

ST. PAUL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
COUNCIL MINUTES FROM MEETING OF
Tuesday, January 14, 2025

Council Members Present: Pam Lange, Jane Dykowski, Sue Mrowka, Teri Staffeld, Michael Isaacs, Toni Hill, Fred Miller, Jeannette Wackro, and Dan Case. Also present: Rev. Anderson.

Excused: Tim Ruffner and Mark Ennis

Guests: There were no guests.

Meeting was called to order by President, Sue Mrowka, at 6:36 p.m. followed by opening prayer led by Rev. Anderson.

Approval of the Minutes: Motion by Dan Case, seconded by Michael Isaacs, to approve the minutes of the December 10, 2024 Council Meeting. Motion carried.

Agenda Additions/Deletions: To New Business add: 6. Policy Update and 7. E-mail from Aaron Johnson

REPORTS AND UPDATES

Treasurer's Report: No written report as it will be completed for next week's Annual Meeting. Dan Case shared the good news that December was a very good month. The year ends with our operating account ending in the positive at \$13,009.00. This gives us a cushion to begin 2025. It was noted that the plate income has increased since we began passing the plate. (Without the written treasurer's report, there was no motion to accept at this time.)

Dan Case reported that Aaron Johnson has resigned as Financial Advisor. Motion by Dan Case, seconded by Toni Hill, to accept his resignation with regrets and thanks. Motion carried.

As required at year's end, motion by Dan Case, seconded by Toni Hill, to transfer \$13,171.14 (dividends and capital gains) from the Endowment Fund to the Asset Depreciation Fund. Motion carried.

Motion by Dan Case, seconded by Michael Isaacs, to approve the \$4,000 housing allowance for the Iterim Pastor for 2025. Motion carried.

As a note, the budget will include the additional \$10,000 approved for a settled pastor even though the anticipated candidate is not joining us. Sue Mrowka, Michael Isaacs, and Toni Hill, on behalf of the whole Council, thanked Dan Case for his due diligence in reporting our finances.

At this time, Jennifer Wilson joined the meeting. She was introduced as the new bookkeeper. She was invited to share questions she has at this time. She had none and returned to the office to continue her work.

Ministry Department: Interim minister, Rev. Linda Anderson, thanked all who have kept things going in the music department with the prior director's resignation. Michael Isaacs thanked Rev. Anderson for her providing the many contacts who were able to provide music assistance when needed. Rev. Anderson expressed concern about the communication regarding Christmas decorating. The decoration containers were not stowed away in a timely manner. The Bible Study group needs to select a representative to the cabinet where the decorating schedule was determined. Sue Mrowka also noted that there is a need for non-council help such as: stewardship, flag maintenance, and altar guild. At this time, the other church engagement was discussed. There was a lengthy discussion about other churches in the area that are in membership decline as we are experiencing. We seem to be in a better position and should look to reaching out to them with invitations to events and worship (for those not

Ministry Department (continued)

meeting for worship every week). Three churches mentioned were Gibraltar, St. Marks. and St. James. Dan Case found in the email listing he has 11 churches—seven open regularly. We need to establish regular contact and specific personnel to engage.

Trustees/Building and Grounds: Toni Hill reported that a new refrigerator was purchased for the kitchen from the Facilities Improvement Fund. A new coffee maker was purchased for the parlor. Rev. Anderson said she received a \$50 donation from a Bible Study member to help cover the cost. The new smoke detectors are here. Michael Isaacs offered “ladder work” help as needed. The kitchen suppression system is still in the process of completion. Toni Hill noted she would be replacing the light bulb that was needing replacement, the panhandler has not been here lately, and the kitchen doors to the fellowship hall and west room should be left open during this cold weather to prevent pipe freezing.

Deacons: Teri Staffeld reported that passing out the books and plate have been well received. She asked how we would be moving forward since at this time there is only one deacon. Motion by Dan Case, seconded by Toni Hill, to appoint Teri Staffeld as an auxiliary deacon. Motion carried. For January, Dan Case (1 day), Teri Staffeld (2 days), and Jeannette Wackro (2 days) will be deacons. Teri Staffeld noted that the worksheet for deacons needed modification. Dan Case offered to do that and also to do the monthly reporting for the deacons if he were provided the information.

Elders: Fred Miller reported that 63 communed on Christmas Eve and 57 communed on January 5, 2025. Dan Case moved, seconded by Toni Hill, to appoint Fred Miller as auxiliary Elder. Motion carried.

Search Team Update: Pam Lange reported on behalf of the Search Team. On Monday, January 13, 2025, they held a zoom meeting regarding their next steps. Pam related that they had a discussion regarding a part-time pastor. After much discussion, motion by Dan Case, seconded by Jeannette Wackro, that the Search Team should use their discretion in bringing to council the details of a part-time candidate interested in our situation. Motion carried. The consensus of the Council members seemed to be that the goal should be a full-time pastor; but, we should be open to other possibilities.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Status of Council Candidates: There is no one who has stepped forward to assume any of the open council positions. The open positions are: First Vice President, Second Vice President, Treasurer, Elder (3 years), Deacons (2 and 3 years), and Trustees (1 and 3 years). At the annual meeting nominations will be accepted from the floor. If nominations fill open positions, they should be voted upon. For still unfilled positions, current council members wishing to continue should so indicate and voted upon. It was suggested there be available descriptions for each position.

2. Annual Staff Reviews: Harold Fick and Eric Poet are not yet completed. Toni Hill and Michael Isaacs are setting up a date for one of them.

3. Finalize Agenda for the Annual Meeting: After review, the agenda for the Annual Meeting was accepted.

4. Director of Christian Education Clarification: Rev. Anderson, Debbie Case, and Candace Poet will be meeting to work out these details.

5. Pew Communion Training: Before pew communion is served again, there MUST be a definite plan established and rehearsed. With pew communion, it was noted the table should be moved forward.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Decision on Council Dinner for 2025: Tabled for January meeting.
2. Decision on Council Retreat for 2025: Tabled for January meeting.
3. Considerations for Availability of Building Space: Jane Dykowski related that with smaller activity participation, maybe we should re-evaluate our use of space. While working with the Gift Sale, Janet Staffeld, Peggy Staten, and Jane Dykowski discussed places in the building for storage and work space for the Sew 'n Sews and the Gift Sale should it be held again. The Sew 'n Sews have items stored in 3 places and Gift Sale has items stored in on place at this time. The Sew 'n Sews have to gather their materials when they meet and work. The Gift Sale items were mainly stored and prepared in private residences and moved to the church at the time of the sale. This item for discussion is going to be taken to the Cabinet for consideration. Use of space in the parsonage was suggested.
4. Calendar approval: Winter Blast – February 7 and 8 and Cole Slaw making – February 21 and 22: These events are added to the calendar and space reserved.
5. Other Church Engagement: Item covered under Interim Minister report earlier.
6. Policy Update: Motion by Dan Case, seconded by Jennette Wackro, to update the Employee Handbook to reflect the discontinuance of Flexible Spending Accounts. Motion carried.
7. Aaron Johnson E-mail: An e-mail received from Aaron Johnson was addressed. Dan Case will be contacting him and relate our concerns regarding distressing content of an anonymous letter and Make-a-Wish card directed toward him when he was serving on Council.

ROUNDTABLE

Sue Mrowka addressed securing business cards for Rev. Anderson. She will order regular cards with added name.

Motion by Michael Isaacs, seconded by Toni Hill, to adjourn. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m followed by the Lord's Prayer recited in unison.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane L. Dykowski
Recording Secretary.