

**UNION CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
COMMON MINISTRY
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MARCH 12, 2020**

Present:	Absent:	
Pastors	Bridget Flad Daniels	Jon Pahl
Moderator	Sandy Polarek	
Vice Moderator	Heather Collins	
Treasurer	Jeff Gibson	
Clerk	Gail Hohenstein	
Education	Nancy Gibson	
Gifts & Memorials	Nicole Polarek	Phil Enscoe
Inreach & Membership	Denise Olson	
Outreach	Achim Siefert	Christie Reese
Stewardship	Clay Reese	
Worship	Betty Bienash	
Communications Coordinator	Avonelle Weist	
Guest(s)		

Moderator Sandy Polarek called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

Additions to the Agenda:

Congregational Joys and Concerns: Joys and concerns were shared.

Gathering Prayer: Christie sent a prayer which Clay read.

Open Forum: None.

Ministers' Reports: Jon submitted a written report (attached). Bridget highlighted the potential application for a Lilly grant portion of his report. It was agreed to proceed with the Letter of Intent. Bridget will include her report in the applicable agenda items below.

Clerk's Report

Minutes of the meetings of February 13 were approved. (Jeff/Heather)

Gail read a letter from Shielded Hearts thanking Union for its donation from the 1st Responders Jazz Service.

Treasurer's Report

Jeff distributed the monthly report (attached). Approved (Nicole/Denise).

New Business

- Covid19 Planning: The WI Conference UCC has not issued meeting recommendations. Options for upcoming services and gatherings were discussed. It was agreed we will not have in-person church services and Wednesday night gatherings for the next 2 weeks (through the 22nd). Organizations which use our space will make their own decisions as to their operations. Church groups (e.g., Bible Study, Common Ministry, Seminary Secrets will not meet in person. Common Ministry will have a virtual meeting on 3/19 to assess current status.
- NE Association Delegates May 2 and Wisconsin Conference Delegates June 5-7 Green Lake: Deferred.
- Quarterly Meeting April 26: Presenters TBD.
- Memorial Garden Sculpture: Barbara Koller would like to donate a sculpture for the Memorial Garden. Bridget distributed a couple examples of the sculptor's work and described his general concept. Bridget noted that she has communicated with Barbara and the sculptor that the expectation is that this will be revenue neutral

to the congregation, save possible additional costs to insure the sculpture and perhaps run electricity to the garden to light it. The Memorial Garden Committee has been consulted and approves of this donation. Motion to approve the sculpture approved (Gail/Achim).

Continuing Business

- Priorities and Budget Update: Group of 10 folks meeting. Will report proposal/findings in August.
- Retention and Roll Review: No update.
- Sex Offender Policy Update: No update.
- Fundraising: May 27 Happy Joe's. Buy bulbs (see information in newsletters)!
- Tech/AV Task Force Update: Progress has been made. T-Loop seems to be working fine on the main floor

Ministry Updates (if not included in minutes)

EDUCATION

No report.

GIFTS & MEMORIALS

No report.

INREACH/NEW MEMBER/MEMBERSHIP

Will need help with Easter set up and cleanup for the Easter breakfast.

OUTREACH

Consideration is being given to increase size of the rummage sale by involving the community (letting them put items in our sale). May 15-16.

STEWARDSHIP

No report.

WORSHIP

No report.

Communications: Avonelle has been working with Barbara McClure-Lukens on promoting the "Return from the Border" discussion and will be working on communications for the virtual services.

Adjournment

Thank you to Betty for treats tonight!

