

Asbury United Methodist Church Council

Minutes of January 28, 2021 Meeting

7:30 PM via Zoom

In Attendance: Elizabeth Tawil, Dan Haas, Anne Haas, Nancy Cody, Nancy Beers, Karen Beer, Scott Karsner, and Pastor Jen Karsner, Owens Walker, Corrine Van Hoven, and Vickie Whitley, Director Asbury Preschool & Clubhouse.

Open in Prayer

Corrine opened us in prayer.

Minutes

We approved the minutes from the December 28, 2020 meeting.

Finance Report

Nancy reported that she had received the invitation from Truist to apply for the PPP loan but that there was some type of bug in the application platform that generated an error message when she tried to submit the completed application. She is waiting for a resolution but she is concerned that funds may run out if we wait too long. If she can't get a resolution by Monday she will consider submitting an application with the United Methodist Credit Union. We have a church reserve account with the credit union and they are accepting PPP loan applications. *(An update: After waiting on hold for over an hour this morning, I found out that Truist is making a patch this weekend to fix the issue with non-profits and that I should be able to submit Monday morning.)*

She has started working on the annual Statistical report that is due March 1.

Trustee Report

Dan reported that he has lined up an electrician to access the electrical problem in the Sanctuary and an issue with the vent hood in the kitchen. Regarding the sinkhole, it has been looked at and it appears that the problem may have been caused by faulty work done by the original contractor 17 years ago. There was a problem with the sacristy ceiling and it looks like we may need to replace the ceiling and the plaster walls. We are awaiting the results of an asbestos test. Hite Spencer had gravel brought in for the cemetery road and the Boy Scouts helped lay the gravel. Hite is also looking into a Scattering Garden for the cemetery. The HVAC work is complete.

SPRC

Owens reported that he held a town hall meeting with employees to update them on the budget and where we stand. The SPRC voted to continue the preschool director at full salary based on the application for a second draw PPP loan. If the loan is not approved they will re-evaluate. We have scheduled a meet and greet for Gregory and Terri to introduce them to the congregation on February 28 after the church service.

Reconciling Ministries

The team held a meeting. They decided to get a pulse from the congregation. They will draft a welcoming statement and share it with various church groups and ask for a 15 minute feedback session at one of their group meetings. They will also share it with the congregation and have two open call meetings to solicit feedback.

COVID 19

Preschool

Pastor Jen summarized a Zoom call with preschool parents. The call lasted an hour. Dan Haas explained the Council rationale for the shutdown and re-opening metrics and a handful of parents provided their feedback. All of the parents praised the teachers and the protocols the preschool had established and stated that they felt that their children were safe at Asbury. Parents wanted to re-open when possible and a few asked for a re-evaluation of the metrics for opening. A few parents stated they appreciate the work of church council and trust council's assessment of when it is safe to reopen. Some said that they will enroll their children elsewhere if we don't re-open soon. Some asked us to consider extending the school year into June to match the public school calendar.

The school system is expected to establish new metrics on February 17. We have scheduled a meeting for February 21 at 2:00 pm to re-evaluate our metrics based on the updated school metrics. Case rates have been declining and we will monitor those and if case rates fall within our re-opening metrics or the school system guidelines are issued before February 17, we will move up our meeting date. Elizabeth and Pastor Jen will draft a letter for Vickie to send to preschool parents to thank them for their feedback and lay out the framework for our re-opening of the preschool.

Vickie reported that preschool registrations for next year are going well.

Sanctuary

Scott had asked us to look at setting guidelines for re-opening the sanctuary. We had a brief discussion and we decided to table the discussion until our February 21 meeting. Scott started a Google Doc to capture issues we should consider in establishing the guidelines. Here is the [LINK](#) for the document. Please add your thoughts and questions.

Anti-Racist Church

Scott reported that the first "Be the Bridge" meeting went well and we had 30 people from the congregation attend. Pastor Jen talked about the intersections between reconciling ministries and anti-racism and suggested forming an ongoing team for justice issues. Corrine suggested that the team be inter-generational and include a youth representative. Pastor Jen welcomed that suggestion and she suggested monthly justice learning opportunities.

Dan Haas closed us in prayer and the meeting adjourned at 8:50.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Cody