**PRESENT**

Cameron Barr, Senior Pastor

Mary McMillan, Moderator

Doug Bruce, Treasurer

Linda Sellars, Adult Education

Larry Kroutil, Board of Justice, Outreach, and Service

Rae Buckley, Board of Youth and Young Adults

Alyson Breisch, Children’s Ministry

Peter Schay, Deacons

Jean Anne Barnes, Fellowship

Susan Denault, Membership, Engagement and Stewardship (substituting for Susan Renwick)

Nubia Rivero Bello, At Large Member

Robin Smith, At Large Member

Soren Potthoff, At Large Member

Rev. David Mateo, Associate Pastor

Rev. Mary Elizabeth Hanchey, Associate Pastor

**NOT PRESENT**

Erica Tillman, Assistant Moderator

Susan Renwick, Membership, Engagement and Stewardship

Anne Stoddard, Trustees

David Taylor, Music Committee

Jenny Anderson, Director of Music

Jane Landreth, Clerk

**INTERPRETATION SERVICES:**  Provided by Murtado Language Solutions.

**CALL TO ORDER: Moderator Mary McMillan** called the meeting to order.

**INVOCATION:**  **Senior Pastor** **Cameron Barr**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes had been approved online prior to the meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS:** None

**AGENDA APPROVAL: Mary McMillan** asked if there were any new items to add to the agenda. In the absence of new items, shemoved for approval ofthe agenda for the April 26, 2022 meeting.

**Second:** Peter Schay

**Vote:** Unanimous approval

**SENIOR PASTOR REPORT**

**Cameron Barr** began with a discussion about the use of masks indoors. Masking is encouraged for large group meetings indoors. Group discernment is encouraged for smaller group gatherings. The question is about maintaining a culture of masking or promoting some flexibility. Whether to encourage people to wear masks indoors also depends on the size of the meeting space. Council decided to keep masks on for the April 26 meeting.

**COVID-19 Update: Cameron Barr** noted that we are now coded as “green” in Orange County (low level of risk of COVID-19 infection). Nevertheless, we want to maintain a norm of people wearing masks in worship at United Church.

**Candidate Forum:** Following the Orange County Justice United forum for Orange County District Attorney candidates, Cameron was repeatedly asked about having a forum at church for candidates for office to speak to the congregation. Staff recognized that the church needed to have appropriate boundaries because of our tax-exempt status, so **Cameron Barr** did additional research. He received a memo from the UCC office that reiterated boundaries that churches must follow. A key point is that candidates need to have an equal opportunity to participate. All candidates were invited from two races: District Attorney and Clerk of Court. Candidates had to agree to ground rules. However, members of the congregation have expressed concern to Cameron about a forum for offices in which United Church members also are candidates. **Mary McMillan** mentioned looking at our political life in light of our covenants. **Jean Anne Barnes** thanked **Cameron Barr** for being careful. We need to mindful of issues related to the separation of church and state and our tax-exempt status. (Update: Following further conversations, **Cameron Barr** communicated the decision to cancel the forum.)

**INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY – STREAMING PROJECT**

**Peter Schay** mentioned that a weakness continues to be our wireless connection into the sanctuary. Connections have been working for the La Mesa service in the Fellowship Hall, although there have been some technical issues periodically. **David Mateo** has been working on two versions of the La Mesa service: the full service and a shortened version of about 20 minutes. **David Mateo** has been getting good feedback on the YouTube service.

However, there could be issues if both services are streamed at the same time. We may want to wait to launch streaming of the Festival Worship service until Spectrum updates our Internet service.

**FINANCIAL UPDATE**

**Doug Bruce** provided copies of the most recent financial report which shows that we had a deficit of about $11,000 in March (revenues versus expenses). However, this deficit was expected based on early large pledge activity in January and February. We are holding at a year-to-date surplus of almost $74,000, which exceeds our budget by $54,000. However, this surplus is expected to narrow in upcoming months as expenses ramp up.

**EASTER AND HOLY WEEK DISCUSSION**

**Peter Schay** reported that there were 258 people in Festival Worship on Easter Sunday. That number is the largest worship attendance in the sanctuary since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. There also were 31 people who attended the La Mesa service in person.

**David Mateo** reported that attendance in the La Mesa service has been stable, but we expect more people to start showing up. However, there seem to be two separate groups of people who come to the La Mesa service every other week. **Larry Kroutil** mentioned an opportunity to use the summer months to re-evaluate worship times. The 9:30 worship time for La Mesa has been an issue for some people and families.

**Jean Anne Barnes** mentioned that the Fellowship Board had planned for food for 350 people, so we had some leftovers. The Fellowship Board hopes that we eventually can go back to members of the congregation bringing food for the fellowship time.

**PLANNING FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING**

The meeting date is tentatively set for Sunday, June 12. We could meet in the sanctuary if we follow appropriate health precautions. The question came up of how to handle food on that Sunday. The Fellowship Board will rise to the challenge if they are made aware of the order of the day. Council discussed having the worship service and then the annual meeting, followed by food after the meeting. The Fellowship Board could provide rolls and sandwich fixings and ask the congregation to bring other food.

**ANNUAL REPORTS**

We will proceed with last year’s format. It will build on the “6-Month Debrief” and include a summary of this year’s accomplishments and recommended actions for the next church year. **Mary McMillan** encouraged Boards to be thinking about the following questions:

* What works for your Board?
* What changes can you recommend?
* Does your mission statement still work for your Board?

