

Meetinghouse Council Minutes

October 18, 2022

7 p.m.

Attendees: Steven Anderson, Jason Phillips, Paige Didora, Kent Nack, Deborah Eckland, Jeff Lindsay, Sara Wilhelm Garbers, Tim Anderson, Wendy Senior, Shelby Wagner, and Mary Fisher.

7:02 Opened with Prayer of Relational Intent and Devotions - Kent

7:12 September Minutes Approved

7:13 Budget - Jason

- There was an update in the recent E-news
- A large gift came in recently
 - We have quite a few people who give in one lump sum
 - Can make things difficult to predict
- Most budget categories were not spent to their limit
- Giving was behind in September
- Continuing to review data - giving units, demographics, other points to present to the congregation in November

7:19 Policies and Training - Deborah

- Handbook updates
 - There will be a lunch meeting for staff on November 8 to review
- Employee Technology Policy
 - Discussed the social media policy portion
- **Motion to Approve the Meetinghouse Church Employee Handbook, Meetinghouse Paid Leave Agreement, Meetinghouse Technology Use and Social Media Policy**
 - Discussion
 - **Motion Passes**

7:39 Ministers' Report - Jeff, Sara

- Programs have kicked off this fall
- Wednesday night dinners
 - Trying to strengthen the volunteer pool
- Second We Sing program - We Sing Justice
 - Led by a professional from St. Olaf
 - Meetinghouse Masterworks also kicked off
 - In collaboration with the Edina Chorale
 - Very successful
- Rolling out two programs that we have talked about
 - Joy Sjakstad - Neighborhood Listening Project
 - What are the unmet needs in the community
 - Edina and the bordering neighborhood
 - Kicks off Monday

- Christian's work with the Center for Theology in the Neighborhood
 - Survey for the congregation
 - This Sunday kicks off the survey. QR code on bulletin and paper
 - The information will be used in conjunction with Joy's data gathering to shape some future partnerships between our community and those around us
- Most of the ministries that we support are not proximal to us; goal would be to be a blessing to our immediate neighbors
- We will have to take the feedback and do something with it -- because the respondents will want to know what action items follow their opinions
 - Also be mindful that we are not asking repetitive questions
- General discussion that it may actually be more clear to message this as: *Christian is in a Leadership program at United Theological Seminary, please contribute by completing a survey.*
 - It may inform the work that Joy is doing but is more clear as acting towards a separate goal
- Sacred sites tour next Saturday
- Theology on Tap this Thursday
- Thanksgiving service is shifting focus this year towards gratitude and thankfulness
- Christmas morning and New Year's morning in the North Commons
- Christmas Eve - three services
- Advent theme: God With Us
 - Following the candles of the advent wreath, there will be a well-known carol each Sunday
 - More music overall in Advent
 - 12/18 - one service of Lessons and Carols
- Big Christmas gathering following Lessons and Carols

8:09 Emerging Generations Update - Nicole

- Trunk or Treat
 - Cars in the parking lot here at church, kids go from car to car for treats during the daytime
 - Intergenerational, easy, inviting, outward-facing

8:24 Conciliatory Conversations - Steve

- Feedback was circulated to the Council

8:29 Financial Discussion with Congregation

- Working group that is planning how to address the financial status with the congregation so that this discussion does not feel sudden at the annual meeting
- Increased giving, decreased expenses, or continue to rely on the Foundation.
 - Is there widespread criticism over using the Foundation, and if so, what do people feel should be done instead?
- How to get a large number of people to attend

- Is this worth doing, will it be a downer, and will the messaging turn people off?
- What is the goal -- To encourage people to give, to start a conversation, or to generate ideas?
 - We are inviting folks who see this church as their home to shoot for one hundred percent participation in the life of this church
- Importance of asking the congregation to give rather than casually mentioning ways to give during services
- Emphasis on giving as a spiritual practice
- At the last annual meeting, people were asking about data
 - One part of this Town Hall is to keep people appraised
- One goal of November's meeting is to encourage people that their investment is in the right place
- More intentional language may be useful with respect to the Foundation money - how it got there and what it's being used for
- More tangible giving goals and benchmarks - giving people an idea of what they are giving towards (example: new music for the Chorale)
- Logistical question of what format and room would be best
 - Depends on our goals: first priority is giving an update versus generating ideas
 - Something to continue to think about - re-connect by email

9:14 Signs

- Commissioned Eric to get some ideas/bids

9:16 Motion to Adjourn