

Christ United Methodist Church  
Council minutes  
September 12, 2023

Present were Pastor Kurt Freeman, Scott Gillespie, Hollie Kessler, Pastor Bruce Mowery, Judy Austin, Paula Thoennes, Joan Banning, Nick Fetchina, Carol Yarian, Marlen Slagel, Jack Dwiggins, Sylvia Vaughn, Jake Mayer, Mike and Lisa Hilsabeck, Dana Blanchard, April Headdy, Becky Crabb and Phyllis Halsema.

Chairperson Scott Gillespie called the meeting to order, thanked us for coming and asked Pastor Kurt to open with prayer. He then asked those present to share how we saw God at work.

The minutes of the July meeting were approved as emailed.

Jack Dwiggins reported that the new discipleship class on hospitality was well attended.

Judy Austin reported for Staff Parish that they had completed the budget requests and that the next item of business would be Pastor Kurt's yearly evaluation which would be discussed in October.

Nick Fetchina reported for Finance. At the current time income is under budget, but expenses are also under budget. He cautioned that the checking account balance needs to be watched carefully at this time. He then discussed the process for paying off the current mortgage of \$800,000 from IN Savings and Loan (due to a significant increase in the mortgage rate of 8.75%) by using the employee retention credit received from the government tax credit program and then refinancing the remainder of \$300,000 with a lower interest rate. A member of the congregation has offered to take on the loan at a 5.25% rate for a 5 year period. The loan document has been prepared with the advice of attorneys for both sides and in accordance with the laws of the church. As a result, Nick presented the following motion from the Finance Committee: The Committee recommends that the Administrative Council approve a new loan and mortgage in the amount of \$300,000 to be executed by the Officers of Christ United Methodist Church, Inc. also known as the Trustees of Christ United Methodist Church. The motion was approved. It is anticipated that there will be a campaign to pay off the mortgage before the 5 year due date. Nick then commented about Stewardship Sunday on September 24. Pastor Kurt is preparing a letter to be sent to the congregation with a link to the pledge card and the narrative budget prior to the 24<sup>th</sup>.

Carol Yarian reported for the areas she oversees. The Prayer ministry has added another prayer station in the sanctuary that has been well received. The new Breakthrough Prayer Ministry will launch Sunday, September 17<sup>th</sup>. The Kid's Kloset is serving so many families that keeping the Kloset with enough clothes is difficult and the number of items taken per child has decreased. Since many families speak Spanish, Carol has made guideline posters in Spanish for this need. The Back Pack program has started again and the first delivery of 24 back packs has been made to Edgelea School. We are currently collecting food for the Tippecanoe Country Food Pantry during September. We continue to pack food for Seniors at the Food Finders facility and also take food for lunches to Lafayette Transitional House twice monthly. The Women's small group, BFF will begin meeting again in September. The team for Jubilee Christmas has begun meeting. The Hospitality Class had 14 members at their first meeting. . Last Sunday the Suicide Ministry presented a meaningful service for remembering those we have lost to suicide with about 40 persons attending. The All In class for those considering becoming a member of CUMC (or wishing to refresh their membership) had 11 persons in attendance. At their first meeting many

shared stories with the group. Carol is working to develop a group to support our church becoming a Lighthouse Congregation (a conference initiative) to welcome those individuals who have come to us from churches who have chosen to disaffiliate from the United Methodist Church. The Conference website would identify us as congregation who would welcome them. Our Prayer team and some greeters have attended a Welcoming webinar as we work towards this goal of Lighthouse Congregation. Attendance is fairly stable at this time, but is improving. More people are getting involved with classes and mission opportunities in our church Carol also reminded us of the Early Learning fun opportunity and fund raiser at Wea Creek Orchard on September 28 from 5 to 8 PM.

Mike Hilsabeck shared for the trustees that there was no business to report. They had met and chosen leaders. Mike Hilsabeck was elected Chairperson and Roger Horn Secretary. Also the kitchen A/C furnace unit went out and will be replaced soon.

Dana Blanchard reported for Early Learning. One grant, which was given for employees has \$25,000 remaining and must be used by the end of September. It was determined that they would give bonuses to the employees to use these remaining funds. This will take place on Friday of this week. They are working on their budget at this time. A new child care facility is being built in the neighborhood and, although there are waiting lists for most child care facilities, the difficulty may be in getting and keeping employees, as the new facility is offering a \$1200 signing bonus to new employees.

Jake Mayer reported for Children's Ministry. Trunk or Treat is scheduled for October 29 and sign-up sheets are being prepared for volunteers, trunks and treats. On October 1 at 3:30, Emily has scheduled a cleaning out session for an upstairs storage room which has various toys, etc. that have not been used for some time and the space is needed by the child care. The children's Christmas pageant will be December 10.

Jake also reported for youth Ministry. They have met for 3 sessions to date, with 7 students. Although they are not well acquainted they seem to have common interests and conversations are continuing to build among the group. A possible opening lock-in did not occur, but as the group grows one may happen later in the fall or early winter. A planned "Parent Time out" with the youth as sitters for the children has been difficult to schedule with the student schedules and church calendar.

The Worship team has some new volunteers with good ideas. Jake was thanked for leading the team through the Suicide "A Moment of Remembrance" service. New volunteers had been helpful in planning the service along with the worship band. In addition to this extra, the band has also joined Brianna's Hope for one of their meetings.

Pastor Kurt started his report with an explanation of a Lighthouse Congregation. It is a Conference initiative to address the many individuals who are feeling cut off from their home churches due to the many disaffiliations from the United Methodist Church. These individuals need to be welcomed into a congregation differently than the usual newcomer to the church. A team will be developed who can welcome them with grace into a new place which understands why they are here and encourage their participation when they are ready. Pastor Kurt commented that he had had several conversations with some individuals who had found our church through the website or from a member of our church.

Pastor Kurt continued his report by introducing Becky Crabb who is leading the Breakthrough Prayer movement, which encourages us to move to praying for our community. He introduced a card with the prayer which will be shared on Sunday with the congregation: "Holy Spirit, move

us to carry Christ into our Community”. A motion was made to accept this Breakthrough Prayer movement for our congregation. The motion was seconded and passed. Sunday’s sermon will be a teaching time for the congregation to learn how to use this prayer as they go through their daily lives. Resources are available and one Sunday School class is using the book Open Road to study this process which will be led by Becky Crabb. Another resource also to be used is a daily devotional, Dynamite Prayer.

Hollie Kessler reported that the Council must approve the Travel Allowance and Continuing Education amounts for Pastor Kurt. Staff Parish Committee recommended \$1000 for Continuing Education and \$2000 for travel allowance. The mileage rate will follow the IRS Guidelines. The recommendation was approved by the Council.

Pastor Bruce reported that our church was to be recognized by the District for our contributions to the Lebanon Children’s Home. Hopefully this will remind other churches about the home and its needs.

Pastor Kurt announced that our Charge Conference will be at our church on November 6. This is the same time as Brianna’s Hope and the plan is to start early enough that those attending can then participate in a session with those in the Brianna’s Hope program. When asked, Pastor Kurt explained the makeup and function of the Charge Conference.

Following the close of the business meeting, Becky Crabb asked that each of us take our prayer cards into the Sanctuary. Once there, she asked that we choose a spot in the room that we would choose for prayer, closing our prayer with the words on the card. When all had done so, we closed the meeting with “Holy Spirit, move us to carry Christ into our community”.

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Respectfully submitted,  
Joan Banning, Secretary