

## Church Council Notes Union Church, July 18, 2022

**Present:** Joan English (Recorder), Dave Kobersmith (Staff Support), Marty Hensley (Finance), Kent Gilbert (Pastor), Kim Kobersmith (Nominating), David Jones (Program Director), Shirley Carlberg (Bookkeeper), Sally Hindman (Properties), Linda Parsons (Clerk), Carla Gilbert (M&S, Pastoral Associate), Donna Lovell (Admin), Greg Lakes (Treasurer), Betsy Whaley (CL&G), Joan Moore (FD)

A quorum was present. Our devotional was offered by Dave. Introductions were made, as there were a couple of new CC members attending. Question of the day – what’s a mandatory hot dog topping for you?

### Action Items

**Minutes:** Approval of June minutes. So moved by Linda, seconded by Carla. Approved.

**Plan for Congregational Meeting.** Marty reported on proposed changes. We were able to increase some income streams by about \$7000 total. Expenses have increased, but a few significant lines have decreased as well. Overall – projected shortfall of just under \$40,000 for the year. Not unexpected, BUT in several previous years we have had a generous one-time gift, and we haven’t this year. We are unlikely to make up \$40,000. We do have cash reserves, but once they’re gone – they’re gone. We absolutely cannot do this every year. May need to make some difficult choices.

Discussion:

- Is there visioning happening about generating income from broader community?
- Is there any visioning happening to address the revenue issue creatively?
- A hope is to consider the Communications Position as an investment. Tell the story of values through communication strategy. We’ll pay originally through Transformation Funds and hope that position generates its own funding. Considered it as a contract position? Yes. We have a contact in Peter Hackbert at Berea College.
- Betsy is willing to help with designing a position and RFQ (Request for Quote). We need a person to help us get the right info to the right person in the right way for the right reason. Skills needed– database, social media, awareness of fund-raising and development tools, ability to respond to emerging issues, be an excellent communicator, artistic design skills helpful.

Next steps from Church Council this evening – does Council affirm this budget as presented?

- Mission & Service is willing to fund some extra Faith Development needs up to \$2000.
- Have all Boards considered areas where they can shave? Shirley or Dave checked in with each Board.
- \$1500 Life & Disability for Office Admin was put back into budget, was incorrect. It should’ve been \$600, but has never been spent.
- Copier – now paid off. For future – Donna has extensive experience researching
- If every Board cut every expense, that total is only \$25,000 - \$30,000. Our money is spent on staff salaries. We either have to raise more money on a regular basis, or do this with fewer people.
- We have both a short-term issue and a long-term sustainability issue. We can address the short-term now; but visioning a plan for sustaining the work has to happen. We acknowledge this cannot be completed by the budget meeting. For future, we should look back 3-5 years; and forward 3-5 years. Our culture’s relationship to organized religion is changing. Younger people express that church is either irrelevant or harmful. What are we going to do as a congregation to adapt to needs of the culture, how to bring the good news? We knew this before the pandemic but it’s even clearer now. We may never have 300 people in worship again but that doesn’t mean the need has gone. One of the tools Kent alluded to – Church Mgmt Software is a very powerful tool. In 2022 there are over 30 people who are new givers. We need to learn how to talk to them. What is the next step?
- Communication position will serve the visioning we do for next steps of how the church engages with the world. We need to do some pre-work before we hire someone. We have the function of what the person will do, it’s somewhat independent of exactly what the story is. Could that person be part and parcel of that? We may not need to have it all organized before we find someone doing that work. We have a lot of our story to tell, it’s info gathered before pandemic.
- Our value of inclusive love can absolutely empower people to survive in a hostile environment, equip people with tools. If we get people in the door, they report that Union gives them sustenance. Marty – could this be a contract with someone to coordinate, not a Union Church position? Carla – is in conversation with someone about how do

We as progressive Christians share that story with those who have been betrayed. We have to talk about our faith. Kent would like more info about contractors if Marty has it. We would be well served to put together a request for qualifications. Print & Pixel understood what we are doing, understood the region, took the time to understand our values. Kent knows we have circles where that would be welcome.

- What's our next step – 2 or 3 people to sit down and talk about what we need for the next 12 months and, while that's in process, how do we engage in deeper visioning. Can Church Council take this action? Yes. When we get to funding, the congregation would weigh in. Setting up is CC's purview. This group's work will be informational, and seek voices for the visioning/discernment process. Betsy Whaley, Dave Kobersmith & Donna Lovell will be that group. Many thanks from the larger group!

**Kim asked for a motion to affirm the changes to budget. Marty so moves; as a motion from a Board, it needs no second. Agreed unanimously.**

Longer visioning – we will look again and plan to undertake next steps after congregational meeting.

**Media Booth update.** Some Transformation Fund monies used. This needs to look architecturally pleasing and be structurally sound. It looks great so far! The guess of \$5000 was not close. At next CC meeting funding requests are due to be addressed, and they will ask for more funds to complete it. Jeff Hutton has built the shell at his home; Denis Burton is helping build, we have hired electricians and audio engineers.

## Discussion

**Finance Report.** Documents are in drive. Kroger, Amazon Smile, FB fundraisers, etc, are helpful ways to give painlessly. Is it time to remind people about this? Joan and Dave will do.

## Coordination

### Board Updates or Highlights

- Admin -
- CL&G – Lawn Party Ice Cream Social Aug 7 5 pm. Bring finger food, sandwiches, CL&G will provide ice cream. Ideas for custom flavors: Crank & Boom, Berea College Farm Store contact Tammy Cornett
- Faith Development – we have a new nursery care provider – Cansas Dowell will start Aug 7. She also plays several musical instruments and sings. Her parents are progressive pastors. Another student will volunteer. David has started conversations about having a student-led worship service, starting this fall. Will meet with CL&G this Thursday to plan for some dinners and get-togethers; to glean ideas and insights throughout the fall
- M&S – mark your calendars Arizona trip presentation Aug 21, 1 pm; November 3,4,5 Fundraiser Auction
- Nominating –
- N&C – Aug 13 Jennie Kiteck service with reception; Rhonda Cardwell will be away August-November; Stephen Ministry is seeking Stephen Leaders
- Properties –
- Worship –
- Endowment -

**Pastor's Report** David Crandall has died suddenly, his mom Dorothy was a long-time member and he was a friend of many at Union and the wider Berea and dance communities. Joy Frazier is leaving to be closer to family in Indiana. Jennie Kiteck memorial service August 13. Music from 1-2; service at 2; light reception to follow. If we are in the RED, it'll have to be on the porch. Kent got together with Pastoral Relations Board about how we will know if he needs some rest. No conclusions but good discussion. If he's unable to regularly participate in the weekly work flow; if it's putting an undue burden on staff working around his illness; if he is able to do the work but is having deterioration of abilities/physical damage –signs that some leave is warranted. PRB will reach out to staff, church members to assess where we feel the pinch. If a therapy comes onto the radar that requires significant investment of time, he will need to try that. His health has greatly improved since June. Good things -- Church family and volunteers have discovered ability to do things they didn't know. Kim – does the group assembled need to meet (Kent, Jennifer, Kim)?

Is there an emergency succession plan? No, but we probably should consider. He's helping outside events plan their own backup plans.

We changed locks on doors & will give anyone a code who needs one.

### **Announcements**

Dave and Joan Moore have been talking to Josh Bills about solar panels on homes. Any interest? Speak to Dave.

- Next scheduled consideration of Funding Requests – August, 2022
- Next Meeting August 15.

Meeting ended at 8:00

Joan English