

Minutes
2016 Church Council Meeting
November 28, 2016
7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Council Attendees: Bruce Hadley (Moderator), Tom Brayer, Lynn DeHart, Lynne Devnew, Heather Edwards, Jim Garrett, Patti MacLennan, Bob Mustard, Nancy Von Stackelberg, Sandy Von Stackelberg, Kate Sturgis, Drew Thawley, Peggy O'Connor, and Emily Keller.

Council was called to order by Bruce at 7:04 pm and Peggy opened the meeting with a prayer.

Bruce polled all attendees to ask if they had any items that should be addressed.

Nancy reported briefly on the current status of the stewardship campaign. She noted that so far 95 pledges have been received for 2017; the 2016 total for pledges was 125. To address this gap, a letter is going out this week to remind people to pledge. If a problem still remains in January, there will be a stewardship team meeting to determine what the next steps will be. They are writing handwritten thank you notes as the pledges are received.

Tom shared that we have a lease and tenants for the parsonage as of December 1 with a thirteen month lease and the potential for a month to month after that. The family lives in Duxbury and is having major renovations made on their own house. Heather asked about the tables hospitality had requested; they have been approved.

Jim reviewed the church financial reports noting the high level of activity recently in the capital account.

Lynn recognized Melissa and the wonderful communications we have been receiving. She also reminded us that it has been a while since we recognized those who have been members for 50 years. Lynn also suggested adopting a family as was done with the Laotian family many years ago or alternatively finding another way to help other people who are hurting. It was observed these ideas should be pursued via Outreach as potential uses for our Mission Fund.

Multiple times during the above discussions, the value of having a viable and up to date list of church numbers was noted. It would provide important input to the future Senior Pastor Search profile, it would be valuable for the stewardship team, and it would assist in recognizing the 50 year members. It was noted that, if we do a survey, we might ask people whether they consider themselves members of Pilgrim Church. After a brief discussion it was noted that the Deacons are about to address this challenge and we should allow them to do so.

At this point the leadership of the meeting was passed to Peggy, who had two topics to discuss. Conclusions from the discussions are summarized below; the focus is on the plans developed for the next steps.

Governance

Peggy's suggestions

Peggy began by sharing some highlights from Hotchkiss's book (see Attachment) on church governance. Running throughout the highlights was the importance of TRUST. The importance of defining a mission and vision were noted, as was the importance of measuring progress towards the mission and goals. Peggy observed that the church's primary mission is to change peoples' lives in a whole lot of different ways. We come as broken people who need something. We discussed the need for us to determine whose lives we need to change and in what ways. The council's role is to develop that mission and vision and move it forward.

Peggy then shared what her research and experience have led her to see as the ideal governance structure. She recommends 6 – 8 as the ideal number of council members. The members would include the chair of deacons and the chair of trustees to ensure communications with these critical boards and the church clerk to record proceedings (all three of these positions are also officers of the church). The council would also include three other members with one joining each year. One would be the chair, one the future chair, and one the new council member. These three members would be the lead council members when it came to doing the work of the council. The senior minister and associate minister are also included on the council.

In addition to the council, three times a year (June following the annual meeting, Fall, and Winter) there would be special meetings including all church committees. People would come to these meetings to share ideas, get involved, and see interconnections. These meetings lead to open communications (perceived and real) as they allow people to attend regular meeting to discuss what is going on. These meetings would be led by the church council.

In Peggy's recommended structure, the moderator would not be a member of church council. The position would be a bit like the town moderator role. The individual would be individually elected (not a part of a slate) by the congregation, and should be a leader respected by the congregation, someone who regularly attends church and is able to read the mood of the congregation. The moderator's responsibilities would include running the annual meeting and the budget meeting. The moderator could also be called upon to help groups in the church with any thorny issues.

An additional aspect of this governance system is a quarterly formal meeting of the moderator, chair of deacons, chair of council, chair of trustees, and ministers. The objective of the meeting would be to look at how "WE" are doing.

Next steps

The objective is to have a vote at the January budget meeting to gain congregation approval to try this new governance structure from January through May.

Therefore, at the next council meeting, rescheduled to Wednesday, December 21 we will vote on:

1. The proposed size of the council from January through May.
2. The membership of the council from January through May.
3. The role of the council from January through May

Senior pastor search committee formation plan (see attachment)

Peggy reviewed the steps to be taken (noted on the attachment) and observed the need for a timeline for the search committee formation plan.

It was decided we will have a vote on Wednesday, December 21 on the list of people to be asked to participate on the search committee, starting with “our ideal search committee”. This is when we will put the names recommended by the deacons and trustees and our ideas into a master list. Thus, our goal is to get through item 7 of the formation plan at this meeting.

Preparation for meeting at 7PM on Wednesday, December 21

Thoughtfully consider both the “market segments” that need to be included on the search committee and who might be ideal representatives of those segments of our congregation. Also, please be thinking about whether you personally would like to be on the council, the search committee, or serve on another church committee or project.

If you will be unable to attend on December 21, please be sure you have provided suggested candidates to Patti, Tom, or Bruce; your personal service interests to Bruce or Peggy, and your ideas regarding the governance structure proposal to either Bruce or Peggy.

Peggy closed this very productive council meeting with prayers of thanks at 9 PM.

Minutes prepared by Lynne Devnew, Pilgrim Church clerk