

**Hilltop United Methodist Church
Church Council Meeting Minutes
Thursday, January 18, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.**

Present: Pastor Matt Sipe, Don Putzier, Derrick Galinat, Michelle Behsman, Barb Keith, and Paulette Adams.

Don opened with prayer.

Minutes: Matt made a motion to approve the minutes from December with a second from Barb. The motion carried.

Devotional: Matt shared an image of Van Gogh's painting, "*At Eternity's Gate*", which depicts a Belgian coal miner seated before a fireplace. He shared that there are many thoughts on what the man might be experiencing or feeling. He noted that Van Gogh was a clergyman, before painting, and that his experience as clergy can be sensed in his art. Matt invited council to spend some time in quiet prayer, perhaps like the man pictured in the painting.

Finance: She also provided a report of December finances. In December general giving was \$35,122.00. Other income received was \$22,994.65 for Capital Campaign. Expenses were \$29,828.97 and the net income was \$5,293.56. Working general fund balance at the end of December was \$55,787.91. She also shared a year end summary, general giving totaled \$278,728.37 with total income at \$315,346.97. Expenses for the year were \$292,937.81. Overall net income was -\$6,285.49. Other pledges to the capital campaign were received this past week and the total now pledged is \$495,530.00. \$141,184.18 of capital campaign dollars have been received as of 1/9/2024 and the monies have been moved to savings. Michelle also reported that just today we learned that Lucille Prinsen had passed away and Hilltop has been named the beneficiary of a life insurance policy. It is estimated that the value is \$30,000. There was discussion about Lucille and how this gift might be used. A motion was made by Paulette to approve the finance report with a second from Derrick. The motion carried. Derrick shared information about the investment account and plans to move it into an account in which an outside wealth management firm could manage. There will be conversations before employing this type of service.

Capital Campaign and MCCI facilities update and discussion: The team is meeting with Brunton this coming Monday. Don shared an estimate of the entire project by email. Don asked council to provide some guidance in prioritizing the projects, as we do not have enough in capital campaign pledges to cover the project entirely. Matt said that it was likely that we will be taking out a construction loan, but he personally did not feel comfortable taking out a loan to cover the entire cost. He believes that the Sunday School space is working much better, now that the office has been moved. Matt sees the Sanctuary upgrades are of greater importance and really a necessity, as some of our AV is in need of replacing. Don is in agreement and shared the difficulties the Tech team has had with cameras, lighting, and computer. Don planned to ask for a re-budget from Brunton, breaking out just Sanctuary upgrade and he expects that the \$495,000 will cover all of the Sanctuary work. It was noted that there will be conceptual design images shared at the Monday meeting. There was a consensus that the Sanctuary should be the priority, as it is our primary space of worship, and many items are already in need of updating (carpet, pews, screens, lights, cameras, etc.).

Calendaring:

- a. Feb. 4—Confirmation Sunday
- b. Feb. 14—Ash Wednesday
- c. Mar. 15-17—Youth Ski Trip
- d. Mar. 24—Palm Sunday
- e. Mar. 29—Good Friday—Mankato United Methodist joint service at Centenary UMC
- f. Mar. 31—Easter Sunday

Pastor Matt closed in prayer. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Michelle Behsman