

**UNION CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
COMMON MINISTRY  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MARCH 11, 2021**

**Present:**

**Absent:**

Pastors	Bridget Flad Daniels, Jon Pahl	
Moderator	Tim Harder	
Vice Moderator	Heather Collins	
Treasurer		Jeff Gibson
Clerk	Gail Hohenstein	
Education		Nancy Gibson
Gifts & Memorials	Paco Espinosa	
Inreach & Membership		Denise Olson
Outreach	Achim Seifert	Christie Reese
Stewardship	Mark Smith	Clay Reese
Worship	Betty Bienash	
Communications Coordinators	Ruth Homrighaus	Mary Ann Hudson
Guest(s)	None	

Meeting held via Zoom.

Moderator Tim Harder called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Additions to the Agenda:** None.

**Congregational Joys and Concerns:** Joys and concerns were shared.

**Gathering Prayer:** Jon shared Psalm 103 and led us in prayer.

**Ministers' Reports:** Jon shared his letter of resignation effective June 1, 2021.

Bridget shared some thoughts about Jon's resignation. She has talked with the Associate Conference Minister about the opening and has done a bit of reconnecting with history and traditions of this congregation. The position as of June 1 will be half time, and in consultation with Tim, Bridget expects it will be a hire vs. a search and call process. She plans to gather a small group to work on discerning the position description based on the work of the Priorities and Budget Team recommendations, and then a search process will commence. Priorities & Budget had recommended a position focused on Faith Formation with community engagement being handled by Bridget and lay leaders. Faith Formation and youth group leader recruitment has begun for the fall (by Jon) and will position us to be in a good place in the fall.

She added we have on-boarded Christopher Nikolai as our new sexton. He will work Monday-Friday until we start in-person worship, when his schedule will become Sunday-Thursday. His recent position was at a nursing home, so he has good training in COVID mitigation protocols.

Bridget, Tim and Heather have met to discuss Fellowship Room redecorating. As well, Bridget met with a person from the WI Conference regarding space utilization. Wants to make sure we determine the best use of our space before moving ahead on any redecorating. The goal is to create a youth space that adults can also use. She noted that the Literacy Center has put its space request on hold.

She continues to be a part of Cultivating Generous Congregations and is the Northeast WI representative to the Racial Justice Task Force which continues to offer programming to clergy.

**Clerk's Report**

The minutes for the regular meetings of February 11 were approved (Heather/Achim).

**Treasurer's Report**

Jeff had previously distributed the regular financial report (attached). Mark reported in Jeff's absence that while February donations were better than those in January, they are still below YTD budget. Expenses are also lower than planned. The report was approved.

## **New Business**

- Entire Personnel handbook will be revised, but the following typographical error should be corrected now. Motion to approve the change (below) was approved (Gail/Betty):  
Sick Leave  
*Full time employees will be provided up to 10 ~~30~~ calendar days of salary continuation in the event of any absence due to illness or accident, provided the individual is medically restricted from performing their regular job duties and cannot be reasonably accommodated with the offer of some form of light-duty work. Part-time employees may use any of their available PTO time during absence from work for such an illness or accident.*
- Delegates to the Conference Annual Meeting – Zoom May 11-16: The motion to approve Steve Jones and Heather Collins to serve as delegates was approved (Achim/Gail). The topic is Generosity and Generous Congregations. All of Common Ministry is welcome to participate; the link to register is: <https://www.wcucc.org/about-wcucc/annual-meeting>. If Common Ministry members would like to attend and the \$20 registration fee is onerous, the church budget has funds allocated for such purposes.
- New Member Sessions April 22 and 26: Ministry chairs are asked to sign up for one of the sessions to describe their ministries and how new members can get involved.
- Reopening the Building Task Force Updates:
  - Outside Use: Jon reported that the church received an email from The Literacy Center confirming that they have decided to keep their programs in-house for now.
  - Worship/Internal Use and Activities: The following topics have come up for discussion. There will be no Union in-person meetings until we begin in-person worship. It is expected that ministry/church groups will follow DHS guidelines at a minimum.
    - Non-staffed Election Day Bake Sale: Outreach has decided not to do.
    - NEW Shelter Meals: Outreach has decided not to do in March, but will make a decision in early April.
    - The next newsletter will have information about COVID levels and what to expect when we come back. The role of volunteers and volunteer training and sign-ups are being planned.
  - Technology: No update.
- Generosity Teams: Four persons continue to participate in the Cultivating Generous Congregations sessions. There will be efforts to recruit others in the implementation when course is finished. An adult ed session in the fall is planned on the topic.
- Space Ministry Task Force: 11 members have asked to participate, and a meeting is being set.

