

November 2023

Council Packet

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# Council Agenda: November 2023

Council Agenda: October 2023

Plymouth Congregational Church, United Church of Christ

Tuesday, November 28, 2023, 6:30 pm – In Person

Scott Morgan – Moderator	Debbie Schmidt – Stewardship
Sonia Jordan - Moderator Elect	Korey Kaul – Christian Education
Devon Kim – Immediate-Past Moderator	Sue Denning – Deacons
Larissa Long – Clerk	Linda Thompson – Fellowship
Doni Mooberry Slough – Treasurer	Kelley Stillings – Membership
Rich Bireta – Deputy Treasurer	Brandy Ernzen – Mission & Service
David Ambler – At Large Member	Kathy Bowen – Music & Fine Arts
Susan Osborn – At Large Member	Annas Boyer – Personnel+
Doug Eason – At Large Member	Dick Orchard – Endowment
Valerie Miller-Coleman	Susan McCarthy – History+
Caroline Lawson Dean	

\*Quorum is 9 (17 Voting members, 2 Non Voting members+)

(times in parentheses are estimates)

1. Call to Order – Scott Morgan, Moderator
2. Invocation – Valerie Miller-Coleman
3. Consent Agenda (5 minutes)

**Suggested Council Action:** Adoption of the Consent Agenda

These items are considered and approved under one motion unless removed for separate action at the request of any member of Plymouth. Items removed from the consent agenda are considered following the adoption of the remainder of the consent agenda.

- 3.1. Approve Agenda
- 3.2. Approve Minutes from October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023
- 3.3. Receive Financial Reports

4. Church Treasurer's Report – Doni Mooberry, Treasurer (10 minutes)

- 4.1. Financial Update and Fun Fact

Through October 31 we are 83% of the way through the year, we've received income to cover 85% of our annual expenses, and spent 81% of our budgeted annual expenses. While this appears that we are heading for ending the year with a substantial surplus, caution is advised. There are a lot of expenses remaining to be spent including \$27,000 from the Stewardship ordinary maintenance and repair line.

5. Old Business

- 5.1. Goals and Strategy Update Facilities, next steps for possible capital campaign. Possible approval of contract with Generis contingent on the congregation approving moving forward with a capital campaign at a called Congregational Meeting. This will require more information on costs including the organ. – Valerie Miller-Coleman and Debbie Schmidt (15-30 minutes)

**Possible Council Action:** Approve contract for engaging Generis Partners, LLC to assist Plymouth in a capital campaign. Approval is contingent on a vote by the congregation to move forward with a capital campaign.

- 5.2. Policy Update and Review – Scott Morgan (20 minutes) Reviewing updates in Policy Book approved by Council in May. Final consideration to be at December meeting.
- 5.3. Update on Annual Appeal and our budget process – Debi Schmidt, Chair of Stewardship and Doni Mooberry, Treasurer (10 minutes)

6. New Business

- 6.1. Nomination update – Sonia Jordan (5 minutes)
- 6.2. Proposed amendment to Personnel Policy regarding providing full-time employees who do not accept Plymouth-provided health insurance a monthly health stipend, Devon Kim (5 minutes)

**Suggested Council Action:** Approve amending Personnel Policy Section VII, Leave, Paragraph C to provide a monthly health stipend of \$300 to any full-time employee who does not accept Plymouth-provided health insurance with an effective date of June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023.

- 6.3. Information from History Committee regarding possible placement of informational sign, Susan McCarthy (5 minutes)

**Suggested Council Action:** No action.

- 6.4. Update on Senior Pastor Review, Devon Kim (5 minutes)

7. Moderator's Report – Scott Morgan (5 minutes)
8. Associate Pastor's Report – Caroline Lawson Dean (5 minutes)
9. Pastor's Report – Valerie Miller-Coleman (5 minutes)
10. Open Forum

Meetings of the Church Council are open to all Plymouth members. This open forum allows any church member to address the Council regarding Plymouth Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, programs, plans, or policies.

