

Winter Congregational Meeting of First Congregational UCC of Grand Marais
January 28, 2024

Present: 31 people - 27 in person, 4 on Zoom

Moderator Tom Yuhasey welcomed all. He reviewed procedures for meeting/voting and referred to pertinent portions of our Bylaws and Constitution. We had a quorum and we made a plan to vote by show of hands. Steve Noble monitored the Zoom and indicated votes from persons attending in this way. Communication agreement reviewed.

Meeting called to order 11:34 AM.

Opening prayer – Pastor Limvere

Mission statement read by Tom Yuhasey. Clarification requested by P. Harris about this. Our older mission statement remains current. A proposed alternative was not approved at the 2023 summer congregational meeting.

Agenda for meeting reviewed. An agenda item added: introduction of new Time and Talent booklet. **Agenda approved** with this addition – (S. Aldrich move, B. Tyler second)

2023 Summer Congregational Meeting minutes approved (J. Bottger move, N. Starr second)

Financial Report (pages 12-13 of annual report) -- Kevin LeVoir, Treasurer

Presented current balance and cash flow, close to budgeted amounts. **2023 Financial report approved.** (S. Aldrich move and B. Tyler second)

SAldrich brought up the ongoing need for a financial secretary. This was briefly discussed. The Board of Directors will continue to work to recruit for this position. Treasurer (currently also serving as financial secretary) asked to create a list of this role's duties that could be shared with candidates.

2024 proposed Budget presented and discussed. Previous listening sessions. (pages 8-11 in meeting packet). Proposed income needed \$175,834.

Discussion:

- No budgeted funds for possible renewal of appliances at parsonage. \$1000 for maintenance (J. Kern)
- Pledges to date have not yet met budgeted \$101,000 (though they are nearing this amount). (P. Harris)
- Budget may be aspirational but it is lean and makes a good framework to work from. (J. Delfs)

Request made that the treasurer change income line item "other cash assets" label to "other cash donations" for clarity. (P. Harris). The treasurer agrees to this change and will make it.

2024 proposed budget is approved. (J. Bottger move, M. Carlson second)

Moderator Report – Tom Yuhasey. (full text pages 5-6 in Annual Report)

Tom celebrated the contributions of all congregation members in the life of the church. He thanked current and former Board of Director members. He particularly lifted up Kevin Levoir, Jeff Kern and Gwen Mattice for their unique talents/contributions. He thanked Pastor Enno Limvere – now with us 4 years – for all his gifts. He thanked our Office Administrator Neil Pederson for his excellence. He highlighted 2 items of 2023 Board of Directors business – 1) finalizing lease of Maple Hill property to Cemetery Board and 2) rental of South Room to a daycare provider. BOD's 3 mutual ministry goals of

2023 were 1. New mission statement work, 2. Community building and 3. Highlighting outreach work. Tom invites the congregation to read monthly minutes of BOD meetings – in office or on website/newsletter – for full details. He is encouraged and hopeful as we look forward to discussions in 2024 about ways to improve our building and ways to pay for those improvements. He encourages congregational feedback and discussion with Board of Directors members.

Time and Talent Booklet introduction – Tom Yuhasey

The Stewardship Committee and Pastor Enno collaborated on creating a new booklet that describes the specific duties of all the various roles and committee opportunities. This booklet is now available on-line on the church website and in print form. All are encouraged to participate in the life of the church.

Revisiting Mission Statement revision- Jenny Delfs

Brief discussion held to judge level of interest in revising our current mission statement. Efforts to do this in 2023 were not successful. Lessons learned. Most comments at meeting were positive about going ahead with this project again. Suggestions: also create a vision statement, make a short version of the Mission Statement like was proposed but with addendums to flesh out ideas, make it short enough to be useful /memorable to be able to use in decision making, update some of the language of current statement. Board of Directors will take this feedback into account as we develop Mutual Ministry Goals for 2024.

Pastor Report – Rev Enno Limvere (full text pages 4-5)

Pastor Enno encouraged all to read the full text of his report in the Annual Report. He happily shared that this was his favorite year of ministry to date. He highlights upcoming training for 5 church members in the Our Whole Lives (OWL) curriculum that will be then offered to a group of HS students in 2024. OWL is sexuality education curriculum that fosters informed, responsible, and values-based decisions about sexual health and behavior. The curriculum covers the entire lifespan.

Committee Reports – all are encouraged to read through committee's reports highlighting 2023 activities and plans for 2024. If you see something you want to be part of, join in.

Architect plan presentation – Bruce Tyler from Building and Grounds Committee

This is one component of a larger discussion of goals for our facility – our 55-year old building is aging and heavily used. What is needed for the next 50 years?

\$6000 was raised and used to hire ATSR Architect Group.

This is what we get: 1. Facility assessment. 2. Energy audit – to highlight inefficiencies and make suggestions. 3. A master plan.

The process with Architects will take 3 months.

Architect team coming 2/13/24 to meet with Board of Directors, Pastor, congregation, community partners, Building and Grounds committee. They will make their initial tour of the facility. The agenda for that day TBA. All are encouraged to participate.

The congregation was asked to individually complete 2 questionnaires for the architect team. These can be done on paper (distributed after the meeting) or online. Links to be posted on website, in Feb newsletter and in the weekly Mailchimp. DUE BY 2/9/24.

1. Facility assessment questionnaire

2. Use assessment questionnaire

Community groups who use the church will also be asked for feedback/opinion.

Creation of a Capital Campaign Committee or Capital Campaign Exploration committee – Jeff Kern

Jeff made a presentation about some realities of capital campaigns. He stressed that a unified vision is critical before proceeding with such a campaign. He reviewed lessons learned from past efforts. He estimates that as much \$200,000 may be needed. Jeff was asked to include text of some of his reflections in the Feb newsletter.

Motion made to have Board of Directors to create a Capital Campaign Exploration Committee (SAIrlich move, JDelfs second) **Motion approved.**

Discussion included a desire to have a few members of the wider community involved on that committee.

Other Business

1. B. Aldrich expressed disappointment that there was no discussion today about ways to attract more people to this church. He was assured by Board member Steve Aldrich that it was an item for discussion on Feb BOD agenda.
2. B. Aldrich asked for approval to briefly share an inspiring dream he had about the church – **approved.** In his dream he saw a 2nd building next to the church that he is interpreting as representing the unmet spiritual needs of the community. He would like to see us exploring what those needs might be and how we can meet them.

Closing Prayer – Pastor Enno (reprise of closing worship hymn – The Body of Christ)

Meeting adjourned 1:02 PM

Respectfully submitted by Jenny Delfs