

Plymouth Church, United Church of Christ
1217 6th Ave
Seattle WA 98101
www.plymouthchurchseattle.org

CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL Meeting Minutes
Meeting Date: October 21, 2017

ATTENDANCE:

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Al Wallace | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kathleen Wilson | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff: |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lori Kaid | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kyna Shilling | Rev. Steve Davis |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dan Landes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Madeline Beery | Rev. Kelle Brown |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bing Tso | <input type="checkbox"/> Paul Ford | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Doug James | <input type="checkbox"/> Jane Dunkel | <input type="checkbox"/> Guests: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Margot Page | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Katherine Guthrie | |

AGENDA ITEMS:

Al Wallace called the meeting to order at 10:02 am.

1) Financial Update

a) 2016 Financial Audit Review

- i) Two auditors (Lillian McDonnell and Laurie Cromwell of the firm Watson & McDonell presented their audit report of Plymouth's 2016 fiscal year. The audit report is to be filed with the state of WA ASAP. They had no findings or comments. This audit covers Plymouth Church as well as Plymouth Healing Communities (PHC). There were not a lot of changes to the balance sheet, unlike past years. The report has been reviewed with the Finance committee. Bridge loan for PHC home purchase noted, with permanent financing to pay this off expected next spring.
- ii) [MSP to approve 2016 consolidated financial statements.](#)
- iii) Discussion of future connections with Plymouth Housing Group, including their annual fundraiser. It would be great to have Plymouth represented more at their fundraiser, also to raise awareness of Plymouth's historical connection.

b) 2017 YTD Review <Dan/Doug>

- i) To date, we are running \$103,000 deficit through third quarter, which is actually better than projected. Both expenses and revenues have been lower than budgeted so far. Steve and Dan project, with 90% confidence, that we will have a deficit of no more than \$0-\$25,000 by the end of the year, which is less than the 2016 surplus. We can then apply the 2016 surplus to cover the 2017 deficit, as needed. Garage revenue has been somewhat lower than expected. Plymouth should examine appropriate future rental increase amounts for the

Seattle Infant Development Center (SIDC) program, as we renegotiate for the years 2018-2020. We should also consider short-term extensions as we consider the long-term use of the church spaces.

- ii) A letter went out to individuals with uncollected capital campaign pledges (approximately \$50,000 in total) recently. Staff consensus is that most is uncollectable, and might need to be written off. Several council members will help contact selected individuals.

c) 2018 Budget Update <Lori>

i) Strategic & Organizational Priorities

- (1) Budget committee has met twice so far, though it has been challenging scheduling. Big question is, what are the guidelines for budgeting? 2017 focus, based on Council thinking, has been (1) vibrant worship, (2) enhancing electronic media usage, (3) continue working for social justice—these fall into our standing priority areas, namely, faith formation, worship and music, congregational care, building and facilities, mission, and new initiatives. Little time now to adjust long-term strategic priorities. Do we want to stay the course, or start taking brave steps? What are the 2018 steps we want to take? Ministers and council will need to revisit Action Plan soon to reassess and recalibrate so we can firm up our long-term road map, financial sustainability...and communicate this well to the congregation. Our impression is that the congregation does not want to overdraw from the endowment to fund routine operations. A cultural shift needs to happen at Plymouth—trust in clergy to produce the vision, individual responsibility for improving the church, growth into collaborative ministry model.
- (2) We discussed meetings that we need to have before January 28 annual meeting. Budget conversation with congregation happens November 12, approval meeting will happen January 7; December 3 for meeting for discussing music director, and future vision and flexibility for music at Plymouth. Stewardship requests also will be occurring during this time.
- (3) Kelle and Steve to reassess Action Plan to discuss at next 11/18 Council meeting. Bing will send the latest Action Plan out to Council so they can reacquaint themselves with it prior to that meeting.

ii) New Initiative Approvals planned for 2018 Recurring

- (1) Not discussed.

