

St. Mark United Methodist Church

Church Council Meeting Minutes

Date: December 11, 2022 **Time:** 12:30 pm **Location:** Room 111

In attendance:

1. Amber Stewart
2. Pastor Carolyn Stephens
3. Mitch Foster
4. Karen Hannula
5. Darrell Card Harper
6. Pastor Sheila Stephens
7. Mark Wood
8. Joel Black
9. Robert Gileo
10. Jess Cusick
11. Kathy Fazenbaker
12. Mary Abbott Waite
13. Lilly Berrios
14. Lee Edwards
15. Jon Woody
16. Eric Steverson
17. Deana Hilton

The **December 2022** meeting of the **Church Council** was held in person in Room 111 on December 11, 2022. Amber Stewart, President of the Church Council, Presided.

The meeting was Called to Order at 12:33 by Amber Stewart.

Pastor Carolyn Stephens led the council in prayer.

- **MOTION**
 - ***Accept Lee Edwards to the role of Vice Chair of Trustees***
 - Seconded by Belva White.
 - Motion approved unanimously.
- Discussion ensued about adopting of minutes. Mark Wood pointed out that the discussion about the Apportionment change was not included the minutes. Eric Steverson clarified that that the 5 Budget Amendments referenced in the motion in October 30, 2022 meeting, was referred to the Meeting Packet distributed to the Church

- Meeting minutes amended to include the meeting packet referenced will be forwarded to the Church Office to be uploaded to the Church Website.
- **Lily Berrios** moved to approve the October 2022 meeting minutes, Darrel Card Harper seconded, all in favor, motion passed.

REPORTS

Connectivity/Hospitality

- Caroling next week on Sunday, December 18, 2022.
- Will have connectivity cards to pass out.
- No update from Jeff Collins Smythe

Solidarity

Pastor Carolyn reported

- Reverend Bryan Tillman meeting

Endurability

- Reroofing of Education Building in January
- January – chapel service will move to Sanctuary for the whole month
 - Work on the inside ceiling of the Chapel

Wiggins Task Force

- Painting is done
- Ceiling tiles are replaced; more time for parameter tiles as they have to be notched
- Looking at furniture; what can be repurposed, reused, etc.?
- Bought 5x7 rugs for sleeping rooms, polished appearance and comforted
- Switches and plugs have been replaced.
- Refrigerators have been replaced.
- Hot Water heater replaced.
- Kitchen shower: what people can contribute?
- New range hood.
- Next Sunday, dedication of Youth Kitchen in memory of Jeri Hannula
- Lily Berrios pointed out that the issue of excess dust in and around the church needs to be addressed.
- In need of dumpster to haul away junk around Wiggins House and around the church in general.
 - Invite classes to clean out their classrooms.
- Contractual content
 - No plan to charge students for use of the space while inhabiting.
 - Restricted to those as that identify as female.
 - We are going to ask that GA Tech sign responsible the condition to the student had at check in.

Ministries

Children's Report

Vespers

- Wednesday evening Vespers led by Steve Fazenbaker has witnessed positive results as expressed by the attendees.
 - Average attendance 15
 - Located in the chapel with circular seating that encourages comradeship
 - Fall session ended December 7, 2022.
 - Statistic information has been submitted to the church office (Robert Gileo).
 - Plans for winter midweek Vespers have not been finalized.

Book Study

- Wednesday evening book study led by Michelle Levan concluded December 7, 2022
 - Average attendance 6

Bible Study

- Carolyn Stephens conducted a Bible study during the fall midweek session
- Attendance unknown - reported by Carolyn to Robert Gileo

Saint Mark @ Home

- Currently Pam Buzbee is facilitating the only Saint Mark @ Home which usually meets on the first Monday in the month
- Average 10-12
- The Saint Mark @ Home group formerly led by Art Multop will resume on January 9th at the home of Joseph Hackett under new leadership (TBD)

Children's Ministry

- The Children's Ministry will host a baby shower for Jada Ragland, Santiba Clark's middle child on Wednesday, December 14, 2022, immediately after supper in Wade Hall. All are welcome.
- The Annual Family Christmas Eve Worship Service led by the children and youth will take place at 5:00 December 24th. You don't want to miss it.

Youth

- MAC day; unpacked food donation to the pantry
- Jenny Jobson told youth about the history with Saint Mark and educated the youth on the history of MAC
- Youth and Foundations Class packed stockings in Memory of Sandra Kelly.
- Annual Lock In, Friday, December 16, 2022.
- Packing and giving out Midnight Mission to Breakfast Club and Supper Club.

