:00 a.m. in Pilgrim Hall. We're going to plan our Christmas Tea, make centerpieces for the tea, elect officers, and enjoy time together.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Retreat update: Irene Joyce and Rachel Zielinski have been communicating with Jill Frey from Outdoor Ministries and are still working on the lodging arrangements and figuring out details with the reconfigured spaces at Templed Hills.

Thanksgiving “Basket” collection will be monetary donations/grocery gift cards this year. Irene Joyce will be gathering names of people in need and mail them the gift cards. If anyone in the congregation knows of someone who could use food assistance, please contact the church office.

Live Nativity and Open House is on Sunday, November 21st, Dale Hawk has been in contact with the City of Strongsville and is coordinating decorating the outside of the church. Musicians are lined up for performing on the front porch. We will not serve refreshments this year because the city is not going to serve anything for safety reasons. Dale and Rachel will get together to plan this celebration in greater detail. Dale moved that we procure a camel for the Nativity set, to be paid for with donations and the Memorial Fund. Jen Barry seconded and the motion passed.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Greg Dickson, Judy Gaumer, Sally Herzog, and Irene Joyce volunteered to serve on the Nominating Committee. Irene Joyce moved that term limits be set aside for the 2022 election and we have 1 year as well as 2 year terms to balance out the lack of a 2021 election (pandemic closure). Cathy Hawk seconded and the motion was approved.

Sarah Hayes brought a sample photo/social media/online consent form for parents to allow their child’s picture (without names) be posted on our website or Facebook pages.

Betty Craig motioned for adjournment at 8:22 p.m. (via phone), seconded by Cathy Hawk. Motion carried.

The next regular meeting of the Official Board will be **Tuesday, November 23, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.**

Irene Joyce, Secretary