11. Adjournment and Lord's Prayer

12. Important Future Dates:

Next Council Meeting: December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023 @ 6:30pm – **This meeting will be in person**

Tentative 2023-24 Council Dates (fourth Tuesday except third in December): January

23<sup>rd</sup>, February 27<sup>th</sup>

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# Council Minutes: October 2023

Council Minutes: October, 2023

Plymouth Congregational Church, United Church of Christ

Tuesday, October 24, 2023

1. Call to Order – Scott Morgan, Moderator

Scott called the meeting to order at 6:30.

*Members present:*

Scott Morgan – Moderator

Sonia Jordan – Moderator Elect

Devon Kim – Immediate Past Moderator

Larissa Long – Clerk

Doni Mooberry Slough – Treasurer

David Ambler – At Large Member

Susan Osborn – At Large Member

Doug Eason – At Large Member

Valerie Miller-Coleman

Caroline Lawson Dean

Debbie Schmidt – Stewardship

Korey Kaul – Christian Education

Dave Barker – Deacons

Kelley Stillings – Membership

Beth Chambers – Mission & Service

Kathy Bowen – Music & Fine Arts

Dick Orchard – Endowment

*Members not present:*

Rich Bireta – Deputy Treasurer

Linda Thompson – Fellowship

Annas Boyer – Personnel

Susan McCarthy - History

2. Invocation – Valerie Miller-Coleman

Valerie read passages on living a generous life from “Giving to God” by Mark Allan Powell. In ancient Israel one may have seen worshipers placing offerings on the Tabernacle altar, which were then destroyed by fire. If offerings were destroyed today rather than put to good use many would be appalled. But it isn't what happens after an offering is made. We give to God as an act of worship.

### 3. Consent Agenda

- 3.1 Approve Agenda
- 3.2 Approve Minutes from September 26, 2023
- 3.3 Receive Financial Reports

*Debbie moved to approve the consent agenda; Korey seconded; motion unanimously approved.*

### 4. Church Treasurer's Report – Doni Mooberry Slough, Treasurer

#### 4.1. Financial Update and Fun Fact

Through September we are 75% of the way through the year, have received income covering 78% of our budgeted expenses and spent 74% of our expense budget.

Doni said the November financial update will include an estimate of year-end balances, and will also be provided to the congregation in early December. In addition, a Certificate of Deposit which comes due before the next council meeting will be renewed.

Council members then participated in a trivia game about government and church, with prizes for all!

### 5. Old Business

#### 5.1 Goals and Strategy Update Facilities, next steps for possible capital campaign – Valerie Miller-Coleman and Debbie Schmidt

Debbie provided highlights from the Listening Sessions (presentation attached)

- 140 participated in 4 sessions
- Top reasons for attraction to Plymouth
  - Welcoming to all (open and affirming)
  - Music & Worship services

- Social Justice activities
- Plymouth ministries strength ranking
  - Worship Services
  - Music Ministry
  - Church Staff
- Ministries needing improvement ranking
  - Building and Facilities
  - Senior Adult Ministries
  - Fellowship and New Member Assimilation
- 82 households completed pre-capital campaign survey
  - Want prioritized list of projects with funding plan
  - Need clear congregational communication
  - 68% support vision and plan for capital campaign
  - 80% would consider giving through a 3-year commitment

Valerie added that comments were primarily positive, but more information is needed regarding scope and cost. She also said the consultant feels we're ready to consider a campaign.

Generis has proposed a consulting agreement for a capital campaign, which Stewardship will discuss and bring to Council in November. The suggested time frame is December 1, 2023 through June 1, 2024. The consulting fees are \$40,000 and do not include expenses such as travel, airfare, meals and lodging.

General questions/discussion followed:

David Ambler asked where Plymouth would be at the end of the contract. Valerie said the campaign would be completed. If all information is available by January or early February, the campaign would be finished before Easter and the outcome celebrated before Pentecost.

She added that the architects can provide a detailed cost analysis specific to an agreed-upon plan. The time crunch is the organ. Kim and the organ committee are working to pull that information together, as Reuter's is no longer an option.



Korey asked if the dates could be pushed back 3-4 months. Valerie said if that happened the campaign would run into next year's Annual Appeal which we want to avoid.

