

**Hilltop United Methodist Church
Church Council Meeting Minutes
Thursday, Feb. 18, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.**

Present via video conference: Matt Sipe, Don Putzier, Derrick Galinat, Paulette Adams, Stacy Vanderwerf, Jocelin Maine, and Michelle Behsman.

Don Putzier opened the meeting with the Lord's Prayer.

Approval of minutes: Church council reviewed the minutes from January. Jocelin made a motion to approve the minutes, with a second by Matt. The motion passed. There were no additions to the agenda. Paulette made a motion to approve the agenda, Derrick seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Bible Study: Pastor Matt shared a study of Genesis 32:22-32, the story of where Jacob wrestles with God. Matt saw that this passage speaks to how we as a church are currently "wrestling" with decisions before us. Like Jacob, we also look to receive a blessing from God.

Finance Report: Michelle provided a report of January finances. January plate giving was \$17,022.89 (avg. Jan. \$22,154). Expenses were \$25,393.92 (avg. Jan. \$28,063). Net income was -\$7,962.38. Michelle shared that it is too early to make predictions. She also provided an overview of the 2021 budget as it is presented in QuickBooks, with budgeted amounts for expected income. Derrick shared that the Trustees voted at a recent meeting to contribute more funds (approx. \$30k) to the TD Ameritrade account. Funds will come from the surplus in the checking account from 2020.

Committee Updates: Jocelin reported that 26-28 kids are attending each Wednesday and this week they worshipped together in the sanctuary for Ash Wednesday. They are currently studying Galatians and "fruits of the spirit" and plan to do more in the community to love our neighbors. She also reported that the MCCI family and youth ministry would be meeting in a few weeks to move on the prescriptions.

Short-term visioning: Matt shared that a postcard would be mailed in the coming weeks about Holy week and Easter. A letter was mailed last week about these plans as well, along with an MCCI update. There are plans to do Stations of the Cross on Good Friday. There will be drive-thru communion for Easter Sunday following the live-stream worship service. A worship service from our MN Annual Conference District Superintendents will be shared the Sunday after Easter. Matt suggested a survey about returning to worship to see if members will be comfortable returning to in-person in May. Matt asked for feedback on what success might look like for in-person worship and a brief discussion followed. There is still uncertainty about safety related to COVID-19 and the big question is will members come and worship. Matt wants to ensure that we are still providing an excellent worship experience considering possible limitations related to having an outdoor worship service. Michelle shared that she and Karla Lassonde discussed plans for the outdoor service and they intend to have tents set for the summer. Shanna Blomquist will decorate for the first service on May 9th. There was expressed concern about unpredictable weather and questions about notifying members quickly should we need to cancel the service. Michelle said that we could use Realm to text members and we can put a notice on our website.

Long-term visioning: Don reported that MCCI sanctuary team updates were shared in a recent letter to all church members. Matt said that ideas about worship scheduling from the last council meeting were shared with the MCCI children/youth/family team and they were excited about the possibilities and thought moving Sunday School to run concurrent with the second service would greatly enhance youth ministry opportunities.

Matt closed in prayer. Meeting adjourned at 7:38 pm

Respectfully submitted, Michelle Behsman