

Church Council Notes Union Church, April 18, 2022

Present: Joan English (Recorder), Dave Kobersmith (Staff), Marty Hensley (Finance), Carla Gilbert (Mission Board rep, pro tem, approved by Moderator.), Kent Gilbert (Pastor), Kim Kobersmith (Nominating), David Jones (Staff), Shirley Carlberg (Bookkeeper), Bob Boyce (Properties), Linda Parsons (Clerk), Betsy Whaley (CL&G), Jean Boyce (Moderator)

A quorum was present. Our devotional was offered by Kim from The Book of Awakening - "The purpose of full attention." Question of the evening – what is your favorite farm fresh food?

Action Items

Minutes: Approval of March minutes. Discussion of use of Stewart-Hindman Fund needs to be adjusted. Approved pending that change Bob, Jean second (change made on 4-19-22).

Election of Hazel Morris to Nurture and Care Board. Jean moved to elect Hazel to fill the final 2 years of Cheryl Caruso Payne's unexpired term. Betsy seconded, all in favor. Welcome and thank you!

Audio-Visual Proposal. Dave and Kent have been meeting with our AV Team -- Marty Hensley, Jeff Hutton, Sayer Kobersmith, Rina Tanaka, about upgrading our current system, which is over 20 years old. They have met with 2 vendors, gotten quotes and compared them line-by-line and made a recommendation.

Projects are:

- sound system in the sanctuary & livestream; also to get sound in Community Room & Nursery
- hearing assist devices induction loop
- adding lighting above the pulpit area

Church Council voted to use \$30,000 of Transformation Funds in April 2020. We've spent about \$15,000. This proposal is about \$50,000. Dave suggests adding another \$5000 of contingency, so an additional \$35,000 - \$40,000 needs to be approved.

Source of money can be Transformation Funds (account #3050).

Marty stated that some of this is time-sensitive - the lighting work should be done at the same time as the ceiling (funds already allocated) because we'll only have scaffolding in place for a short period.

We have solid bid of \$31,000 for audio; \$7000 for induction loop. \$5000 for lighting; \$3-5000 for construction of sound booth.

Need to start communicating with contractors now in case of supply chain issues. Once Council says yes can get ordering done.

Discussion of placement of booth -- at the back of pews with a passage behind the booth. We cannot block the air intake vent. We will need to take out the center section of back pew. It'll protrude slightly out from under the balcony.

Question from Properties Board about lighting -- Problem 1 is that we don't have lighting that shines at a good angle for soloists, orchestra or piano – the apron area of the platform. These would be "moveable head" fixtures. Second problem – lighting at the pulpit is not upgradeable. The proposal is for 4 LED pivoting fixtures. 2 on the pulpit, 2 on choir.

Discussion of aesthetic -- good news – the new sound system will remove central sound cluster. Lights will be about 12 inches long, white against the white ceiling. They'll be controlled from the sound booth. By installing them with the scaffolding, we can install them in such a way we can get to them from the ceiling, which will give easy access for servicing. Ceiling repair/painting bids will come in soon. Dave thinks funding could come from a small capital campaign for our 100-year anniversary of the building.

Transformation Fund - \$100,000 is still not allocated

How shall we vote on this? We can pause the lighting question til we have bids. Marty – it'll be easier to do induction loop with the other audio project. We definitely want to do the lighting when we do the ceiling but we can keep the financing separate. We can encumber/ set aside that money now and spend it later.

Step 1 is shall we move ahead, are these worthy projects? Second, where will the money come from? We are just committing the money, not spending it.

Betsy moved that we go ahead with the audio projects and that we also approve lighting upgrades, but hold on them until we begin ceiling work; those funds to come from the Transformation Fund. OK to add: "not to exceed an additional \$40,000?" Yes. Bob seconds. Any questions? Motion passed.

Selecting Endowment Committee Representative. Committee meets once or twice a year. Based on last congregational meeting, they will meet a few more times than that to continue discussing a question raised about how church's money is spent. Needs a CC rep. Greg Lakes, Charles Hoffman, Sune Frederiksen are members; Dave is staff support. Any volunteers? Let's try again next month as the group really should have Church Council representation. Bob would like to see a woman on that.

Discussion

Finance Report. Shirley reported. Have closed the Putnam account and accounted for its expenditure. Its line item on Statement of Financial Position will go away. Budget vs. Actual. About \$8000 in the red last month; now about \$2000. She has no concerns at this time. Congregation generously gave \$10,000 toward Ukraine concerns. Then sent another \$1800 just this week. Still supporting our other concerns – BFCO, Food Bank, Samuel's Kids.

Endowment Fund – \$454,000 currently. Bob reminded Council that once we hit \$500,000 we can use interest. Fund will generate \$25-30,000 this year. There's a 10-year goal of 1 million. Dave asked how we went from \$8000 in the red to about \$3000 so quickly. Shirley reported receiving good chunks of income – from retirement investment - in March.

Board Updates or Highlights

- Admin -
- CL&G – they're considering offering a women's brunch in May; and men's breakfast in June. Is a gender-specific event an issue? Do we need to state gender? The desire is to be inclusive. Discussion around affinity groups (a stated desire in our most recent Strategic Planning conversations) and gender being only ONE of any number of self-reported affinities. This would be a beginning, not an end & the hope would be to generate more opportunities to get together. The critical issue is that we form community. CL&G will start lemonade on the porch in mid-May. Want to buy a better cart. Dave affirmed funds are there.
- Faith Development –
- M&S – will be helping with Urban Garden Blessing at 6 pm Friday. Mission trip to US-Mexico border in May. They're hoping Wednesday's program will generate other interest. They ask for responses by Thursday noon. M & S has allocated funds for that trip. Would like a group of 4 or 5. May 11-19. They may plan a potluck in May.
- Nominating –
- N&C – Hazel is new chair. We have people willing to give rides, receptions, MealTrains. They have excellent Stephen Ministers. See Carla if you know of a need.
- Properties –
- Worship –
- Endowment -

Pastor's Report. Easter went well. Attendance was 131 in person. Dave (Kobermsith) added online views & we might be up to 190 in worship! Madison County continues to be in the Covid Green Zone. We've got a significant number of Memorial Services coming up. Mark Gailey May 1; Tom Hubbard June 4; Jennie Kiteck August 13. No BLE this summer, will focus on Mission experiences. Summer is a good time to plan for future community gatherings -- but we do not know about another Covid wave. Kent is looking at vacation/time off plans. No change in health.

Parking is becoming more of an issue -- Berea College has stopped ticketing students on weekends. Need to try to find a solution, hopefully with Pres. Roelofs. Maybe info on website? Is it ok to park at the Tavern? Yes. Might get golf carts, circuit church to parking lot, for half an hour. Performed a memorial for the McLain family at Hindman settlement school.

Announcements

- News items
- Next scheduled consideration of Funding Requests – May, 2022
- Next Meeting May 16. Devotion: Joan
- Kim asked if is there interest in meeting in person, or hybrid? Using OWL, 360 degree view for those watching remotely with larger view of current speaker. Seems ok to meet by Zoom at this time
- 40 years ago this weekend Bob & Jean Boyce arrived in Berea!
- Bob has presented at Elmhurst Art Museum [online](#) here.

Meeting ended at 8:45 - Joan English