## **Ministry Reports (unless covered in Ministry meeting minutes)**

### EDUCATION

No additions

### GIFTS & MEMORIALS

No report.

### MEMBERSHIP & INREACH

No report.

### OUTREACH

Stock the Box date moved to April 10. Blessing Box donations are going well. They are hoping to have a fall rummage sale in early October. An alternative “market” for volunteer groups is being planned. There was discussion on the need to ensure Ruth is given information about planned events so they can be publicized.

### STEWARDSHIP

Mark added that they like Christopher a lot. Mark reminded us of a couple of fundraisers coming up -- Heartland Pizza on Tuesday and Spring Bulb fundraiser.

### WORSHIP

Current emphasis is on Lenten programming and Wednesday night programs and will be moving to finalize Holy Week services.

**JOSHUA Report:** No Report.

**Communications:**

Ruth and Mary Ann have set up a 2-times a week posting schedule on FaceBook and Instagram for upcoming activities. They have set a goal is to try to bring in 2-3 new members through contact with Union via communications. They did an intake meeting with Bridget and put together goals. Their focus is outward to spread our message to the community. They are planning to make updates to the website, including adding a new member packet to the website and the potential of a podcast.

**Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn was approved. After prayer, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Hohenstein  
Clerk

Next meeting: April 8, 6 pm via Zoom

APPROVED

**Union Congregational UCC  
Treasurer's Report February 2021**

<u>Income</u>	<u>2021 Actual</u>	<u>2021 Budgeted</u>	<u>2020 Actual</u>
January	\$58,360	\$74,522	\$80,947
February	\$25,898	\$26,095	\$23,476
March	\$0	\$0	\$0
April	\$0	\$0	\$0
May	\$0	\$0	\$0
June	\$0	\$0	\$0
July	\$0	\$0	\$0
August	\$0	\$0	\$0
September	\$0	\$0	\$0
October	\$0	\$0	\$0
November	\$0	\$0	\$0
December	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$84,258</b>	<b>\$100,617</b>	<b>\$104,423</b>

<u>Expenses</u>	<u>(thru February 28)</u>
Actual:	\$80,956
Budget:	\$92,395
Last Year:	\$87,298

**Comments:**

After two months we continue with revenue lagging the budget by about \$16,000. Expenses are under budget by about \$11,500. Pledge income in February lagged the budgeted amount by about \$1,500 and YTD is behind about \$11,800. Included in the revenue is \$4,550 in room rentals which exceeds the budget by about \$3,000. Non-pledge income has slowed and is now about even with the budget projection. We continue to hold the line on spending and through February have spent about \$11,500 less than budgeted. Our cash cushion is now around \$3,200. Hopefully pledge income will come in stronger as the year goes on.

Respectfully submitted, Jeff Gibson



Dr. Jon Pahl  
Minister of Faith Formation and Community Engagement  
Union Congregational UCC

March 5, 2021

Dear Church:

It has been one of the great honors and joys of my life to serve as a Pastor at Union. I have deep respect and regard for this truly great and historic congregation, which I will have served for over three years. It will be difficult to leave you, but I have been invited to return to full-time teaching at United Lutheran Seminary, and I am eager to pursue my research again, including extensive travel planned for speaking engagements in the coming Fall and Winter (God-willing). I hereby submit my resignation as Minister of Faith Formation and Community Engagement, effective June 1, 2021.

I believe I will leave the congregation stronger than when I joined you, despite the severe challenges of this pandemic that has strained us all. I have worked to the utmost of my abilities to engage our community effectively—in our jazz ministry, with Habitat for Humanity, and especially in the Brain Center—a 501(c)3 that has great potential to live into Union's mission as a "start-up church." I have also sought to teach well and guide our faith formation efforts, preach faithfully and clearly, and be a pastoral presence among you. I said when I began, in my opening remarks upon my election to this call, that "I will disappoint you." I'm sure that's been true. At the same time, I hope people will remember my service with some joy and affection. I know I will miss you all.

My last Sunday will be May 30<sup>th</sup>. I will be happy to work with the Personnel Committee on transition planning, and I will (of course) continue to assist with worship, lead educational endeavors, and otherwise contribute to a healthy and vibrant congregation until that date.

I thank you again for the opportunity to serve among you—a calling for which I will always be grateful. I will remember these years with overwhelmingly warm feelings and joy, and I have the highest and most sincere hopes that Union will continue to flourish in the coming years.

In Christ,

Jon Pahl, Ph.D.