

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING
ST. PAUL'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH & WESLEY FOUNDATION
February 23, 2021

ATTENDANCE:

Voting Members: Jack Basiago, George Bodenschatz, Sam Bonsall, Rebecca Connelly, Dave Flick, Kelly Grimes, Jane Harris, Jennifer Ishler, Scarlett Miller, Phil Mohr, Darrin Thornton

Non-voting Members: Becky McGee, Greg Milinovich, Sarah Voigt

Other Attendees: Lou Geschwindner

CALL TO ORDER:

D. Flick called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

NEW MEMBERS

D. Flick welcomed J. Ishler and G. Bodenschatz to Church Council. J. Ishler is serving as chair of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee; G. Bodenschatz is serving as member-at-large.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

The minutes of the Dec. 8, 2020, meeting were approved

ENDOWMENT FUND DISTRIBUTION

K. Grimes reported that the Endowment Fund increased 9.47% in 2020. The closing balance as of December 31, 2020, was \$2,002,191. The Endowment Investment Committee recommended a 5% distribution for 2021, which was approved by the Board of Trustees at their January 2020 meeting. A vote was taken on the Board of Trustees motion; the motion passed unanimously.

FINANCE REPORT

S. Bonsall reported the following:

- The church ended 2020 with an increase in unrestricted net assets of slightly more than \$30,000. This will carry over to the 2021 budget to offset potential shortfalls.
- Based on his experience at his previous church, he recommends we work toward establishing an emergency reserve fund equal to approximately 6 months of operating expenses.
- The Wesley Foundation is in very sound financial shape. Wesley received \$17,600 from the McFeely Endowment; this will be an annual disbursement.

- The preschool is the budget of most concern due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Private tuition revenue is down because of the lockdown in April and May, followed by reopening with reduced capacity. We received a \$206,300 loan under the Paycheck Protection Program; approximately \$109,000 of that was used to offset preschool payroll costs from April 9 through September 8. Tammy is currently working with BB&T Bank to determine the amount of loan forgiveness for which we are eligible under the CARES Act. She believes it's likely that the entire \$206,300 will be forgiven. If that happens, Church Council will have to decide how the remaining \$97,000 is allocated.

Follow-up discussion:

- K. Grimes expressed support for establishing an emergency reserve fund.
- R. Connelly asked about the long-term plans for filling staff positions that are currently vacant. G. Milinovich stated that the priority is to focus on children and youth, if we can afford it, potentially as part-time positions or possibly as a combined position.
- S. Miller recommended that Church Council seek input from preschool staff regarding use of the remaining PPP funds, should the loan be forgiven. She suggested that one option might be to upgrade the kitchen equipment at the preschool and hire a cook. The existing equipment is not sufficient to serve the preschool and they are currently using a catering service, which costs more than hiring a cook.

REOPENING DISCUSSION

- S. McGee reported that she had been asked by a couple whose wedding she will be officiating if they could have the ceremony in the sanctuary in June. G. Milinovich stated that he would be uncomfortable hosting a wedding if we're not worshipping as a church in the space yet. After additional discussion, it was agreed that we could not commit to opening the building for a wedding in June.
- Regarding establishing a timeline for returning to worship, a number of Council members expressed concern that there are still too many unknowns, despite the rollout of vaccinations. Additionally, it was noted that not everyone on the church staff is eligible to be vaccinated yet and that we should not reopen until staff who want to be vaccinated have that opportunity.
- When we do reopen, it's likely to take the form of a "soft opening," i.e., a gradual return. Regardless of when that happens, we need develop a transition plan now so we're ready to go when the time comes. G. Milinovich asked if a few Council members would meet with him on Zoom to begin mapping out a plan. It was agreed that he will set up a meeting and anyone who is interested and able to attend may do so.

- D. Flick stated that he will draft a brief message explaining Council's ongoing work on a reopening plan, to be shared with the congregation in the weekly "What's Happening?" email.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jane Harris, Church Council Secretary