**BOARD UPDATES**

* **Recruitment of new Board members**

There were two motions for appointments to Boards:

* **Mary McMillian** made the following motion: The Board of Justice, Outreach, and Service requests approval of Mark Hollins to become a member of the Board effective immediately. Mark will serve for 2 years and 1 month.

**Second:** Peter Schay

**Vote:** Unanimous approval

* **Mary McMillian** made the following motion: Council is requested to approve the addition of Priscilla Boomer to the Fellowship Board. Her appointment will be effective immediately to fill a vacancy. She will fill a 2-year term starting in July 2022.

**Second:** Peter Schay

**Vote:** Unanimous approval

**Cameron Barr and Mary McMillan** are trying to “prime the pump” to encourage people to serve on Boards. Board Chairs can notify Cameron if they would like to speak to the congregation. Trustees and Deacons have gotten responses to the bulletin insert on Easter Sunday about Board vacancies. This is the time for Boards to be reaching out. The Board of Justice, Outreach, and Service has been brainstorming for several months about filling vacancies. **Cameron Barr** needs to know how many vacancies each Board needs to fill. **Rae Buckley** was recognized as the new chair of the Board of Youth and Young Adults.

**Board of Justice, Outreach, and Service (BJOS)**

**Larry Kroutil:** The Racial Justice Ministry and Music Committee submitted an application for fundraising approval for the Negro Spirituals Royalties project. Negro spirituals that we sing in worship services were developed by enslaved people. There is no record of “composers” or descendants who would benefit from royalties. The Negro Spirituals Royalties Project plans to support a local organization of Black Musicians to be chosen by a selection committee including representatives of the Music Committee and Racial Justice Ministry at United Church, and musicians who are people of color, including musicians associated with United Voices of Praise. It is expected that the group to be selected for support would be a nonprofit group supporting young singers of color. An amount of $1,619 has been identified as a symbolic level of support. BJOS and the Music Committee believe they can identify that amount for this year from existing budgets. Therefore, Council approval is not needed for the expenditure of $1,619 from the BJOS and Music Committee budgets. Rather, Council approval is requested for people to be asked to make donations to support this work on an ongoing basis. The goal is to announce this project to the congregation on June 19, 2022 (Juneteenth). On Sundays when Negro spirituals are sung in worship, the plan also is to make people aware that they can make donations to support this effort.

* **Larry Kroutil** made the following motion: UCCH will be authorized to request donations to support the Negro Spirituals Royalties Project when spirituals are sung in worship. BJOS and the Music Committee also are directed to include proposed amounts for this Project in the draft budgets for the coming church years.

**Second:** Peter Schay

**Vote:** Unanimous approval

**Larry Kroutil** also reported on the following:

* People are encouraged to pledge to vote in the May 17 primary.
* Support is available through the BJOS budget for children and youth to attend Johns River Valley camp.
* The registration deadline for the Durham Pilgrimage of Pain and Hope has passed.
* Thank you to Kitty Dalton for the attractive BJOS bulletin board.
* Larry has followed up with Linden Thayer on the Afghan refugee resettlement team. Sharing current information with the congregation will be useful for making sure that everyone has correct and complete information.

**Adult Education**

**Linda Sellars**: Adult Education finished the covenant series. The Board has a couple of Adult Forums in the works. We may have one Adult Forum per month.

**Fellowship**

**Jean Anne Barnes**: There will be food for Confirmation Sunday. We typically also have a cookout in May. We need to think about what **to** do for Juneteenth.

**Treasurer**

**Doug Bruce** reported that he reviewed the lease on the copier in the office.

**Children’s Ministry**

**Alyson Breisch**: Rise Against Hunger will be on Saturday, May 14. So far, 27 people have signed up, but we need 60 to 70 people. Board Chairs were encouraged to get the word out to Boards. Youth will get credit for community service hours.

**Membership, Engagement, and Stewardship (MES)**

**Susan Denault**:

* MES has identified four new people for the Board.
* MES is looking for greeters.
* The Board is looking at developing more community groups as COVID-19 starts to wane.
* A Stewardship Point Group is meeting. The issue is what we can do outside of the **stewardship** campaign to get people re-engaged in giving.

**Youth and Young Adult**

**Rae Buckley**:

* Youth and young adults had a going-away party for Ian McPherson and Megan Hughes.
* The youth area downstairs has been refurbished.
* Information has been sent out for Rise Against Hunger.
* An end-of-year party/cookout is being planned.

**Deacons**

**Peter Schay**:

* The Board needs to find five new Deacons.
* An additional challenge with live streaming of the worship service is that one person cannot do the sound and video at the same time. Deacons will need volunteers for each.

**Pastors**

**David Mateo:**

* We are in the process of reconnecting with people who have attended the La Mesa service.
* We are trying to rework the service based on the online service component.
* There currently is only one musician for the service.
* A question concerns the dynamic of the service. Are there other ways to encourage participation other than asking a question during the sermon?

**Mary Elizabeth Hanchey:**

* There are three different sign-ups for taking meals to people in the congregation.
* Groups are coming back to life and interfacing.
* There are new cards in the pews in the sanctuary to encourage re-engagement.

**Cameron Barr:** We have an intern from Duke Divinity School who has been working with the youth. He has been a cornerstone of the confirmation class. We anticipate that he will stay involved with UCCH when he comes back for his third year of divinity school.

**RECAP ACTION ITEMS**

**Larry Kroutil,** filling in for Jane Landreth, identified one action item from the meeting:

• **Board Chairs** will notify **Cameron Barr** of the number of vacancies that Boards need to fill.

**CLOSING PRAYER**: Led by **Mary McMillan**

**Respectfully submitted: Larry Kroutil**