Susan feels we're asking a lot from the congregation, especially since a number of members expressed their lack of support for the bylaws revisions.

David said he isn't sure how the consultant arrived at the range of support, based on comments he heard during the listening session. He didn't see a congregational wealth assessment, either. Valerie explained a decision was made to not share those analytics.

David said you shouldn't conduct a campaign if you don't have a goal and significant commitments in place before launching. He added that past campaigns included individual interviews which provided some idea of what members might commit to a campaign.

Doni understands the quiet and public campaign phases David referenced and began an analysis in 2019. At that time, she felt there were potentially 2-3 major gifts that might cover a significant portion of the organ repair/purchase. However, all work on the analysis stopped when the pandemic arrived.

Scott said there won't be a decision tonight, but Council will have to determine next steps. There are reasons for both moving ahead or deferring. And if we commit to the proposal, we are committed to the \$40,000 fee. Additionally, who approves a capital campaign – Council or the congregation?

Devon was surprised to find that listening session attendees asked questions about the master plan as there was a robust amount of work done on it. She looks forward to sharing that information with the congregation.

Valerie added that having asked the congregation for feedback and observing the organ committee's work, we don't want to miss an opportunity. We have focused energy and attention and she feels that with the right communication something positive could result.

Caroline asked if the contract could start on Jan 1. Valerie said yes, if we have a clear plan and can begin congregation communications no later than early February.

Can the Generis contract be divided into modules? Scott asked Stewardship to inquire about contract segmentation and to provide options for payment of the contract fee.

Debbie will send copies of the Generis proposal to Council members and Scott will have it placed on the website. Dick suggested providing the listening session results to the congregation through a variety of communication channels.

## 5.2 Bylaws and Policy Update – Scott Morgan

Scott distributed the Policy Book Table of Contents to Council members, reminding them that the revised Bylaws and Constitution become effective at the next annual meeting. Council has adopted a version of the Policy Book, but it was passed with the understanding there would be changes. Christian Ed has already updated the Safe Church policy.

He asked Council to specifically review the following areas:

- Membership
- Governance – Includes an extensive gift policy/utilization, which is a work in progress
- Planning & Coordinating Sessions – Located under Council
- Council committees – Created in May, but not completed. Name/functions to be determined.
- Finance and fund-raising – who does what? Need to systematize and make a formal part of policy
- Boards need to review the total number of members
  - Total is to be divisible by 3
  - Dave Barker said Deacons will have 12 members
- Boards should consider how ministry teams could be useful
- Need to determine appropriate level of authority for contracts

Scott will send a pdf. file of the Policy Book to Council before the November meeting. He wants to pass the revised Policy Book in December, but added it won't be final as policies will continue to be revised going forward.

## 5.3 Update on Annual Appeal and budget process – Debbie Schmidt, Chair of Stewardship and Doni Mooberry Slough, Treasurer

Council will have to approve the budget before sending to the congregation for consideration. Doni said the brunch went well and commitment cards were picked up or mailed. The draft 2024 budget reflects a 13% increase from last year based on board requests. The amount of commitments received by mid-November will determine what, if any budget adjustments will have to be made prior to the annual meeting.

## 6. New Business

6.1 Four-way Ministry Covenant request, Valerie Miller-Coleman

Valerie introduced Amy Fishburn, Chaplain for Midland Care Connection. She is also a UCC Minister and new Plymouth member. She said the Four-Way Ministry Covenant is between Plymouth Congregational United Church, The Kansas-Oklahoma Conference, Midland Care Connection and Amy Fishburn. Each covenant together to meet obligations.

Amy gave a brief summary of her background and the journey that led her to one-on-one ministry at Midland Care Connection.

*Doug moved to approve the Four-Way Ministry Covenant; Doni seconded; motion approved unanimously.*

6.2 Nomination Committee – Sonia Jordan

The nomination committee is chaired by Sonia and includes the current Moderator and Immediate Past Moderator. Sarah Whitten and David Ambler have agreed to serve as at-large committee members. Heather provides staff support.

