

Hamline Church United Methodist – Church Council Meeting Minutes
February 28, 2023 – 7:00pm via Zoom

Attendance: Rev. Mariah Furness Tollgaard, Rachel Joyeux, Angela Wolf Scott, Jeff Dreisbach, Pete Theisen, Kyle Pennington, Ellen Schroeder, Rev. Heather Grantham, Stephanie Jones, Nathaniel Dempsey, Emma Close, Natalie Wiersma, Kirstin Purcell, Adine Momoh, Jay Alexander.

Welcome & Check-In

The council welcomed new member Kirstin Purcell to the SPRC and introduced themselves.

Consent Agenda

Chair Kyle Pennington asked if the council wished to discuss the Consent Agenda, which included January Minutes and a Growth Grant. Jeff Dreisbach asked if Pastor Heather Grantham might summarize the use of the Enneagram for the staff, and she explained how it helped them work together better and discover their own strengths. Kyle asked for a motion. Pete Theisen made a motion to accept the Consent Agenda in its entirety. Angela Wolf Scott seconded the motion. The council voted unanimously to accept the Consent Agenda.

Discussion Agenda

Pastor Mariah Furness Tollgaard opened the discussion on the Hamline Church 2023 Goals. She noted we are due for this process as it has been delayed by the pandemic; typically planning extends to about 18 months ahead. She mentioned the goals are rooted in our core values as a sanctuary for the city. She mentioned the areas of focus for the church, including Spiritual Formation, Connection and Caring for the Church, Service, Foundations for Ministry, and Supporting the Wider Mission. Regarding Spiritual Formation and Worship goals, these need some more intensive focus since we can plan farther ahead now than during the pandemic. She said it's a priority to make in-person worship welcoming, especially for families with small kids. Heather also addressed Spiritual Formation, saying it was available to all to help deepen their connection to the sacred. Part of that goal is to get the word out and get more people engaged in the community and at Hamline University. Retreats and immersive experiences are another way to get people involved across generations. For Connection and Caring, there are ongoing efforts to keep in touch, show appreciation, engage new members and provide a way to onboard them, and now the creation of a photo directory. Efforts for Service and Love of Neighbor is reflected in the justice work in the community, which has much participation and typically led by members, rather than clergy/staff. The Earthkeepers and the Dining Hall are other ways we've provided impactful service to the community. As for Foundations for Ministry, this is seen in responsibility for fiscal and physical resources. Onboarding the new staff is a priority this year, and getting an Updated Property Conditions assessment and an Energy Evaluation will allow us to do more long term planning for the building. Relationships with Minnesota Methodists, Reconciling Ministry, Minnesota Conference, and Hamline University are also under this umbrella. Pastor Mariah brought up the issue of apportionments, and the fact that we have only been paying into the Minnesota Conference. Finally, she mentioned we have more than 20 clergy at HCUM (retired or otherwise), and we hope to keep building that relationship.

Pete followed up with a question about the Book of Discipline and the frequency of external audits, suggesting we should add that into our goals for the near future (every 3 years). Adine Momoh asked how we plan to measure how our goals are achieved. Pastor Mariah said she will hold herself and team accountable, noting many of these goals are more qualitative than measurable in metrics. Nathaniel

Dempsey asked about how this is measured for the staff, and Pastor Mariah noted there are goals set every year at performance reviews.

The council moved on to discuss the Church Profile update process. Pastor Mariah discussed how the profile is used and noted it hasn't been updated since she joined in 2014. The council was divided into break out groups to help complete the remaining questions on the form, and then we reconvened to discuss our ideas together (these responses were added directly to the online form by each group).

In discussing the 2023 Endowment Disbursement Approval, Pete summarized the effects of the market on the endowment disbursement, which came to \$59,000 including \$8,000 carryover. He mentioned that this year, the finance committee aimed to put more in Capital Improvements (\$31,000) than Growth Grants (\$12,000). He asked the council if this seemed acceptable. Pastor Mariah said this has been the first year we haven't had any carry over from the Capital projects. Pete mentioned Brittany Pennington noticed that we could begin drawing on the Growth Reserve in 2027 to supplement or add to Capital funds, so those resources are only 4 years away. Jay Alexander asked for clarification: if growth grants would be reduced from \$15,000 to \$12,000 this year, does that mean we'd accept fewer applications or just fund them with less? Pastor Mariah said they received around eight applications last year. She also mentioned there are other sources we might turn towards to supplement those limited funds. Rachel Joyeux asked if it might be possible to make sure the Growth Grant is earmarked to receive those \$15,000 in future budgets. Pete said it's evaluated every year, and wondered if it might be possible to set a deadline for applications so it can be better anticipated in the budget.

Kyle called for a motion to reallocate \$3,000 from the Growth Grants to Capitol Projects in 2023. Adine moved, Jay seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Kyle made another motion to approve the endowment withdrawal for \$52,000, with disbursal of \$43,000 from the growth fund, and \$8,000 from the reserve fund. Nathaniel seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Adine made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Emma Close seconded the motion. Pastor Mariah led a prayer to end the meeting.

Follow Up Tasks

SPRC

Annual Reviews for Staff early to mid-March.

Finance

Continue on-boarding with Gillian and establish monthly review process.

Trustees

Security Plan Review

Recommendation from window plaster repair quotes.

The Council's next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 28 at 7:00 p.m. by Zoom.