**Official Board Minutes**

United Church of Christ (Congregational)

**September 28, 2021**

The meeting was called to order by Moderator Rachel Morgan at 7:02 p.m. Pastor Heidi led the group in prayer. Present were:

Jennifer Barry

Elaine Coffey

Linda Elkins

Mike Elkins

Greg Dickson

Ingrid Dickson

Cathy Hawk

Dale Hawk

Sarah Hayes

Sally Herzog

Jim Heinrich

Sharon Heinrich

Pastor Heidi

Jen Sekorky

Rachel Zielinski

**Minutes of the 8/31/21 meeting** were approved in a motion by Ingrid Dickson, seconded by Cathy Hawk.

**Treasurer’s Report:** Sharon Heinrich **– Beginning balance: $7,003.79.** Income: $0.89 interest on 9/20/21. Expenses: None.  **Ending balance: $7,004.68.** The report was approved in a motion by Cathy Hawk and seconded by Jen Barry.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Advertising/Technology Committee**: Tom Gaumer emailed that he has no news to report at this time.

**Church Treasurer/Financial Secretary**: Sally Herzog reported that the balances are $21,991.80 for the checking account, $37,617.44 for savings account, and $12,105.75 for the Royalton Road account. The application was submitted for the forgiveness of the PPE loan. All the loan money was used for salaries. It will be 60 days until we hear a response about our application.

**Diaconate:** Jennifer Barry reported that the Diaconate had a fairly uneventful month. Barb Camp with Cathy Hawk and Elaine Coffey served a funeral luncheon for Jean Straub, which was the first luncheon held since Covid.  Small sandwiches from Giant Eagle were purchased. Pre-packaged sides and pre-packaged cookies worked out well. We will be doing this going forward while Covid is an issue.

We will bring back Coffee Hour on October 3rd.  Coffee will be made and available after the service.  No baked goods or pastries will be placed out.  We may have juice for the kids.  Disposable cups will be used for the beverages.

**Dinners/Free Lunch:** Betty Craig emailed that we plan to start the Free Lunch for All on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month. Reservations will be taken the week before— Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.  We plan to start

with only 30 in the hall, and masks must be worn except when eating, 11:30–12:30. All volunteers must have their shots and will also wear masks and gloves. Carry outs will be provided as long as the food lasts. At her request, Betty’s land line will be used for reservations.

Betty will keep a list of reservations (for both seating and take-outs), with names and contact information.

Volunteers will meet tomorrow, September 29th, to finalize details, and Cathy Hawk will verify whether volunteers need to be vaccinated. The church will take all precautions for Covid.

Cathy asked whether the board needs to approve any changes the volunteers make in the future for serving the Free Lunch for All. Pastor Heidi said they don’t need approval, unless they don’t feel comfortable making the changes themselves.

Jen Barry made a motion to resume the Free Lunch for All program, which is modified for Covid. Elaine Coffey seconded, and the motion carried, with one vote opposed. The program will start up again on October 13, with 8 tables and 4 people per table.

New Free Lunch lawn signs were made with the updated information of second and fourth Wednesdays at 11:30 and Betty’s phone number for reservations. The signs are in Pastor Heidi’s office.

When going through the Free Lunch’s food supply, volunteers discarded expired food, which cannot be served. In the future, however, anyone who wants expired food is welcome to have it.

**Fit Club:** Irene Joyce emailed that the club is planning to resume sessions soon. Rachel Zielinski said she plans to join the club.

**Minister’s Report:** Pastor Heidi reported that nine people will become members of the church on October 3rd, when we will have communion on World Communion Sunday. Penny Sunday is October 17th, and the collection will go to Free Lunch for All.

**Mission Outreach:** Jen Sekorky reported that the Veterans project is asking for socks and monetary donations from the congregation to put together 50 gift bags with 2 pairs of men’s socks and 2 full-size candy bars per bag for Veterans’ Day, November 11. Cash donations will be received in the weekly offerings, and a collection box for the socks will be in the Gathering Area from October 10th through 31st. Pastor Heidi will check when the 4th quarter shipment of 100 pairs of Bomba socks is due to arrive at our church. Jen will talk with Irene Joyce about having this project advertised in the October Newsletter and bulletins.

Jen Barry made a motion to appoint Sarah Hayes to the Mission Outreach Committee, to replace Tony Koussa. Ingrid Dickson seconded, and the motion carried.

**Music Committee:** Ingrid Dickson reported that the choir continues to practice, singing in new, all-matching KN95 masks and socially distanced. Most of our members have returned, but not all. We feel blessed to be back singing! The choir will start wearing robes on October 3rd.

Bell choir is going well.  The bells will play during the October 10th service.

A new keyboard was purchased for our church, paid for by the Memorial Fund.

We have received really positive feedback about the service music. The congregation especially appreciates singing the hymns with the organ.

Ingrid reminded us all to provide our church’s tax exempt number for church purchases—to save money.

