**Church Council Minutes Union Church, May 15, 2023**

**Present:** Joan English (Recorder), Dave Kobersmith (Staff), Kim Kobersmith (Vice Moderator), Marty Hensley (Finance), Kent Gilbert (Pastor), Charles Hoffman (Endowment Committee), Kim Kobersmith (Vice Moderator), Carla Gilbert (M&S, Staff), Steve Gowler (Moderator), Jones (Staff), Donna Lovell (Admin), Grace McKenzie (FD), Jennifer Melton (Worship), Jeff Hutton (Properties), Linda Parsons (Clerk), Steve Bolster (Pastoral Relations)

Marty offered our devotional, [*The Man in the Arena*](https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/7-it-is-not-the-critic-who-counts-not-the-man) from a speech by Theodore Roosevelt

Question of the evening: Favorite thing to do on a hot summer day.

**Action Items**

**Minutes:** Approval of April minutes. Steve Bolster moved to approve, Donna seconded, minutes approved.

**Discussion**

**Finance Report** – Charlie reported. We’re in the negative as of April month-end, $32,000 already for 2023.

Questions

* How did this happen so quickly?
* Are we losing donors?
* Are the same ## giving less?
* Are we on track with deficit we expected?

We are expecting our disbursement of approx. $40,000 in June from The Lambert Fund. If the pattern of income vs. expenses holds, we are projected to be at about $90,000 deficit for the year If that $40,000 is applied to the deficit we’d still be at a $50,000 deficit for the year. Spring/summer campaign? Should we contract with someone we’ve had contact with to do a packaged campaign? Giving campaign in honor of the building? Can we hire a “turnkey” campaign? We can wait until our fall campaign - the $40,000 will give us a bit of breathing room. We are due for a re-emphasis on stewardship. The 1st yr of pandemic we had a PPE loan . Transformation Fund dollars are available.

Steve G – does a professional giving campaign result in one-time funds or spur continuing donors? The Capital Campaign did lift other giving. Both that company & another we consulted with do an annual campaign bundled with a larger giving campaign; commitment to a 2-year or 3-year vision.

**Community Conversations report:** One more to be held this coming Sunday (21st). Nothing concrete yet, but we know need to be telling our story better & inviting people to more things. What we have to offer is valuable. We don’t want to lose what is lovely. We want people to be able to participate more & more easily. Creating excuses to come here and more invitations to follow. Weds. & Sundays are targets. Nice to have a lot of “hand-holds” to bring people back and then their next step should be easier. We are all the Welcome Team.

Ideas --

* David J & Kent – working toward a regular Weds Nite live again. Moving toward fall, lots of good ideas.
* Moving choir to the floor this summer for better accessibility, starting on Pentecost. Choir will take a break, but maybe “pick-up” choir through the summer.
* CL&G looking at some sporadic events between now & August – the beginnings of small groups and adding more.
* Book studies, choir, spirituality. Great ideas on Weds - maybe a childrens choir, invite college students, turning from an internal event to community. Come & eat, maybe parish nurses do a quick exam.
* Properties Board is looking at the playground, which needs work.
* A group is looking at a second contemplative service Sunday nights, maybe a Vespers.
* Hopefully we have 3 different things we can invite people to.
* Brochure, poster, website.
* We need to be better at helping people find their niche. We have been a little DIY, recognition we need to become a bit better at helping people build what they need. Grants team is seeking money that can help with marketing – print ads, posters, what? Eagerness and energy around this. Newcomers came to both after-church conversations. There is a desire to share this fellowship and work.

Jeff – is there a master schedule that shows how the rooms in this building are used? Yes, Joan maintains the calendar. Are we using the building to its fullest extent? No, there’s a lot of vacant space during the day. Ideas:

* Community Services that are not necessarily religious – how to write a resume; job training; mock interviews, filling out online applications, Memory Keepers support, technical things, help using devices, connects younger & older members, divorce recovery group, mens, womens, trans support groups, book clubs.
* Today M&S is going to check about hosting a Head Start.
* Room 101 is used as a hallway – what about making a hallway, off of which could be 2 or 3 offices for rent, kids to do homework.
* Social service intake, connectors for Medicaid, SNAP, etc., Marty – help with filling out online applications as well as resume.
* Commercial kitchen is a huge need. That’s a perfect grant goal. We are close to being able to be certified – need a lot of expensive equipment.

