

**Hilltop United Methodist Church  
Church Council Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, Mar. 18, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.**

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

Don Putzier opened the meeting with prayer.

**Approval of minutes:** Church council reviewed the minutes from February. Derrick made a motion to approve the minutes, with a second by Paulette. The motion passed. There were no additions to the agenda. Kerry made a motion to approve the agenda, Derrick seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**Bible Study:** Pastor Matt shared a study from Colossians 3:1-17. Matt asked the council to consider how this passage is related to church leadership and how it might apply to how we make choices. Discussion followed.

**Finance Report:** Michelle provided a report of February finances. February plate giving was \$18,800.77. Expenses were \$14,086.12. Net income was \$10,151.25. Michelle reported that \$30,000 from checking was transferred to the TD Ameritrade account on March 4 and the PPP loan forgiveness approval came through in the last week and the balance of the loan was paid today in full (5,003.72). Matt reported that Rob Cornelius would be coming on board in April as the new Finance Chair.

**SPRC Update:** Karla reported that the committee has decided to add a PT Youth Director, a PT Kids' Connection Coordinator, and PT Nursery Staff beginning in the Fall. There were comments about the importance of supporting the growth and momentum that the youth group is experiencing under Jocelin's leadership.

**Committee Updates:** Derrick reported that the Trustees have planned for a Spring clean up day on April 24. There was also talk about replacing trees on the property. Don, as lay delegate, reported that the Annual Conference would be virtual this year and Matt shared that Hilltop would be a regional location for viewing. He also reported that the General Conference has been postponed to 2022. Jocelin reported that she had met with Lydia Jagodzinske to discuss a joint community VBS with Centenary UMC and Belgrade Avenue UMC and the planned date is July 19-23.

**Short-term visioning:** Matt provided an update on Holy Week plans. Good Friday we will have a Stations of the Cross from 2:00-8:00 pm and there is an opportunity for volunteers to serve as shepherds. There will be a drive-thru event after Easter Sunday online worship with cinnamon rolls and other surprises. A postcard promoting these events was sent this past week.

Don reported that the Sanctuary Team is viewing the first draft of drawings by Brunton Architects and will provide feedback.

**Long-term visioning:** The discussion turned towards planning for the return to worship and the opportunity to make changes during this transition. Matt had shared some thoughts and options prior to the meeting via email. He reminded council that this is a time for prayerful consideration rather than a time for decision-making. There are plans to send out a survey to all members to gather information to help council in making decisions about worship times in the Fall.

There was brief discussion about COVID-19 and whether council felt comfortable opening prior to all staff being vaccinated.

Matt asked for feedback on the proposal to have Sunday School follow the service that would be most attended by families (this would be the Contemporary service). There was discussion about the type of services we should offer with a question about providing blended for both services. Matt said that research is very clear that the way to attract new members and young families is through a purely contemporary worship service.

The plan is to have only one service when we return to in-person and so there was consensus that we may need to offer a blended service until we move back to two worship services. It was suggested that this worship service through the summer would be a great opportunity to try out a blended style that we can retain in the future. There was support to offer a contemporary service and a blended service in the Fall, rather than a contemporary and a traditional.

The discussion moved to the proposed start times for the Fall worship services, taking into consideration cross-pollination of families from both services, but also an optimal time for keeping families around after contemporary worship for Sunday School.

There were questions about the survey – the types of questions we should ask, how many questions can we include, etc. We need to ask people who we are trying to reach. Matt threw out the idea of a Saturday service and said that in actuality we will have three services when we consider the online service. Is there a worship time that is not currently being offered by other Mankato churches, both UMC and non-UMC?

Matt encouraged council members to continue the discussion via email.

Matt closed in prayer. Meeting adjourned at 7:58 pm

Respectfully submitted, Michelle Behsman