**Organ Preservation Committee:** Jim Heinrich reported that the organ was repaired on September 2nd. The console and the chamber processors were not communicating properly. James Leek installed new solid state components to the chamber processor. The cost of the repair was $2,435, and the bill hopefully will be paid with funds from an anonymous donation. Pastor Heidi will coordinate with Financial Secretary Mike Elkins and the donor to get the bill paid.

James Leek mentioned a building protection unit that could help prevent the problem in the future; and Jim will talk with electrician, Scott Harper, about the two different systems of this unit (that cost $350 and $1,100 to $1,200).

**Stewardship Committee:** Judi Pavisich emailed that she has no news to report at this time. Pastor Heidi said that the committee could use help, if anyone is interested.

**Sunday School/Christian Ed:** Linda Elkins reported that Rally Day was September 12th and everything proceeded smoothly.  Backpacks were blessed and tags were given to anyone in the congregation.  Students are in three different classes.  Teachers are Lora Rung (confirmation class), Serena Abruzzino (middle-age children) and Linda Elkins (young children).

One child tested positively for Covid 19 the day after Rally Day.  Parents of students who were in close distance of that child were contacted.  A substitute teacher could not be found for the affected classroom, so that class was suspended for 2 weeks.

We have received the September and October lessons from Illustrated Ministry.  So far the children are responding very well to them.  Linda has been able to match them with the stories in the Shine book that she used in the past.

Mary Densmore is planning our annual decoration of pumpkins for Sunday, October 31st, and Linda hopes to get googly eyes for decorating them.

Penny Sunday collection will be on October 17th.

More substitute teachers are needed, in addition to Mary Densmore. If anyone is interested, please let Irene Joyce or Linda Elkins know.  Bell choir is working around the order of Sunday services so that Linda (and Mary) will not need a substitute teacher when the bells play. (At this Official Board meeting, Rachel volunteered to be a substitute teacher, when she is available.)

**Thrift Shop:** Cathy Hawk reported that we ordered two new signs: “Thrift Shop Open” with time inserts of “10-4” and “6-8”, and a banner flag “Now Open”.

We are getting quotes from Scott Harper for electrical work: 1) dryer line. 2) jewelry case lighting. 3) outdoor walkway lights for late night 3rd Thursday evenings.

We will need Bill Craig or Don Behrendt to do plumbing for the washer.

We will be selling the pool table and have acquired some additional shelves from another church.

Donations continue to come in abundantly. This month (September) the shop made $1,644, which does not yet include this Thursday’s sales! The shop accepts cash and check payments, and hopes to get a card reader for credit card purchases.

The shop is getting more exposure on Facebook. The shop is more boutique-like, and the merchandise is rotated more frequently.

The Thrift Shop will pay for 2 or 3 more emergency lights in Pilgrim Hall/kitchen.

**Trustees:** Greg Dickson reported that Emma Clotworthy put in her two week notice as church custodian. Her last day will be October 4th.

Royalton Road tenant has agreed to a one year lease term. Rent will remain $1,300 per month.

The Pearl Road tenant has agreed to a five year lease. Lease will be raised from $850 to $925 monthly.

Both leases are currently being prepared for signing.

The Payroll Protection Act Loan was discussed. We are applying for loan forgiveness since we did indeed use the funds for payroll during the pandemic. The loan was for $20,500.

Trees will be trimmed on the Pearl Road side of Pilgrim Hall, at a cost of $150.

**Women's Fellowship:** Elaine Coffey reported that our picnic was a great success. The weather, company and scenery were perfect.  Thank you to Judy Carte for putting together a wonderful leaf presentation!

Our October meeting will be on Wednesday, October 6th, at 10am.  We'll be watching *Young Frankenstein*.  It's our Fall celebration.  Pj's and pillows and all are welcome!

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Retreat update: Irene Joyce emailed that we are still working on the lodging arrangements and figuring out details with the reconfigured spaces at Templed Hills.

Live Nativity and Open House: For this year on Sunday, November 21st, Dale Hawk will serve as coordinator and proposes we take good pictures and celebrate safely outside:

1. Do the live nativity outside, as usual.
2. Use the church’s front stoop, that would be garlanded, as a stage for musicians (the Keenens’ group), with the sanctuary as a warming station for the musicians (and perhaps use PA system for amplification).
3. Have a tent by the Pilgrim Hall door for giving out hot chocolate and ornaments to children. (Barb Camp is researching ornaments as gifts for children, and Rachel has an outdoor heater.)

The live nativity animals are reserved from last year.

Additional suggestions for November 21st from board members were:

* Light our church’s walkway with luminaries.
* Have our Pilgrim Hall restrooms available for anyone who needs to use a restroom.
* Protect our grass with hay, since there will be a lot of traffic on the grass.
* Give a big push for Nativity characters and perhaps get volunteers from other churches to participate.

Dale and Rachel will get together to plan this celebration in greater detail.

**NEW BUSINESS:**



The Nominating Committee needs to be set up at next month’s meeting, because many people served extra time this year because of the pandemic.

Betty Craig motioned for adjournment at 8:12 p.m. (via phone), seconded by Pastor Heidi. Motion carried.

The next regular meeting of the Official Board will be **Tuesday, October 26, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.**

Sharon Heinrich for Irene Joyce