2) Call Letter Update / Ministers in Collaboration Document <Al>

a) Ministers in Collaboration (Roles & Responsibilities)

- i) Council reviewed collaborative ministry document that Steve and Kelle prepared, laying out how they have apportioned their roles. Kelle invited Council to provide feedback on it at next month's meeting, and to add things in over the next year.

b) Kelle/Steve Call Letter

- i) It is a high priority to formalize covenant that congregation has approved Kelle and Steve's call, though this has lagged. Steve has gotten information/examples from University Congregational Church, the PNW Conference, and Broadview UCC. Need to get this done soon so that we can have the formal installation. Steve will send materials he's received to Al, to send to Susan Berry to firm up the letter.

- c) **Laura Robinson's Call Letter <Madeline>**
 - i) We are Laura's home church, and have provided a verification letter. She has a call from Plymouth UCC in Des Moines, Iowa. Plymouth needs to approve our support for her ordination (to occur at Plymouth). [MSP our support for her ordination](#). Madeline will prepare a letter from the Council to the Conference Committee on Ministry.
- 3) **Staff Update <Kelle/Steve>**
 - a) **Employee Manual <AI, Kelle, Steve>**
 - i) Kelle/Steve provided copies of manual to staff—so far, no comments. Consider an executive coach for Steve and Kelle to support them regularly; also consider Lilly Foundation grants, which support these kinds of efforts, though someone else aside from our ministers should spend the time writing the grant.
 - ii) Lori will send out a clean HR manual to Council for final review prior to next Council meeting.
 - b) **Employee Feedback <Lori>**
 - i) Lori wanted to send in advance, but instead will email Council summary of her conversations with staff, including important points and suggestions, for discussion next Council meeting.
- 4) **Minister's Report <Kelle/Steve>**
 - a) **Organ Festival**
 - i) Received written one-page report from Wanda Griffiths on potential gift from the Hull family with details of the vision, gift, and timeline. Plan is to have a full proposal by December Council meeting, aiming for February 2018 approval.
 - b) **Other plans**
 - i) Kelle shared plans to have alternative service once a month in November and December on Friday/Saturday evenings, with an open-mike service geared towards young adults (18-30 years old). These will provide opportunities for attendees to share musical gifts.
 - ii) In the future, Kelle plans to submit minister's report in writing in advance for the November Council meeting. We will also move this report earlier in the agenda so it doesn't get shortchanged.
 - iii) White privilege workshops are starting tomorrow, and last for six weeks.
 - iv) Steve and Kelle have been going to Monroe Correctional Facility regularly since June, to show personal investment in that ministry, in the unit for those suffering from mental illness. It's been incredible meeting people who have not been visited for 30 years, showing up as their family. There is a hunger for these kinds of ministries and connections at Plymouth.
 - v) Steve reported on big-dollar items he handles--such as failing air handlers, spending on new initiatives, sound board failure, LED retrofit to take advantage of incentive funds, chapel ADA remodel, etc.--and keeping us in the loop as a good practice. Finance committee sees these monthly. He will email Council members selectively moving forward.
- 5) **Council Update**
 - a) **Filling vacancies on Finance, Investment, Community Involvement & Building Committees <AI>**
 - b) **Replacement of vacated council positions <AI>**
 - c) **Nominating Committee Update <Katherine>**

- i) Five councilmembers are terming out this year (two two-year terms allowed). Suggestions needed for possible new members—send ideas to Katherine ASAP.
 - d) **Process Improvement <AI>**- Next year, we will move back to monthly Council meetings but keep the Saturday time frame for consistency purpose. Raise up strategic planning as focus next year, less focus on nuts and bolts.
 - e) **Next meetings** – November 18 and December 9, 9:30am-12:30pm (no breakfast), just Council, not boards, meeting.
- 6) Meeting adjourned at 12:15 pm.

Minutes submitted by Bing Tso, Council Secretary, to Council by email for review and approval on October 22, 2017. Approved by Council via e-mail with minor editorial revisions on October 25, 2017.