

## Minutes

Kent United Church of Christ Council Meeting (via Zoom)

September 28, 2021

**Present:** Jaime Baughman (past moderator), Karen Carmany, Becky Dunlap, Glenn Hanniford, Barb Hanniford, Donna Hess, John Hetrick, Sue Otterson (vice moderator), Jackie Peck, Jeff Roeger (moderator), Sally Saltzman, Julie Wallace, Barb Wertsler, Pastor Amy (ex officio), Pastor Kim (ex officio), and Pat and Linnea Ray (guests)

Jeff opened the meeting at 7:04 p.m., saying that he wanted it to be productive and focused but give members time to share input because this was our first meeting since we began worshipping inside in person. Pastor Amy gave an opening prayer, and Jeff read our mission statement.

## Minutes Approval

The minutes of our August 24 meeting were approved.

## Celebrations!

Back in the Sanctuary! Jeff thanked Pastor Amy, Glenn and the Worship and Arts Ministry, the AV team (Julie, Felicia, Kim), deacons, and others. We're still working out various issues, but we are back!

NAACP Office. A meeting has been held to discuss office needs, and we're also working on a legal agreement. A grant proposal will be submitted this week to the Living Water Association to help offset our first-year costs.

WISE Process. Jackie shared that the congregation has had opportunities for input into the draft covenant, and thus far it seems that there is comfort with the document. Any further input should be given to Jackie as soon as possible. We are getting closer to the time for a Council and congregational vote.

## Pastor Amy's Report

She shared several highlights:

- We are putting the "Reimagining Governance in Ministry" process on pause for now, given all that is going on currently. The process will be resumed in the new year.
- World Communion Sunday is coming up. She encouraged us to bring a loaf of bread (homemade or store bought) and if we brought one, to take a loaf of bread and share it with others.
- She thanked Glenn and Sally especially for their exceptional work in recent weeks.

## Treasurer's Report

Sally said that she was thrilled with our August financial results. Even with employee raises, we have a year-to-date surplus rather than the projected deficit. We took a leap of faith in approving the raises, and she is glad we did. We already have some Neighbors in Need contributions, and more donors are paying the bank fee. Pastor Kim's pension should begin September 1, and her insurance is in the works. Sally requested that we contact her or Leah regarding financial questions using this email address: [accountspayable@kentucc.org](mailto:accountspayable@kentucc.org). They will try to let us know when a payment goes out. She closed by saying that 2022 will be a challenge, but she is up for it.

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### **New Business**

#### Personnel Changes

We asked Pastor Kim to leave for this portion of the meeting.

- (1) Financial position. Jaime explained that Heather Cronin's very part-time presence was not ideal, and she left effective September 14. In researching alternatives, Pastor Amy found that in churches our size, an office administrator often also handled finances. Because Leah's current position is only 30 hours a week, and she is interested in taking on additional hours and new responsibilities, Personnel approved a motion to promote her. She will spend three months in training for the new position, and assuming all goes well, it will become permanent January 1. Her compensation will increase to reflect her additional hours and responsibilities. The position description will need to be revised.

The Personnel Ministry brought the following motion to Council:

*We move to promote Leah to a newly created related position of Office Administrator, effective October 1, expanding her current position to include responsibilities of the Financial Administrator.*

Motion passed.

Sally noted that the treasurer's description will need to be rewritten since some tasks may need to move to the treasurer. We will note in Council highlights that Leah is beginning to assume financial administrator responsibilities and is in a period of learning for the next three months.

- (2) Pastor Kim's request. Pastor Kim has asked to reduce her hours to part-time (25 hours/week) as of January 1. This will require a budgetary adjustment. Sally said that Pastor Kim can still designate some of her salary as housing allowance, but it cannot exceed her salary. Her job description will need to be reviewed to decide what needs to be adjusted. She anticipates a continuing focus on faith formation for children, youth, and young adults but will no longer be able to coordinate adult education. She understands that if we hire someone part-time to fulfill certain responsibilities, she may not be able to return to full-time work.

