

Plainfield Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
Annual Congregational Meeting
February 18, 2024 Minutes

The meeting was opened with a prayer from Pastor Joe Newton.

A quorum was confirmed.

Joined online – Karen and Steve Breese, Jan Peters, Sharon Kuzel

Celebrations

- 4 new members (Mary Bucek, Andrea Hendron, Marie Besore, Nicole Berard)

Approval of the minutes of the 2023 Annual Meeting

Moved by Joan Caton
Second by Ginny Noble
Approved

Financial report – Pat Herman

It was a good year. Spending was controlled and the stocks performed well.

Abbreviated Financials

Pat reviewed the Abbreviated Financials report.

There was a net gain for the year of \$27,245.46

Balance sheet

Micro Pantry – money going in is from donations only, it is not part of the budget.
The amount was higher than usual due to the very successful soup sales

There was a question about the Hope day debit.

We are waiting for money to come in from the grant. There is usually about a 2 week delay after receipts are submitted.

It was noted that Apple Tree payroll is a passthrough.

There was a question about if we had an advisor. Pat confirmed we do, Carol Clotz. Bob Mason asked what the fees are. Pat said they were inexpensive. No transaction fees. Fee is annual, based on balances.

Pat reviewed the treasurers report

There was a question about who decides on Memorial Payouts.

Confirmed - The Memorial Board – Elizabeth Ormes, Shawn Hillman, Sue Davis, Bill Caton

In 2023, scholarships were awarded to Josh Hancock and Katy Kuzel.

Bank fees – are for EFT, not for the Stofan & Agazzi account or other.

There was a question about the Custodian cost. It is \$650 / month. We use an Independent Company

Apple Tree pays \$2600 / month for building use during the school year. Pest control and security costs are shared with Apple Tree.

The Apple Tree rate was raised to \$2800 / month from Apple Tree. This is for 9 months.
Things like pest and security come out of that \$2800.

Bill Caton said the amount is about half what they would pay elsewhere, so this is a gift back to the community from us.

Joan Caton – acknowledging the great work and all the time Pat puts in on the Church Finances. Pat Herman – she really enjoys giving back in this way.

Regarding the cleaning, Shawn noted that he is continuing to work through the process with the company and the renters. He has been coordinating the cleaning schedule.

There was a question about if renters pay for special cleaning? Shawn confirmed they do as needed. The cost is \$78 per cleaning. It takes about 2 hours with 2 or 3 people working. They have their own code for the kitchen door. The keys stay here in the office and they get them when they clean.

It was noted that Katy volunteered to do cleaning over her break, good news for everyone.

Giving report – We did great. We should be proud of all we give.

EFT or check, can split between funds. We can stop or pause EFT any time, just email Pat at PCCUCCFinancial@gmail.com

We're doing well supporting the Micro Pantry.

2024 Budget

\$10,000 Capital improvements – building needs, band aids. Total budget is \$133,361.50

That's pretty good considering the increase in custodial costs.

Income budgeted at \$134,050.00, which would give us a gain of \$688.50.

Joe said we should see the budget as a challenge,

We plan on having 5 Congregational meetings, include updates on how we're doing.

Budget Approval

Moved by Mark Gerth

Seconded by Joan Caton

Approved unanimously

Moderator Report – Shawn Hillman

We'll be starting a Book study – “Remove the Pews Spiritual Possibilities for Sacred Spaces” by Donna Schaper. 30 copies will be arriving in a couple weeks.

Hope Day is getting too big for the Fellowship Hall. We need to start thinking about better use of the Sanctuary.

Joan – Hope Day has been going for 17 months. We've served 684 adults and children during that time. That's different ones, not repeats. It makes logical sense to look at this use of the sanctuary. She also noted that many Plainfield churches do not have pews.

Shawn mentioned that we're just starting the conversation and getting feedback.

Our land and location is very valuable. We're starting to gather thoughts and details about that.

Bill Caton gave an update on the possibility of relocating:

The idea being explored is that we would stay essentially here, swapping the land for a new building on the adjacent property to the West. We would still have a sign on the corner of 59 and Frasier. Craig drew up a plan for a building that would be about 12,000 square feet to help us start the discussions.

Drainage concerns were noted by a few people and will need to be addressed. We have 4.5 acres. The other space totals 9 acres.

Ginny Noble noted we still want to have space for a playground for Apple Tree. This would require zoning changes, so we'd see how that goes with the city.

Leadership for 2024

“Craig is taking time off, still involved not sure how that will look – Shawn.

From Shawn's Moderator report

Shawn will still be on Council and active, but stepping back a bit. In lieu of a single chief approach with a moderator, this year's council structure will look a little different.

Here is what we have slated as of now.

Attending Clergy – Joe Newton

Finance – Pat Herman
Apple Tree – Rhea Joy Simonich
Members at Large:
 Ginny Noble
 Tina and Jim Andry
 Mark Gerth (also Samantha Gerth as a Friend of the Church)
 Shawn Hilman
Operations Help – Shawn Hilman
Memorial Board – Open or Elizabeth Ormes or TBD

2024 Council meetings: monthly, time and dates TBD

2024 Congregational Meetings: Every 5th Sunday (except Easter).

- June 30th
- September 29th
- December 29th
- Others as needed.

There was discussion about the new council structure, including concern from a couple people about not having a point person.

Joan Caton and Barb Newton requested to be members at large.

Sally Noble mentioned that she had company that talked about issues they've seen. She is energized by how things are going here.

There was discussion about having access to the council minutes. They are uploaded to the church website after they are approved. Shawn suggested getting a link added to Faith times. We also discussed having some printed copies as needed/requested. We don't want to print more than necessary or mail them out, both of which would come with costs we' prefer to avoid.

There was discussion about who is having access issues or needs different access (printed/mailed copies).

Sharon – will lead a focus group on communication and what works and what doesn't.

Joan – Sharon does a great job with the website and Faith Times. We just need to discuss how to get the information to everyone. Samantha offered to have time at church to help navigate. Sharon asked Joan, Shawn, Samantha, and Andrea to be on the focus group.

Leadership change approved.

Andrea said she likes having coffee with members. Would like to meet in the Narthex.

Susan Winter – likes the idea of a conversation area (Andreas idea). Maybe something quiet and private.

Joan thanked everyone for all the Hope Day support. We always can use more help.

It was suggested that reports include page numbers to make finding during meetings easier.

Closing Prayer was given by Pastor Joe

Adjourn – Joan made a motion, Shawn seconded, all approved