

**Hilltop United Methodist Church
Church Council Meeting Minutes
Thursday, Jan. 21, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.**

Present via video conference: Matt Sipe, Don Putzier, Kerry Rausch, Derrick Galinat, Paulette Adams, Stacy Vanderwerf, Jocelin Maine, Karla Lassonde, Dan Marti, and Michelle Behsman.

Don Putzier opened the meeting with the Lord's Prayer.

Approval of minutes: Church council reviewed the minutes from December. Jocelin made a motion to approve the minutes, with a second by Matt. The motion passed. There were no additions to the agenda. Don made a motion to approve the agenda, Derrick seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Bible Study: Pastor Matt shared a brief study of Galatians 3, which the current sermon series is based upon. This passage challenges us in how we are to be one in Christ Jesus.

Leadership Covenant: Don called attention to the Hilltop Leadership Covenant and asked if there were any questions before calling for acceptance of the covenant. Matt suggested that our presence be an affirmation.

Finance Report: Michelle provided an overview of year end finances. Total plate giving for 2020 was \$277,675.93, which is higher than any previous year except for 2019. The average total for the past six years (2014-2019) is \$269,793.62, so we are \$7,882.31 above the average, yet total giving was \$8,920.24 less than last year. Total expenses for 2020 were \$259,630.52, overall net income was \$32,843.34.

Committee Updates: Jocelin thanked the council for opening up the church for in person youth group. There were 22 in attendance and the youth were enthusiastic and anxious to get together weekly, rather than every other week.

Short-term visioning: Matt reported that there will be an Ash Wednesday service, coordinated by twelve clergy members. Matt is open to suggestions for other events during Holy week. The Easter service will be pre-recorded. There are four connect groups that will begin in February and one later in April. Barb Keith will begin serving as Connect Group coordinator. Don asked if there was a possibility of pre-recording a choir hymn for the Easter service. Matt said that it would need to be completed by mid-March.

Long-term visioning: Don reported that the MCCI Sanctuary team was in the process of reviewing a contract with Brunton Architects for drawings and designs for sanctuary upgrades. The contract is being reviewed by a lawyer and expected cost is no more than \$10,000.

The discussion turned to re-opening plans-with one area of focus on the outdoor service and the other focus on fall plans. Matt stated the need for a team to help with set-up and tear-down for the outdoor service. Matt asked for suggestions of individuals who would be willing to help with the outdoor service. Karla and Michelle offered to help put together a team to care for our first service after re-opening.

Matt then shared thoughts on the long-term plan for worship. He believes that momentum is important and achieved with larger numbers of attendees. He sees the wisdom in beginning with one service in the fall until numbers are large enough to add a second service. The online service would continue throughout. Now is the time to address previous issues with worship and Sunday school scheduling. Matt suggested that the first service be contemporary followed by Sunday school and a traditional service. There was a question about when the live stream would take place. One shared vision was to begin with contemporary at 9:00am followed by a blended service that would be live-streamed. Sunday School would run simultaneously during the second worship service, which provides an opportunity for families to attend worship together at the first service followed by Sunday School for the kids or parents can attend the second service while their

children are in class. This would also create more overlap between the two worship services creating opportunities for interaction amongst groups that typically do not get to see each other under the current scenario.

There was discussion about the need for two services and the type of service that will be offered. Matt closed with a call to focus on what our purpose is – how do we reach new people when we re-open. Matt sees this as an evangelistic moment because people are hurting.

Matt closed in prayer. Meeting adjourned at 8:14 pm

Respectfully submitted, Michelle Behsman