The Personnel Ministry brought the following motion to Council:

*We move to accept Pastor Kim's request to go part-time, working 25 hours per-week beginning January 1, 2022.*

Motion passed.

Discussion ensued about the need to move quickly to review our staffing and determine what we might need in light of Pastor Kim's reduction in hours. Jaime moved and Glenn seconded that *Personnel Ministry will work with the appropriate people to recommend staffing that will ensure that the congregation's needs are met as Pastor Kim moves to part-time.*

Motion passed.

#### United Disabilities Services (UDS) Update

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We had approved a partnership with UDS, but the pandemic halted moving ahead with it. Pastor Amy feels at this point we need to let UDS know that we are not able to pursue it. We do not have the staff and volunteers. Council members agreed with her.

### In-Person Health and Safety Policy Discussion

Jeff explained that because the COVID team could not meet before our August Council meeting, a provisional policy was put into place prior to the return to in-person worship in the sanctuary. Thus, he was asking for Council input on the policy at this time. Considerable discussion followed, primarily about three issues: committee meetings inside the church building, seating capacity, and singing.

In regard to the first section on “staying home,” point 4 on meetings, Council passed the following motion (Jaime, John):

*When it is necessary for a church group to meet in the church in person, the meeting must be scheduled through the office administrator. The group will be responsible for sanitizing the space afterward, following instructions and using supplies provided.*

Motion passed.

This language will be added to the end of point 4. We continue to recommend Zoom or outdoor meetings but recognize that there are times that meeting in person in the church building (e.g., for property needs) is essential. We recognize the importance of scheduling, having time between groups, and not having groups overlap in the building. The two rooms currently available for use are VanMeter Hall and the Chapel kitchen.

We discussed the rationale behind the capacity number (25% or 100), noting that this is an imperfect science. We wondered if we are discouraging people from coming by having a fixed number. However, air circulation is a serious consideration, since we have no air filtration system in our sanctuary; this is especially important with cooler weather coming. We ultimately had consensus in adding the word “approximately” to point 3 under “Social Distancing.” We know that we can seat more than 100, using chairs in front of the first pew and the narthex, if needed, and we agreed that some of us would give us our seats to a visitor if needed. At this time, we do not have a process in place to stream services to another space such as VanMeter Hall, but this is a possibility in the future.

Regarding singing, we recognized that some people are singing despite our policy and our instructions. Jaime reminded us that the COVID team began with strict parameters, knowing that we will begin taking small steps toward normalcy. This is a natural progression. As a result of our discussion, Section 5, Music, point 2 has been modified to read:

*What Kinds of Singing and Musical Instruments Are Possible? While chancel choir and children’s worship team rehearsals will have to wait, it may be possible for groups to sing and/or play by...*

One question arose regarding using drinking fountains. The rationale for now is the potential for spreading germs through children’s use of them. Perhaps a water cooler could be considered.

Jeff reminded us that we must recognize the need to pivot to more restrictions or totally virtual worship if circumstances dictate this. Pastor Amy suggested that the COVID team could take up this issue and bring a recommendation to Council.

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### Worship and the Arts

Glenn shared two items:

- (1) We need volunteers to serve as greeters, ushers, liturgists, and AV team members now that we have resumed indoor worship. Please sign up!
- (2) We are waiting for another bid on our video system and for now are using Julie and Felicia's equipment. They have committed to helping just until the end of the year. We hope to have new equipment installed by then and will need AV operators.

### Stewardship

Karen shared that the fall stewardship campaign will begin on Sunday, October 24 and conclude on Dedication Sunday, November 14. She thanked ministries for their input on the Mission Spending Plan. She also noted that her small ministry will need help in counting money weekly.

Pastor Amy provided a benediction using Isaiah 43:2. Jeff closed the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

Our next regular meeting will be **Tuesday, October 26** at 7 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Barbara Hanniford, Clerk