Sonia is working to provide a diverse nomination slate. Scott said all current members of boards will be re-elected if they have 1 or 2 years left on their term. If any board members meeting that criteria have left, Sonia will need to know. He also asked boards to provide names to the nominating committee, as has been done in the past.

*Doug moved to approve David Ambler and Sarah Whitten as at-large members of the Nomination Committee; Devon seconded; motion carried unanimously.*

7. Moderator's Report – Scott Morgan

Completed under Bylaws and Policy Update

8. Associate Pastor's Report – Caroline Lawson Dean

- Enjoyed personal time on a retreat
- Whole middle school participating in an upcoming confirmation retreat
- Third grade students will receive Bibles on Sunday
- Attended the "Orange Conference" in Kansas City with three lay leaders and Kara

9. Pastor's Report – Valerie Miller-Coleman

- Jaron Asher is the new Director of Operations, replacing Nikki Richardson who recently resigned.

- Worship is planned through Pentecost
- The Faith Foundations Class ends soon. Sixteen participants will complete the course.
- All is well

10. Open Forum

No one spoke during the open forum.

11. Adjournment and Lord's Prayer

*Devon moved to adjourn the meeting; Doni seconded; motion unanimously approved.*

12. Important Future Dates:

Next Council Meeting – November 28, 2023 at 6:30 – this meeting will be in person.

Tentative 2023 Council Dates (fourth Tuesday except third in December): December 19, January 23.

# Board Minutes

## November 2023

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# CE Board Minutes:November 2023

November 7 2023 7:30pm

Members present: Korey Kaul, Kara Holcombe, Jackie Lord, Frances Lyons, Melissa Lisher, Katy Anderson, Caroline Dean, Keeli Nelson

1. Opening prayer - Caroline
2. Celebration - Favorite Christmas Movies
3. Accept October Minutes
4. Treasurer's Report - Jackie Lord - On track for this point in the year including Christmas activities that are coming up.
5. Council report - Korey
  1. Come to meeting about Capital Campaign
  2. Working with the new bylaws to get nominations
6. Old Business
7.
  1. Acolytes - Jackie - The crosses came in for the kids, and there will be discussion about purchasing more robes.
  2. 3rd grade Bibles & Halloween
  3. Virtual Auction - Assign dates -
    1. On the First Sunday of the Month, we will provide a dessert for the coffee hour. With the exception of November and December.
    2. December's dessert will be taken on November 26th.
    3. November's dessert will not be taken to the coffee hour, but will be given to the Fellowship Board for their meeting.
    4. This October's dessert has been moved back to October 2024.
    5. Around 2 dozen cookies

December 2023 - Moved to November 26 - Arrange with Linda Mannering - Jackie

January 7 - Keeli

February 4 - Katy

March 3 - Korey

April 7- Melissa

May 5- Frances

June 2- Jackie

July 7 - Keeli

August 4 - Korey

September 1 - Melissa

October 6 - Frances

November 3 - Katy

7. Upcoming Events:

1. Youth Service Corps at Thanksgiving Meal - Nov. 19

<https://plymouthlawrence.breezechms.com/form/youththanksgiving81>

2. December 3rd 4pm-6pm St Nick Sunday at 9:30am.

Advent Gingerbread Extravaganza: Soup, Bread, Cookies, Setup, Cleanup

<https://plymouthlawrence.breezechms.com/form/67240389>

3. Children's Pageant December 17th & Sam Elliott Party - Kara may reach out to CE for volunteers with costumes
4. 4pm Christmas Eve Service - Volunteers 3:15pm and help kids get costumes on. Two or three volunteers. Melissa (if available) (Find other Prek-K parents who can help)

8. New Business

1. Talk about who's going to serve next year - everyone with 1-2 years remaining on the board is available
2. Plymouth Language Program is asking about using our nursery for child care & possibly calling for volunteers from the congregation. Safe church policy should

be followed. Need to ask them to keep the classrooms cleaned up when they are finished.

