

KVCC Church Council Meeting Minutes
September 28, 2021

Present: Pastor John Sampson, Elizabeth Davidson Derr, Linda LaBarge, Liz Jaques, Annie Scavo, Dan Mason, Barbara Merle-Smith, Fritz Sabbow, Dre Roebuck, Pam Gothner, and Deborah Mitchell.

Absent: Linda Bogardus, Tom Both, Henrietta Jordan, Lorraine Duvall, Charlotte Lichtenberg, Naj Wikoff, Karen Glass

Elizabeth opened the meeting at 5:05 PM.

Opening Prayer: Pastor John led the group in prayer.

Approval of Last Month's Meeting: Linda made a motion to approve the last month's meeting minutes, and Barbara seconded the motion. A discussion followed, and the motion was passed.

Solar Update: Dan provided the Council with an update on the solar panel project. The proposal from Adirondack Solar for the garage reflected no need for any structural improvements to the garage which will house 14 solar panels. Dan is looking for details and pricing on the trench and the removal of two trees on the Church's property. It was suggested to reduce the cost of the tree removal, we offer the wood to whomever wants to cut the tree(s) down and remove the wood.

PASTOR'S REPORT – September 28, 2021

Worship and Spiritual Development

- Led worship at All Souls in St. Huberts on Sunday, August 29.
- Summer music program completed on September 5.
- Choir resumed preparing recorded music for Sunday worship on September 12.
- Outdoor worship offered on September 19.
- In-person equinox vespers offered on September 22.
- Blessing of Animals service scheduled for October 3.
- Winter solstice vespers service to be offered on December 21.
- Weekly meetings with Dave Craig regarding worship on the Zoom platform. Chris Blaicher is training to be Dave's back-up.
- The Centering Prayer Group meets mornings @ 7 AM. On September 23 launched weekly book discussion group on The Cloud of Unknowing.
- Friday morning prayer group meets in the VSR, sharing prayers, concerns and joys of the community.
- Neighborhood House weekly worship has been suspended due to scheduling issues.
- Worship leadership at Elderwood in Lake Placid has been suspended due to the virus.

Confirmed Memorial Services and Weddings

- September 25 – Evelyn Kane memorial service
- October 2 – Brooks Townsend and Amanda Dunham wedding @ Ausable Club
- October 16 – Harrison Caner Memorial Service @ KVCC

Pastoral Support

- Provide ongoing pastoral support to the church community via Zoom, telephone, in-person meetings, and email.

Book Discussion Group

- Begin reading *The Third Reconstruction* by The Rev. Dr. William Barber on September 28.

Community Support

- Working with members of the congregation on identifying neighbors in need, and supporting them through financial grants.
- Dre Roebuck hosting TGIF social gathering at the church fire pit every other Friday.

Essex Association

- Black River – St. Lawrence Association (BRSL)
 - Members of the Essex Association have had preliminary discussions with the BRSL Association about merging. The discussions have been positive and are moving forward.

Training

- Completed Boundary Awareness Training on August 27.
- Sexual Harassment Prevention Training - Lynn to provide documentation that he received the training through KCS in September.

Sabbatical

- Will be on sabbatical September 2022 – mid-January 2023
- Attending Michaelmas Term at Cambridge University, Cambridge, UK

Other Items

- Actively involved in the Creation Justice Task Force, including the Advocacy Committee
- Attend Spiritual Direction sessions for the development of my own spirit.
- Agreed to serve another 3-year term on the UC NY Board of Directors

Treasurer's Report: Prior to the meeting, Jimm provided the Council with the following documents: Income Statement Budget, Weekly Giving Summary, TD Ameritrade Statement, Weekly Giving Summary, and Balance Sheet. Jimm was not available for today's Council meeting, and is waiting on the reports from Teresa. Fritz was able to field questions from the council about budget line items. Pam made a motion to approve the Treasurer's report. Barbara seconded the motion. A discussion followed, and the motion was carried.

Committee Reports:

Buildings & Grounds Report: Buildings: Tom believes two budget items are inadequate. Regarding a reserve for major repairs, he believes that \$2,000 is inadequate. Also \$3,000 is not sufficient to meet our known needs for repairs and maintenance. He suggests \$8,000 would be a more realistic amount. Tom identified that we have an historic and aging building that needs attention. **Grounds:** The Grounds Committee began work on the pollinator garden in early September. The remainder of the prep work will be done after the leaves fall. We may plan a work day when that happens. Barbara made a motion to approve the \$4,000 expenditure to chalk two chimneys (VSR and manse) as recommended by Tom. Linda seconded the motion. A discussion followed, and the motion was carried.

Worship Committee: There is no new information from this Committee.

