

Minutes Not Yet Approved by Church Council

First Congregational Church of Woodstock
 Minutes of Church Council Meeting #11
 19 January 2021, 7 p.m., via Zoom during pandemic

Present: Rev. Dr. Kevin Downer, Director of Faith Formation Lisa Haupt, Moderator Bob Kirk, Clerk Alexandra (Sam) Lyman, Treasurer Carl Davis, Glenn Boies, Laura Bond, Charles Bottieri, John Cimochoowski, Noah Gourlie, Debby Kirk, Leilani Nixon, James Nowak, Lisa Nowak, Kathy Packard, Rev. Debra Pallatto-Fontaine, Jeff Perkins, Tom Singleton, Charlene Swanson, Paula Wilmot, Alicja Wisnosky, and Carl Wisnosky.

1. Welcome: Moderator Bob called meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.
2. Opening devotion: Rev. Kevin had technical difficulties in reprising *The Work of Christmas* from last Sunday's service, so he offered a prayer of thanks and guidance, noting that our work is just beginning and that we can use our very selves to heal the hurting world.
3. Clerk's report, Sam:
 Minutes of December 8th meeting accepted by emailed approval from four members and three more votes entered in Zoom chat at this meeting.
4. Treasurer's report, Carl Davis:
 Even with lower fundraising revenue, "COFH put us over the top." With PPP grant, our year-end outcome is healthy. The New Century Fund withdrawal has not yet been entered in the report on the table. MOTION: To accept report. John/Lisa N., unanimously accepted, no abstentions. Discussion ensued on the second round of PPP loans now available. Do we qualify? Yes, if we demonstrate a 25% loss of revenue for 4th quarter of 2020. Sixty per cent of loan must be used to pay salaries. "There is no downside," says Carl D. John suggests applying, because we used surplus from year 2020 to balance 2021 budget. MOTION: To apply for 2nd PPP loan. Tom/2nd Lisa N., passed with no abstentions.
5. Pastor's report, Rev. Kevin:
 - Thirty contacts are accessing Sunday service on Facebook, meaning more than 30 people; website posting draws a dozen more. Approx. 200 hits on FB during the week after a service.
 - Intention is to improve communication, clarify vision and mission. Be clear and transparent, as some people are anxious about the future.
6. "News Briefs":
 - Deacons, Laura:
 Rev. Debbie Pallatto-Fontaine has accepted a position as full-time interim minister at Storrs Congregational Church. Prayers and love go with Debbie. Debbie described the process of her application, interview, and resulting sense of call to accept the job. January 17th was her first Sunday. She is taking a leave of absence from the board of deacons, and Charlene will become senior deacon in 2021 with Bruce Staehle as partner. Bob offered thanks to both Debbie and Charlene.
 - Moderator, Bob:
 Bob read Ted Bradley's letter of resignation from his role as sexton. Rev. Kevin responded graciously to Ted.
 - Sub-committee on re-opening for in-person worship, Alicja:
 Group met and agreed that the pandemic is worse at the moment, so decisions need to be put off to an unknown date; Rev. Kevin and Debby are resource people for info from SNEUCC; vaccination of children in Connecticut is not on state agenda for 2021, so no one can predict impact on that part of our church community.

7. Old business:

- Proposed slate of officers & board members for 2021, Bob and Debby:
One more member needed on both board of outreach and board of trustees. Bob gave thanks to all who answered call to serve. Full slate to be presented at annual meeting.
- Annual report: Kevin requested that all edits be entered by tomorrow morning, Wednesday, January 20th.
- Budget for 2021, John:
Council members heard presentation after worship at Lunch & Crunch (with no lunch) on Sunday, January 17th. Question of custodial services (cleaning, snow removal) needs to be solved soon in light of Ted's resignation. EWCC hires a cleaning service. Lyman volunteered to clean downstairs bathrooms in the interim, and Carl W. does upstairs bathroom. Trustees will work on a plan at first meeting of 2021.
New surge protection system has been installed to stave off damaging impact of future electrical storms.
Debby asked for clarification on what will be done with surplus funds from year 2020 with respect to capital reserve fund. Carl D. noted that "due diligence requires us to plan for high maintenance needs of our old church building." Debby recommended that proportional gift to SNEUCC (510.100) be increased by \$412 to reflect 6% of pledged income. MOTION: To accept budget draft with notes about update to \$8412 in line item 510.100, and to transfer \$9248 to non-restricted off-budget capital reserve account. Tom/2nd Carl W., passed unanimously, no abstentions. Bob offered thanks to John, Lisa, and all trustees for their hard work during the budget process.
- Annual meeting, Bob:
John will update budget materials, and Ellen Bradley and Rev. Kevin will proof the annual report for mailing to the congregation via website and snail mail. The call has been published properly for the meeting by Zoom, and reminders will be issued to ensure a quorum of 35 members in attendance. Charles volunteered his cell phone number as a hotline for church members to use if they are unable to attend the annual meeting by Zoom.
Rev. Kevin noted that three letters of transfer of membership have been received. He feels that maintaining statistics for the church body is a task that should be in the clerk's remit, as stated in the bylaws. (Currently the office manager keeps the record.)

8. New business:

- "Changing of the Guard" at February board meetings, Bob:
New personnel to be installed at first meetings, convened by retiring senior members, who will then make introductions and leave the meeting.
- Bob would like to include more board members in 2021 council meetings, not just the chairmen, and will issue that invitation. Care will be taken to name voting members for each board and committee.

9. Adjournment

MOTION to adjourn meeting at 8:30 p.m. Charles/2nd Noah, passed unanimously.

Closing prayer by Tom.

NEXT MEETING: 9 February 2021, Tuesday, 7 p.m. by Zoom.

Submitted by Alexandra Lyman, Clerk 21 January 2021