9. Caroline/Kara report
  1. Confirmation retreat - 19 students and 4-5 volunteers
  2. Kara and Caroline working on advent
  3. Thinking ahead to Plymouth Academy
  4. Sunday school is going well and there's an enthusiastic 4th and 5th grade group
  5. Ninth grade group had a good outing
10. Next meeting - Tentative plan to gather in person Nov. 12 at Wheatfields and come back to the church, Dec meeting is cancelled
11. 2024 Meetings - CE would like to change to the 2nd Tuesday of the month to help with the timing of the financial reports and discussions.
12. Closing prayer - Caroline

#### Events:

- Palm Sunday Day parade
- Easter activities
- Confirmation class celebration
- Vacation Bible School
- Graduation Breakfast May 21
- Pride Party in June 11
- Service Trip for high schoolers - July 2024 - Chicago
- Sunday School Orientation - August
- Volunteer Training for working with youth - August
- Blessing of the Backpacks - August
- Halloween party and parade - October
- St. Nicholas Sunday December 3rd
- Gingerbread House Extravaganza December 3rd 4:00pm
- Children's Musical & Sam Elliott Christmas Party December 17th



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# Deacons Board Minutes: November 2023

**Tuesday, November 14, 2023**

**6:30 PM**

**Chapel**

**MINUTES**

**Members present: Cathy Barker, Dave Barker, Matt DeVecchio, Sue Denning, Paul Herpich, Pastor Valerie Miller-Coleman, Kim Noll, Wendy Seger, Gayle Sherman, and Robin Wood.**

**Members unable to attend: Sandy Sloop, Tess Tallman, and Brian Wolfe.**

**Call to Order – Sue Denning**

**Sue Denning called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.**

**Approval of Consent Agenda and October 2023 Minutes – Sue Denning**

**Gayle moved that the agenda be adopted and the minutes from the October 10, 2023 meeting be approved. Paul seconded; motion passed unanimously.**

**Christmas Eve Service Discussion – Gene Tyner and Sue Denning**

**Gene attended the meeting to share information about the Deacons' role in support of the Christmas Eve service. Christmas Eve is an "all hands on deck" time for Deacons. We need a "Co-Leader" to work with Gene. Sue volunteered to serve in that role if needed. Gene distributed a color-coded chart showing volunteer positions for Greeter/Monitor, Ushers, and Candle Lighters in Sanctuary and Balcony for 4:00, 6:00, and 8:00 services. Deacons will help with an information/sign-up table for volunteers between services as follows: November 26, Sue and Robin; December 3, Wendy and Gayle; December 10, Paul and Robin or Tess; December 17, Dave and Cathy. The Board members agreed to meet after the December 12 Deacons' meeting to prepare the candles for the Christmas Eve service.**

### **Devotional – Robin Wood**

Robin presented a reading entitled “Peace and Thanksgiving” written by Gail Rodgers based on Colossians 3:15.

### **Treasurer’s Report – Kim Noll**

Kim presented and briefly summarized the October Mission Spending Plan and Endowment Activity Fund balances. Cathy reported that we are waiting on a refund/rebate on two acolytes’ robes that were too big. Matt reported that Christmas candles and batteries for kids’ candles have arrived. Pastor Valerie reported that Advent devotional booklets came in under budget.

### **2023 Ministry Action Plan (MAP) Goals – Sue Denning**

Sue presented copies of detailed write-ups of liaison procedures and responsibilities (Goal 2B). Sue asked that members read through these and mark areas of misunderstanding. Sue passed around a sign-up sheet for Deacons to indicate preliminary interest in Board positions as leads, “seconds,” and liaisons for 2024. We still need to identify volunteers for a 2024 Communion lead and “second.” Deacons suggested names of congregation members as Deacon candidates, and Sue wrote them on a list to give to Pastor Heather for the nominating committee.

### **Communion Planning – Paul Herpich**

Paul led a debrief of the November 5 Communion Services and passed around the sign-up for the December 3 communion service. Paul reported that the quantities of bread and juice will be increased for December’s anticipated higher attendance.