Mission and Social Action Committee: During the past month, all of the work of the MSA Committee has been accomplished through the incredible efforts of our sub-committee, Creation Justice. As that committee will be making its own report, we defer to them. The allocations to various groups that were decided upon during the meeting of the congregation are in the process of being distributed. The amounts are:

\$2,000 set aside for Advent giving, those supported to be determined later in the year

Allocated \$100 for Pride Month expenses (approved by the Congregation June 6)

\$300 for Creation Justice activities

\$550 for Adirondack Diversity Initiative's efforts to make our region welcoming to all who live and visit here.

\$550 for Little Peaks (used to support scholarships for children to LP)

\$550 for St Joe's Outpatient Clinics re in the treatment of alcoholism, opioid addiction, and substance abuse

\$550 for the Neighborhood House

\$4,600 total

Flower Committee: There is no new information from this Committee.

Creation Justice Church Task Force: The CJC Task Force held a meeting with the Congregation to review and entertain questions on the Creation Justice Church Covenant. All went well. Ten participants enjoyed the CJC sponsored Silent Paddle trip on September 17 to Middle Saranac Lake. There may be another trip this fall.

Re-Opening Task Force Report: John updated the council on the Re-opening Task Force.

- Group continues to monitor updates to health guidance and the state of the pandemic.
- Full hybrid worship offered beginning July 4, 2021.
- Group will be moving to a meeting schedule of every other week.

Sabbatical Task Force Report: It is hard to believe, but Pastor John has been with us for almost 5 years. Next year he is entitled to a sabbatical. For pastors, a sabbatical is a time to nourish their relationship with God, recommit to their call, and provide renewed vision and focus for ministry. John plans to study at Westminster College, an affiliate of Cambridge University, in Cambridge, England where his focus will be the study of Plato's dialogues in relation to the early Christian contemplative tradition. He will be away beginning in September 2022 and returns after Epiphany in January 2023.

This sabbatical time is also intended to give congregations a space to stretch and experiment with their God-given gifts in the church's life. There is a task force of our church working on a plan for how we hold Sacred Space and continue meeting the day-to-day pastoral needs of our congregation during John's absence.

A Sabbatical Task Force has been created including Karen Glass, Naj Wikoff, Chris Blaicher, Elizabeth Davidson-Derr, and Barbara Merle-Smith. We currently have a plan, which has been approved by the Church Council, to use "local talent" for the 18 weeks of John's absence.

Our theme is **Your Spiritual Toolbox: New Voices/New Perspectives**. We will have people from both within the congregation and without, speak each Sunday from the pulpit on what forms the core of their spiritual life, their "toolbox." These will be people who haven't led worship for us before; they will be US, the community. We **will** have local ordained ministers for the 4 Communion Sundays we need to cover.

If you would like to help us to plan and realize a rich time of exploration next year, please reach out to kvccsab@gmail.com. We, as community, will need to work together to carry out day-to-day tasks, address pastoral needs, preach and learn more about who we are as Church. When John returns to us he will have many things to share about his time of study and reflection; we will also have exciting experiences to share with him about our discoveries.

While it will be sad and strange to be without John for 4 months, this time of Sabbath will also be an exciting time to test our flexibility, willingness to learn, and hold each other in care.

Look into your heart and decide if you can lead or support any of the following specific tasks. We will be calling on you to help out in one way or another. We are the Church Community and in this together:

- preach and lead worship on a spiritual theme
- organize and lead the flow of worship on a Sunday
- manage the pastor's discretionary fund (specialty qualifications)
- offer pastoral care (specialty qualifications)

As the sabbatical committee moves forward we will ask again for members of the congregation to step forward to work on the tasks listed and others.

With thanks for your love and support of our church community,

Karen Glass, Elizabeth Davidson-Derr, Naj Wikoff, Chris Blaicher, Barbara Merle-Smith.

2021 Annual Meeting: Combining Meetings, Items for Vote, Recognition Awards, Budget

The Annual Meeting will be held on October 10th and will be in hybrid form. Items to be voted on include the CJC Covenant statement, the annual budget, and the slate of proposed officers. Linda made a motion that we incorporate the Annual Meeting with the Sunday church service on Sunday, October 10th. Elizabeth seconded the motion. A discussion followed, and the motion was passed. **2022 Annual Budget:** Fritz Sabbow provided the Council with a copy of the 2022 Annual Budget. He led an informative discussion around specifics in the Annual Budget and fielded questions from the Council. Some amendments were made to the budget. Barbara made a motion that we accept the amended budget. Linda seconded the motion. A discussion followed, and the motion was passed. **2022 Annual Bazaar:** Dre made a motion that we schedule an Annual Bazaar for the first full weekend in August 2022. Elizabeth seconded the motion. A discussion followed, and the motion was passed. **Recognition:** The Council discussed at length who should be

recognized that this year's Annual Meeting. Many members and non-members of our congregation are being considered, and because of the dedication of so many Committee members, volunteers, and Church members, a further discussion will continue at our next Council meeting.

Other Business: None

Linda made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:43 PM.

Next council meeting is Tuesday, **October 26, 2021** (fourth Tuesday of the month) at 5:00 PM in person at KVCC with a Zoom component.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Mitchell, Clerk