

**Prospect United Methodist Church  
Church Council Meeting Minutes  
January 19, 2023**

**Present:** Pastor Lee, Chris Wilson, Jill Wilson, Sue Powers, Carla Heister, Susan Thayer, Carol Rivard, Beth Provost, Tim Krauss, Christa Zaldivar, Mary Rogers, Kathy Dube, Luisa Gladu

Opening meditation – Pastor Lee.

Minutes from the November 17 council meeting were accepted.

**New members** to Council were welcomed – Susan Thayer, Lay Leader, and Kathy Dube, Co-Chairperson.

**State of the Church:** Tim Krauss discussed the split of the United Methodist Church with the Global Methodist Church. Several news articles have portrayed the split in a very negative manner. We discussed how to keep the congregation informed about any changes, as some may read news articles and feel uneasy and concerned about what these changes will mean for our congregation. We felt it was important to let them know that no changes will affect us to this point. The General Conference will be held in 2024, and there may be changes at that time. The deadline for churches to disaffiliate from UMC is this January, 2023.

Tim reported that the Laity Convocation is coming up on Saturday, February 4, entitled HARNESING YOUR GOD-GIVEN GIFTS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCH! It will be on Zoom, 10:00-2:00. Tim has signed up to attend.

**Parish News:** The new parish council will be meeting in February. Two candidates from each church will attend. Gary Gladu and Pastor Lee represent our congregation. Pastor reported on how the churches in the parish are working together to help each other. One church is supplying Sunday School teachers to another church that has Sunday school children, but no teachers. We need to begin to think about how our church can help others in the Parish.

**Committee Reports:** Mary Rogers reported on the busy events of the Nurture Team. Mary continues to send cards to shut-ins on a regular basis, and they really appreciate getting these cards. The craft group, which numbers 12-18 people, meets twice a month and some of the projects are brought to shut-ins. Debbie Fasci is coordinating the Friends of Prospect luncheon and has about 20-25 people attend each month. The Wednesday Luncheon also brings about 20 people each month. The group did visitations to shut-ins in December and January, and brought some of the crafts made by that group. We will be planning more visitations in the spring. Debbie Fasci is also setting up Greeters for Sunday mornings.

A fundraiser to sell soup in February was presented and approved by Council. Soup will be sold in pints for \$5.00 and quarts for \$10.00. Proceeds will go toward the Oil Fund.

Trustees reported that they had received a proposal from Pascom Sound for a mobile mike. It was decided to go ahead and order the mike. Some maintenance will also be done on the system. Funds for the mike will come from Book of Remembrance. The mike is expected to be delivered in June.

Education reported that the No Rehearsal Christmas Pagaent was a big success. The next event will be the Souperbowl of Caring in February. Proceeds will go to Agave House.

Kathy Dube reminded committees to send any reports/information for the Tower to her.

Tim presented the Financial reports – The Accounting Fund Balance showed that \$30,000, or 4% of our total endowment, was transferred to the General Fund. The remaining due on our October oil bill was paid, and the Apportionment payments were brought up to date. The balance in the checking account is \$14,657.

Jill asked a question concerning the Boy Scout money we are still holding from Pack 2 that we sponsored many years ago. Tim shared that Pac 6 sponsored by the Congregational church was getting organized and that it might be a good way to use that money by helping this troop. Chris Wilson suggested that the money be transferred to the GF as this troop used our building and incurred expenses during the time they used our church. It was decided to bring this question back to Finance to discuss and bring it back to Council with their recommendations.

Pastor reported on his activities: He attended the Bishop's Convocation on January 11-13 in Monticello NY. We will be celebrating new members on February 19. There are 4 candidates attending the new member class in January and February. Pastor will hold a Lenten Bible class March 2-31 (Thurs. mornings and Friday evening classes for 5 sessions. Textbook "Gospel in Life" by Rev. Tim Keller.

Pastor will attend the GBOD Book of Worship Team meeting in San Francisco Jan. 31 – February 3. He will also attend the GBOD Ministry Resources Team meeting in San Francisco Feb. 6 – 8. Jeanette Baker will be the guest speaker on Sunday February 5 when he is away.

Pastor will also attend the NYAC Korean-American Pastor Spiritual Retreat on Feb. 19-21 in Monticello NY. He will be one of the lecturers at the retreat.

Pastor Lee reported on visitations and discussed that lay persons could bring blessed communion elements to shut-ins on visitation.

Tim shared some thoughts concerning the state of our church. He shared that we have many positive programs in our church, and a high level of activity even through the pandemic. Some other churches were not even about to do remote worship through the pandemic. We should feel good about what we have been about to accomplish over the past several years. Finance has reported that we are not able to support the church without taking funds from our endowment each year. He reported that over the past 5 years, our membership has diminished by an average of 15 members annually. The final count for 2022 is 275 members. At this rate, in 20 years we will have 0 members.

There was a conversation with SPRC and Finance about not supporting a full-time pastor. The congregation may not be aware of the financial future of the church. SPRC had a conversation with the District Superintendent who discouraged going to a part-time pastor, and noted that churches with part-time pastors tended to lose members and had fewer ministries through the church.

We need to strategize what we want the future of our church to look like. We discussed getting these issues out to think about this year and to make the congregation aware of the situation. Mary suggested that we return to reporting quarterly finance reports in the bulletin and Tower.

We discussed the procedure to possibly change to a half-time pastor. A timeline would need to be discussed to determine when first steps would need to begin. Strategic planning will be an on-going item of the Council agenda each month for discussion.

Next meeting will be Thursday, February 16.

Beth Provost