Finance Report

Mark Woods reported:

- Mark reviewed the financial statements for October which were distributed in advance of the meeting. The November financials had not yet been reconciled and reviewed, so those will be distributed later.
- On page 1 for the “Assets” section of the balance sheet, the trustee accounts balances are the same as what was presented on the Sept. financials since we generally only post updates to those on a quarterly basis. The one exception is the asset called “Trustees Centerstate MM account” which hold the Juniper St. property sales funds and where the balance went down by \$58k in October to pay for endurability committee expenditures.
- In the liabilities section, the item labelled “Excess Cash Received” which represents the year-to-date deficit that the church has generated shows a deficit of \$35,603. That went down by \$17k in October, mainly because of the transfer of \$25k from the “Floyd Lee Glenn Bequest” trust fund to the church’s operating budget as approved by the council in our October meeting.
- On the second page titled “Revenues”, the total giving income, which is the sum of pledge contributions, non-pledge contributions and loose plate offerings now stands at \$645k on a YTD basis and which is \$9k higher than at the same point last year, or 1% better.
- Other revenues in the “Designated & Trust Funds” section were higher than usual, due to the \$25k from the Floyd Lee Glenn bequest that shows up for the current month.
- Total Revenues from all sources for the month came in at \$108,170 as shown at the bottom of page 2.
- Moving to page 3 and looking at the first expense item for “Conference Apportionments”, we’ve received \$10,700 of specifically designated contributions and have a balance remaining of \$22,143 toward our full conference request. The council had a brief discussion to clarify whether the Floyd Lee Glenn bequest money must first be used to fund the church’s conference apportionments for 2022 that are not funded by contributions given to the church specifically for that purpose. Mark then made the following:

MOTION

- ***“The Council directs that once all specifically designated contributions toward 2022 conference apportionments have been applied, any remaining balance of the 2022 apportionments is funded through the Floyd Lee Glenn bequest which was transferred to the church’s operating budget by motion at the October meeting.”***
 - Motion which was seconded by **Mitch Foster**.
 - The motion was passed unanimously.
-
- Moving to page 4 and down under “Building/Grounds”, Mark noted that we had another high month of expenses. Some of the culprits were \$2,500 from a freon leak in the sanctuary, \$1,600 for tree removal expense, and \$2,600 for our quarterly HVAC system maintenance agreement.
- Total church expenses shown at the bottom of that fourth page came in at \$90,742 for the month of October. On a YTD basis we’ve spent \$966k, or around \$38k more than the same point as last year which works out to 4% more than the October 2021 YTD expenses.

Respectfully submitted by Eric Steverson, Church Council Secretary

- Mark then gave an update on the audit of the church's 2021 financial reports and procedures that is being performed by the CPA firm of James Jordan. We have received a draft audit report and the finance committee had a lengthy discussion with James and Paula, one of his staff auditors, this past week. There was nothing unusual or concerning that has been raised by the auditor, although he has suggested that the church invest some time in setting up and populating a more detailed and comprehensive fixed asset accounting process. Currently, the church's fixed asset accounting consists of recognizing the estimated fair value of our larger assets on our balance sheet, not depreciating those assets, not tracking their cost basis or estimated useful life, and not capitalizing other more routine asset purchases such as carpeting and small equipment. Because of that, we will be receiving what's referred to as a "qualified opinion", meaning not a "clean" or "unqualified" opinion which most businesses would consider to be ideal. James informed us that the vast majority of his church clients are in the same situation with regard to fixed asset accounting so it's not out of the ordinary for a church to receive a qualified opinion.

Discussion about Audit Report ensued

- Address Council at January Meeting
- Cost of Audit: \$2000 less than quote
- Proposed Budget in January 2023 Meeting
- Pledge Amounts
 - Pastor Carolyn Stephens inquired when is the budget finalized?
 - Expected to move faster; reduction in budget.
 - What is Saint Mark's history of meeting projected budget?
 - At what point do we need to do a push?

Additional treasury discussion/update

- **Belva White** reported that the move of funds to the foundation to officially set up our endowment has been completed. The endowment is all at Georgia Foundation, and the Unrestricted Funds are at Morgan Stanely.
 - Belva will follow up next week to have spending distributions so that Mark has that for the budget.

Trustees

- Belva White reported on Make Your Mark
 - Small but mighty; 8 people participated
 - Cleaning the children's area
 - Next Make Your Mark – tie it in to the Parking Deck
 - Family – celebrate the parking deck being open.
 - Sign up with specific tasks? Specific asks and tasks.

Endurability

- Belva White reported for the Endurability Committee
 - December 2022
 - Share Phase 0 survey results / details
 - Share Phase 1 and Phase 2 project details
 - January 2023

- Communications, education, community outreach focused on next phase prioritization.
- February – April 2023
 - Celebrate rededication of the Chapel
 - Funding strategy developed for next phases
- March 2023
 - Announce priorities for next phase.
- Refer to Endurability complete report in the meeting packet distributed prior to the December 2022 Church Council meeting.



Trustees -
Endurability Update.]

- The **Endurability Committee** recommends that Saint Mark proceed with Phase 2, which encompasses repairs to the North Elevation (5th Street side), repairs to the sanctuary interior, and the construction of a connector bridge to the new parking deck. The Phase 2 project will have a not-to-exceed budget of \$1,515,000, including contingency. If bids on Phase 2 exceed this approved amount, the Trustees will be notified by the Endurability Committee and Church Council will review the updated proposal prior to initiating work.

MOTION: Lilly Berrios seconded the aforementioned; all in favor; passed unanimously.

MOVED TO EXECUTIVE at 2:16pm