

Minutes

Kent United Church of Christ Council Meeting (via Zoom)

May 25, 2021

Present: Jaime Baughman (vice moderator), Becky Dunlap, Glenn Hanniford, Barb Hanniford, Donna Hess, John Hetrick, Sue Otterson (vice moderator), Jackie Peck, Jeff Roeger (moderator), Sally Saltzman, Julie Wallace, Barb Werstler, Pastor Amy (ex officio), Pastor Kim (ex officio)

Jeff opened the meeting at 7 p.m. Glenn gave an opening devotional and Jaime read our mission statement.

Minutes Approval

The minutes of our April 27 meeting were approved.

Celebrations!

- Lighting project: we went beyond our financial goal!
- Boy Scouts: are getting a new trailer which will be stored in the garage; they will have a campaign to raise money for stolen equipment; and we may have a Scout Sunday this summer.
- Summer Feeding Program: Kent UCC will be feeding food insecure children through the Ben Curtis Foundation every Wednesday, starting June 16.

Ongoing Business

COVID Team Update

The COVID team had met the previous evening (May 24). They had reviewed the results of the congregational survey on resuming in-person worship. About 120 responses had been received via the electronic survey, and others may still be coming via U.S. mail. About 2/3 of respondents said they were ready to return to in-person worship, an additional 27% plan to come back eventually, and a few were not ready. About 85% of respondents are now fully vaccinated. The team felt that outdoor activities were fine, with indoor bathroom use as needed. We were reminded to still communicate with Leah regarding scheduling meetings on church grounds.

The team felt that beginning the first Sunday in July, we could begin worshipping in person outdoors, and that we could resume indoor worship the Sunday after Labor Day. The rummage sale could also go forward in September. We discussed at some length using the parking lot for outdoor worship, where the service could be heard through our car radios and/or we could bring our own chairs and sit outside. We would live stream the service, and it would also be available on YouTube for viewing later. We discussed the possibility of having two services in the chapel or one service in the sanctuary, even though it is not air conditioned, but starting outdoors seemed the easiest option. Some respondents were concerned about our lack of an air filtration system in the sanctuary. We also cannot guarantee that everyone will be masked, especially with changing CDC guidelines. The front lawn is another outdoor option if needed. We need to recognize that we can be flexible and adapt as needed, just as we pivoted quickly when the pandemic began.

We will not have child care or church school during our summer worship. We'll need help with logistics and technical support. Also, there are some dates that staff will not be there, and we will have to arrange for substitutes.

Council approved the following motion (Becky and Donna, amended by Becky and Glenn):

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We will begin gathering for in-person worship starting July 4, meeting initially outdoors through September 5. A virtual option will continue to be available. Logistics and further information will be developed and communicated in the coming weeks.

WISE Team Update

Jackie shared that as Pastor Amy had articulated so clearly, understanding the role of the church is paramount to our truly becoming a WISE congregation. One of the tenets of Companioning the Grieving as developed by Dr. Alan Wolfelt states:

Companioning is about going to the wilderness of the soul with another human being; it is not about thinking you are responsible for finding the way out.

Many of us are problem solvers, and fix-it people. This is **not** what we are called to be as a WISE Congregation. We **are** called to being present and holding space for those who are hurting because of mental dis-ease and their families; to companioning with our children and youth who are experiencing anxiety and other brain dis-ease; to partnering with recovery agencies and professionals through advocacy; and to being a church that goes beyond an extravagant welcome to being a church of radical belonging, where people are accepted just as they are with no judgment; where their lived experience is heard, respected, and honored; and where they and their families will not be alone in their dis-ease.

Sanctuary Lighting

John reported that we are finally finished hanging all the lights, but we still need to do set-up for the controls. He plans to familiarize some of our members with the lights and how they operate.

Governance Model Update

Barb W. shared that five members have agreed to join the lead team to work with Rev. Nayiri Karjian on our governance model update. *Council approved a motion by Jeff and seconded by Barb W. to appoint a team that will include Kelley Gifford, Patrick Mason, Pam Quellhorst, Jeff Saltzman, and Eileen West. Representing Council on the team will be at-large member Barb Werstler, moderator Jeff Roeger, and vice moderator Sue Otterson. Pastor Amy will also be part of the group.*

Pastor Amy's report

Pastor Amy had provided a written report. She highlighted the upcoming Sunday's service which included baptism at the Cuyahoga River and also confirmation, with an 11:15 coffee hour via Zoom to follow. She thanked Pastor Kim for her steadfast and excellent work with our confirmands this year. She also commented that a quarterly *Messenger* is being considered.

Pastor Kim's report

Pastor Kim also had a written report. She commented that the baptisms at the river were very meaningful. The UYF will be doing local service projects June 16-20, and Vacation Bible School will be held at our church July 5-8.

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Treasurer's Report

Sally reported that we ended up with a surplus for April. Our year-to-date deficit of \$4,855 is less than projected, and our income has gone up. She included a note and illustration in the *Messenger* regarding bank fees. In April, only 7% of the bank fees were covered by donors.

Because our lighting project donations of \$88,523 have exceeded what we need, we will not need to use the line of credit. We may possibly be able to restore some of the things we delayed funding. The Budget Committee will need to take another look at our status.

For the Good of the Group

Julie announced that Founders Day gift assembling would be done June 9.

Barb H. announced that Hospitality and Membership is sponsoring a "Name that Tune" featuring TV theme songs on June 26. Weather permitting, it will be outdoors in the church parking lot.

Becky shared what a blessing the baptisms at the river were, and how blessed we are with our ministers.

Jeff commented that Rhuna Wall will be married in August and is leaving her church position; he encouraged us to reach out to thank and congratulate her.

Jeff closed the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Our next regular meeting will be **Tuesday, June 22** at 7 p.m. via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Hanniford, Clerk