

**Hilltop United Methodist Church  
Church Council Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, May 9, 2023**

**Present:** Pastor Matt Sipe, Darrin Galinat, Rob Cornelius, Paulette Adams, Stacy Vanderwerf, and Don Putzier

Don opened with prayer.

**Minutes:** Rob made a motion to approve the minutes from April with a second from Matt. The motion carried.

**Wednesday night Evaluation:** Matt opened discussion with some observations about how our Wednesday evening worship, dinner, and programming have gone this past year.

There was strong worship attendance in the fall, with attendance declining the past few months. The Wednesday evening services work well for some families. The Wednesday evening schedule has been very tight for allowing time for youth activities, confirmation, and children's activities. There has not been time for relationships to build. New members have generally not been attracted to Wednesday evening worship.

First-time guests typically view our services online, then visit us on Sunday. If they desire a contemporary service, there is none on Sunday, and some have not returned.

Matt mentioned that some people may attend services online or via podcasts, and not be expected to attend worship in person. They may attend a meal on Wednesday, and may or may not attend worship. The meals have been available to the community, a benefit to them.

The church council is asked to talk with people and consider options for next fall, which include:

1. Continue with the current Sunday/Wednesday schedule in the fall.
2. Move to two services on Sunday morning—one traditional (or possibly blended), and one contemporary. Wednesday evening would likely continue with a dinner, no worship service, and there would be more time for children's programs, youth programs, connect groups, choir practice, band rehearsal, or other programming. More time would be available for relationships and engagement.

Decisions regarding how to schedule our fall will need to be made by July.

**Finance Report:** Rob provided a report of April finances. General giving was \$18,432.00. Expenses were \$21,468.25. Net income was -2,360.81. Working general fund balance was \$52,934.15. Rob noted that giving was down 13% this April

compared with last April. He also noted that utility costs increased substantially for the church and parsonage. A motion was made by Matt to approve the finance report with a second from Stacy. The motion carried.

**Calendaring:**

- a. May 15-21 - Pastor Matt gone
- b. May 19 - Blood drive
- c. May 21 - Juston Cline preaching
- d. May 31 to June 1 - Annual Conference in St. Cloud
- e. June 4 - Graduation Sunday
- f. June 5 - Parent meeting in evening
- g. June 12 to 25 - Pastor Matt gone
- h. June 28 - Second Annual "Getting Sauced" Barbecue Event
- i. July 23 - Faith Night at Moondogs
- j. Jul 26 - Bonfire and games
- k. Aug 30 - Hilltop Carnival
- l. Fall schedule - Resumes Sept. 10
- m. Oct. 26 to 29 - Men's Walk to Emmaus, Fairmont
- n. Nov. 2 to 5 - Women's Walk to Emmaus, Fairmont

**Summer Church Council Meetings:** Based on a very positive feasibility study from Mark Davy & Associates, Church Council meetings will likely continue each month in the summer, as various decisions will need to be made to move our vision forward.

**The next Church Council meeting will be Tuesday, June 6, at 7 p.m.**

Pastor Matt closed in prayer. Meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Don Putzier