### **Report on October 24, 2023 Council Meeting – Dave Barker**

Sue thanked Dave for attending. Dave reported that the Council agreed that the Deacons’ Board will continue to have 12 members starting in February 2024 and in accordance with the revised Bylaws and Policies.

### **Upcoming Events – Sue Denning**

Pastor Valerie showed and distributed Glow Advent devotional booklets and reported that they would be given out at Gingerbread Extravaganza and possibly between services on a Sunday before Advent. Sue requested that they be made available to Covenant Groups if they want them, and she will email Caroline about this. Sue reported that she and Cathy had inventoried Advent supplies and replacements have been ordered.

### **Worship Service Discussion: Applause during Worship – Sue Denning**

**Sue reported that she and other Deacons had been approached by a handful of congregation members expressing concern about applause during worship. After discussion, Deacons agreed that we realize that different people have different preferences and people should be free to express their preferences. Deacons' general consensus is that no one should feel under expectation to applaud or not to applaud.**

#### **Open Forum**

**Sue asked if any Deacon would be available to attend Council Meeting on 11/28/23 as she is unable to attend. There were no takers. Pastor Valerie gave the opinion that not having a Deacon attend would not be a problem.**

#### **Adjournment**

**Wendy moved that the meeting be adjourned; seconded by Gayle. Motion passed. Meeting was adjourned at 7:50 PM; the meeting concluded with the Lord's Prayer.**

**Robin Wood, Clerk**

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**Endowment/Planned Giving Committee Minutes:**

**No November Meeting**

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## Fellowship Board Minutes: November 2023

November 8, 2023, 5:00pm Via Zoom

I Call to Order by Dana Dole, Vice Chair

II Members present: Dana Dole, Kathy Funk, Ann McElhenny, Julie Bach, Nancy Bregman, Nancy Guy

Staff present: Jaron Asher

III Committee Reports:

A. Ann moved the October minutes be approved as submitted.  
Nancy B. seconded the motion.

B. Treasurer's Report: Kathy reported that she had spent time with Melissa, Church Accountant. Kathy's concern was how close we are getting to the extent of the budget. We need to be cognizant of how much we are spending. The flowers for the Thanksgiving lunch are being ordered and paid for from the Frederick Fund in remembrance of

Bob Frederick. Julie ordered and has paid for extra turkey from HyVee as a greater number of guests is anticipated for this year's lunch. We are now spending from the savings account of our budget, which Julie commented it shows that we are doing just what we are supposed to be doing and hosting events. The only event we went over budget on was the Pride Party, partially due to the purchase of a new freezer, but Kathy thinks we are ok budget-wise. She mentioned that the \$250 extra we asked for was submitted too late to be accommodated for 2024. That request

would go toward our 2025 budget, and an additional \$300 for our 2024 budget would come out of the Fellowship's Discretionary Fund. Julie asked if we are covered next year for the cookies. Kathy thought that the \$300 would go for that in the '24 budget. Esther's periodic donations of cookies for the Sunday fellowship hour really help with our cookie budget. Julie reported that monetary donations for the Thanksgiving lunch totaled \$120 so far.

C. Council Report: There was none as Linda T. was not in attendance.

D. Staff Report: Jaron confirmed that setup for the Thanksgiving lunch will be on Friday, November 17, at 10 am. There will be a funeral that morning, but there will be no reception at the Church, so the only place we cannot set up will be in the basement as noise carries to the sanctuary. That can be accomplished after the service, or some board members who arrive earlier could get tables and chairs into the Mayflower Room early as to not disturb the service. All board members should try to be there on Friday morning.

Jaron also reported that Heather has asked to have suggestions for names of potential board members as soon as possible. We had decided that we want a nine-board member committee, so if anyone knows of a potential board member, please let Jaron know, so he can report to Heather soon.

E. Coffee Hour: Tom was not present for the report.

F. Esther's Cookies: Ann reported that cookies will be provided on Sunday, November 12, and December 5.

G. Church Thanksgiving Lunch: Julie reported that the signup for food donations is going well, but the Board members may need to help take up the slack if not enough food categories are filled. There will be an announcement at next Sunday's services as a reminder to people who have signed up for this.

