

Hilltop United Methodist Church

Church Council Meeting Minutes

Thursday, July 16, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.

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

Don Putzier opened the meeting with the Lord's Prayer. He also noted excused absences. Stacy Vanderwerf will no longer be attending to meetings as she has resigned from her role on the Inward team. Mark Wright will not be attending due to vacation.

Approval of minutes: Church council reviewed the minutes from June. Paulette made a motion to approve minutes, with a second by Kerry. Motion passed. No additions to the agenda.

Bible Study: Pastor Matt spoke about the associated effects of COVID-19 and the importance of grieving what has been lost. He will be offering a Service of Lament the first week of August in order to provide a space for individuals to feel the emotions that have resulted from living in a pandemic. He shared scripture from Psalms and Revelation that will provide a basis for this special worship service.

Calendaring: Jocelin is planning for an outdoor youth event at the church on Wednesday, July 22.

Finance Report: Michelle provided a quick overview of the June finance report and July cash report. Program and Operating expenses for July are projected to be lower than June. We funded \$6250 of the Trustee initiatives in June and we currently have \$8K more in general checking than we had at the end of June.

Committee Updates: Derrick added that the Trustees are moving forward with sealing the cracks in the parking lot, receiving two bids. They would like to move quickly on this project to prevent further deterioration. He will send updates via email in the coming week.

Reopening Plan Update: Matt opened discussion on plans to reopen July 19, with a focus on worship, asking if all council members still felt comfortable with the plan to have in-person service at 9:00 am. Matt shared that the building was ready and safety measures were in place, like hand sanitizers, doorman service, marked off pews, etc. A video with reopening information will also be shared in the weekly email. The discussion turned to an estimation of attendance and "what if a worshipper contracts COVID-19". Overall, all felt that it was unlikely that we would exceed 50% capacity and if 100 people do come for worship then we will need to move to an online sign up to track attendance. It was also suggested that tracking attendance might be wise in order to notify attendees, should there be a report of a positive COVID-19 case in the population.

The discussion then moved to other events to be held at the church, the YWCA Girls Inc. camp, the outdoor youth event, and a request to have an anniversary party at the church. Council talked about social distancing and mask use and how each of these events may or may not put attendees at risk. Jocelin reported that the youth group would be primarily outdoors, with access needed for restrooms only. Council discouraged food preparation onsite and recommended pre-packaged food. Council had already given permission for the YWCA camp via email, as that group would be less than 25 and would be primarily outdoors. The YWCA staff would not be preparing food or use the drinking fountains. They would also sanitize surfaces and areas of use.

A member of Hilltop also requested to use the fellowship hall for a wedding anniversary. This event did not fit within the Conference guidelines for acceptable events, nor does it meet the capacity guidelines. There was discussion about alternatives for this event, like an outdoor parade (like the Graduate Recognition event). The council agreed that an outdoor event was a safer alternative and like the other events, food should not be served but pre-packaged treats would be allowed. Pastor Matt would discuss these options with the family. Matt said that the family also requested a soloist during worship and in line with worship band guidelines, the vocalist would need to be 12 feet from the nearest person.

Matt closed in prayer. Meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm

Respectfully submitted, Michelle Behsman