Motion to adjourn was approved. After prayer, the meeting was adjourned at 7:53 p.m. Achim/Clay

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Hohenstein
Clerk

Next meeting: April 2, 2020 – 6:00 p.m. -- Chapel Classroom

Future Schedule:

Common Ministry Meetings	Gathering Prayer	Treats
April 2	Jeff	Clay
May 14	Sandy	Denise
June 11	Jon	Jon
August 13	Bridget	Sandy
September 10	Betty	Gail
October 8		Christie/Clay
November 12		Nancy

December 10		Heather
January 14		Bridget

Approved

**Union Congregational UCC
Treasurer's Report
February 2020**

<u>Income</u>	<u>2020 Actual</u>	<u>2020 Budgeted</u>	<u>2019 Actual</u>
January	\$80,947	\$91,733	\$103,568
February	23,891	19,039	12,498
March	-	-	-
April	-	-	-
May	-	-	-
June	-	-	-
July	-	-	-
August	-	-	-
September	-	-	-
October	-	-	-
November	-	-	-
December	-	-	-
Total	\$104,838	\$110,772	\$116,066
G&M Cont.	\$8,333	\$8,333	\$8,333
Total Revenue	\$113,171	\$119,105	\$124,399
<u>Expenses</u>	<u>(thru Feb 29)</u>		
Actual:	\$40,626		
Budget:	\$41,876		
Last Year:	\$39,820		

Comments:

Pledge plus Non-pledge income for February exceeded our budgeted estimate by about \$7,000. One-time Gifts, Prior Year Pledges and Room Rentals fell short of our estimate by about \$13,000. Expenses were about \$1,200 under budget. For the year Building Maintenance is about \$2,400 over our estimate.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeff Gibson, Treasurer

Pastoral Report, Common Ministry, March 12, 2020

Dr. Jon Pahl

I hope to be with you, but if I am not it is because A) our dog is struggling for life; B) the country roads I drive are predicted to be a threat to life; C) I have chosen to social distance, given that our lack of planning regarding COVID-19 (national, local, ecclesiastical) may put one of you at risk from me, or me at risk from one of you; D) all of the above. And the correct answer is D. Once a Professor, always a Professor....

As some of you know, I was due to be in Scandinavia this week and next for a speaking tour. I chose on Monday not to go—because I did not want to become an unwitting bearer of a rapidly-spreading virus about which we know very little, and that I might carry into this congregation. That was, in retrospect, a wise choice. My presence here has given me some time to reflect, and I offer this Pastoral Report on two key issues: 1) Developing a Healthy Church Plan; 2) Inquiring whether the congregation would support Pastor Bridget and me writing together a Grant Proposal (with other community partners) to the Lilly Endowment's "Thriving Congregations" initiative.

1) Developing a Healthy Church Plan We now know, in light of COVID-19, that we need to develop a policy and set of practices to protect our most vulnerable population—our seniors. As the World Health Organization has put it, in declaring a pandemic yesterday: "WHO has been assessing this outbreak around the clock and we are deeply concerned both by the alarming levels of spread and severity, and by the alarming levels of inaction." We must act, as leaders of this congregation, to do whatever we can to mitigate the spread of this disease. That means the strongest forms of social distancing, which means avoiding crowds, including canceling events—painful and unprecedented as this is. From history, we know such social distancing will work to slow the spread of the virus. God has given us the wisdom, through science, to know what to do to protect each other in the face of this pandemic—to protect our neighbors. We should do so. I am committed to working with Pastor Bridget on this long-term Plan, and to maintaining congregational engagement through social media and other means in the interim, including streaming worship for Sunday AM. A musician (Ray or, preferably, David H, given Ray's age) might be invited to join the ministerial staff.

2) Applying for a Lilly "Thriving Congregations" Grant Lilly Endowment is again making grants of up to \$1,000,000 over five years to support "thriving congregations." We believe a partnership with Saint Norbert College, with UWGB, and with agencies connected to the congregation could lead to a very strong proposal. The purpose would be to advance community development and congregational vitality in education, health, and the arts through internships, linking initiatives such as the Brain Center, On the Mark Dyslexia Clinic, Howe Community Resource Center, and others, with the MA Programs at SNC, and with various programs, including the Pride Center, at UWGB. A portion of the grant could cover the part of Jon Pahl's salary current drawn from Gifts and Memorials. We welcome feedback and ideas, including whether the effort is worth undertaking at all. A *Letter of Inquiry* is due to Lilly April 17. If invited to submit a full proposal, it would be due June 1.