H. "The Plan": Julie believes the work of setting up tables and chairs, etc., can all be accomplished on Saturday with the help of Board members and Matt. The reconstitution of the potatoes (150 pounds) with milk and butter (which we need to keep track of how much milk and butter should be used) will be completed on Saturday and then warmed on Sunday. Plastic bags to line the roaster pans have been purchased, so there should be less mess to clean up. Ann will call Reiser's to remind them about the potato delivery information. Included in the delivery will be a smaller order for a separate "Link" order (approximately 30 pounds). There will be a layout diagram for tables, etc. Dana has purchased \$175 worth of new fall decorations, and she will discard some of the "older" decorations from past lunches. Matt has ordered beige plastic tablecloths and placemats, and service items have been ordered for 425 guests. Ann reported that several forms for youth workers have been received just today. The youth will be responsible for serving pie, filling water glasses, getting butter on the tables, and assisting the elderly. An earlier discussion about purchasing new white tablecloths has been put on hold, and the maroon and gold ones will be used for the serving tables this year. Julie asked Dana to send out the plans for Friday and Saturday to Board members to be sure they get "The Plan" information. Julie will make two paper copies of the food

donation signups for Board members to use to make reminder calls to those bringing food items. There is no signup online for attending or bringing food to the lunch. Dana will get a head-count out soon for the 50+ year members.

I. New Business: Dana received information that the student choir from Doane University of Nebraska will be here to perform February 9. We need to get more details about the housing for them, but the Board did agree to provide a Taco Bar meal for them. Perhaps the housing issue could be handled more efficiently by the Church choir and Fine Arts.

**IV Next Meeting: Sunday, December 10, 10:30 am, Room 202.**

V Nancy Bregman moved to adjourn the meeting. Ann seconded. Meeting adjourned at 6:05 pm.

Respectively submitted, Nancy Guy, Clerk

#### Fellowship Board Minutes Addendum

November 8, 2023

Section III, H: Most set up can be accomplished on Friday morning, not Saturday. Saturday only a few are needed to reconstitute the potatoes and place in the roaster pans. The pans are then heated early Sunday morning, so they are ready to serve for the luncheon.

Section III, I: New Business: Julie suggested we find out the number of the Doane University student choir members who are expected, so we know the size of the taco supper to prepare for them.

Nancy Guy, Clerk

November 14, 2023

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## Membership Board Minutes: November 2023

Membership Board - November 15 minutes

Listening Sessions - Sept. 25 & 26

Areas of concern -Senior adult ministries & New Member assimilation

discussed this - Do we need to communicate better about what we're doing?

We would like the Women's Group on Monday evenings to advertise more.

We will discuss this more at a later date.

Nominations for Membership Board -

This board has decided to keep nine members!

We discussed that we need 1 person to replace Jane Walters whose place has been vacant for about a year. This would be a 1-year term. We also need 3 people for the term ending in 2026.

In an effort for more diversity, we would like to have 1 or 2 people who attend the GOG primarily.

We also will encourage Membership Board members to attend a GOG service to get a better understanding of that service.

Visitors to Plymouth - Heather presented current visitors who may come to the Orientation in January.



NOV. 19 - 50-year members recognized

Jan has called all by 9 of them, the majority are not coming.

Membership Board will take the absent members their name tags.

Barbara Murphy - Valerie & Heather will make a special mention of her; Jan will get a small bouquet. She is a 74-year member!

Advent Labyrinth in Silence (with Coffee) Dec. 6

Jeanne and Melodi will make a presentation - during announcements on Nov. 26 at first service.

They also plan to have journals available for Dec. 6.

Heather has ordered the Labyrinth, and we hope to get it in time.

Longest Night Service - Dec. 18 (Monday)

This service targets people struggling with the Advent Season.

We will have a Board meeting before that Service on Dec. 11 at 3:00 p.m. We will finalize plans then.