Currently 75% of our attention & resources is devoted to worship/praise. We have a call to switch that – add 75% service to others – living and serving. The call to discipleship is to serve and give to homeless, struggling populations. What are we called & empowered to do? Not to just exist. We are not of service to exist, we are of service to serve.

There is energy – what people say they love and respect is our service to others. The church has not always been seen as safe, helpful. We can show that Jesus’ love manifests in that way rather than offenses (imagined and real) churches have caused.

**Scheduling reminder:** We are getting busier - doors and heat are mainly operated by staff, so pls call the office to make sure you can get in and are warm/cool. Donna expressed that she has a couple of roles that involve finding meeting rooms in Madison County. The library has great system for reservations, which we should investigate - a system that does not involve a person. Maybe an add-on to the website? Library system has a picture of a room, description of what it has, how many fit, you click and get a calendar for scheduling. There are very few rooms in the county especially after the renovation at the library & they’re very expensive. Grace spoke to the challenges of RITI using the building at the same time as children & youth programs. This year, Grace supervised entering the building. And element of Weds nights heighten awareness. Safe Sanctuaries policy to ensure 2 adults with any group of kids. Thinking about any kids continue how we protect our most vulnerable. Not without challenge. We should be in conversation with other groups that have navigated this – evenings are particularly challenging.

**Coordination**

**Board Updates or Highlights**

* Ad hoc committee on Building Celebration -
* Admin -
* CL&G -
* FD – Grace reported. Chris is in the process of ending his position at the end of the summer. Courtney Parrish is new Assistant Director. FD has a hiring committee for director position, which includes Cadence Perman & Susan Schmied.. ¼ time position. Applicants invited.
* Finance -
* M&S –
* Nominating –
* N&C –
* PRB –
* Properties –  Our playground has got some challenges. We want a space for families w/ children. Are we liable if someone is injured? Yes, likely. We have a “play at your own risk” sign, but we are still liable. Any ideas of how we can move ahead with improvements w/o closing down. Tennant Kirk (Mission Board) has advocated for an organic (natural) playground as M&S outreach. A lot of community members use it. Question: might the city be interested in partnering with us since it’s also used by community members? Likely not, as maintenance is an issue. How bad is it? Little Tykes made the existing equipment & will not take on the liability if we modify it. Our Fall Zones are not large enough now that we added the handicap accessible walkway. If we decide to decommission this playground, we can’t even give away the equipment without being the vendor (liable party). Youth Group does play/hang out on the playground. Idea of maybe using Cowan Chapel as youth services space, add playground to that far side of the building, which is the most malleable area. This is a public-facing spot that IS used. We have not had a problem with major injury.
* Worship –
* Endowment -

**Pastor’s Report:**  Couple of people are in our thoughts. Betty Hibler’s birthday, tomorrow is Dough Hindman’s birthday. This Weds, he has a lumbar puncture scheduled & the hope is that his cognitive & physical conditions improve. Prayers for that. Rita Barlow has T-cell lymphoma. Terrible itching rash, it affects her hearing & memory. Open to visitors, Dale could use some support. It’s manageable but not curable. Angela Anderson heading to MD Anderson for several weeks. Her family has a bad history with this type of colon cancer. Many grads will be honored on Sunday. If we missed anybody, get those names to the office. If they’ll be here, we’d love to recognize them. Jeff Pool has retired, so has Sue Reimondo. Kent will be in Japan for the International Committee in advance of October delegation May 30-June 7. Carla will preach. UCC General Synod Indy end of June over July 4.

**Announcements**

* Next scheduled consideration of Funding Requests – August, 2023
* Next Meeting June 19.  Linda will do devotional

 Meeting ended at 8:30 pm, with prayer by Rev. Kent.

Joan English