Welcome Table - Kelley will send out the dates to the other Membership Board members

Nov. 26 - Kelley

Dec. 3 - Phyllis & Marty

Dec. 10 - Kelley &

Dec. 17 - Melodi

Dec. 24 - Jan & Julie (both services)

Dec. 31 - Kelley

Jan. 7 - Jeanne

Jan. 14 - Julie & Kelley

Next Board Meeting - Dec. 11 at 3:00 p.m.

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## Mission & Service Board Minutes: November 2023

### **Plymouth Mission & Service Board Meeting -- DRAFT**

**November 1, 2023 | 7 p.m.**

**Attendees:** Caroline Rothnie, Jo Bryant, Caroline Dean, Brandy Ernzen, Chuck Marsh

#### **General**

1. Our next meeting will be Wednesday, December 6
2. Our current meeting lacks a quorum, so no votes will be taken. We'll vote later, online, for time-sensitive items.

#### **Standing updates/reports**

3. Approval of October meeting minutes is tabled, pending a quorum.

#### **Treasurer's report**

4. Our first-Wednesday meetings prevent receiving financial reports in time for review and approval at the monthly meeting. The report will be submitted to board members via email.

### **Fundraising update**

5. Beth and Kathy will update us on final totals for the Virtual Auction at our next meeting.

### **Church Council report**

6. Council primarily focused on updates regarding the potential upcoming capital campaign. Board members are encouraged to attend upcoming meeting and encourage others to attend. Council also focused on working toward a smooth translation to Plymouth's new bylaws. Council members anticipate unavoidable bumps but will strive to keep them to a minimum. Council also worked on the nominating process for the revised version of church boards.

### **Advocacy and Social justice ministry updates**

7. At its October meeting, SJMT decided to establish a taskforce to study if and how Plymouth might, in a speedier manner, speak in Plymouth's name on social issues, particularly those that are causing immediate pain and/or threats to others. Pastor Caroline and Chuck have been gathering names from volunteers and nominees for the taskforce. Caroline will speak with other congregations and similar sources to see if others have developed a good model for this challenging task.
8. At the October meeting, SJMT also agreed to try to strengthen Plymouth's contacts and involvements with KIFA (Kansas Interfaith Action) and Justice Matters – ideally, that could help Plymouth act on those issues causing immediate pain and threats to others. Toward that end, SJMT trying to set up a series of monthly Sunday Plymouth meetings with KIFA representatives, tentatively for Jan. 21, Feb. 18, and March 17 – crunch time for the Kansas Legislature. The goal is for these sessions to be educational and to offer opportunities for advocacy. Moti Rieber, KIFA's Executive Director, will be at Plymouth Dec. 10.
9. SJMT believes that if the KIFA sessions productive, perhaps Plymouth could try the same thing with Justice Matters later in 2024 – September, October, and November, perhaps. Again, the goals would be education and the identification of clear opportunities for advocacy and action.
10. In recent meetings, SJMT has discussed a high school anti-racism course. Pastor Caroline says that Plymouth has identified a good curriculum and might be ready to launch in early 2024.
11. Regarding the Israel/Gaza tragedies: Pastor Caroline is developing two Art Vigils for Peace noon sessions, tentatively set for Nov. 15 and Nov. 29. The sessions would begin with prayers and lamentations and move to the creation of art. The overriding theme will be Peace.

12. Last but definitely not least: Plymouth is one of the sponsors of Lawrence's Nov. 20 Transgender Day of Remembrance event. This will be at Ecumenical Campus Ministries, 12<sup>th</sup> Street and Oread Avenue, across from the Oread Hotel, from 6 p.m. to approximately 8:30 p.m. \*\*\* Our Board tentatively approved a \$50 contribution toward ECM's costs for music at this event. Because this meeting lacks a quorum, this matter will be submitted for an email vote so that we can respond quickly to ECM's request.

### **Mission partner update**

13. Community Children's Center clothing drive: Kate Campbell and Susan Osborn will help Jo with this. They've met, and Jo has also met with CCC staff. They have materials, including barrels, that we can use for our for this. Sunday, January 21, seems like the best kick-off date. Unfortunately, there won't be a January *Rock* issue, but we can use other church media: bulletin, email, announcements, and perhaps a Save the Date note in the December *Rock*.
14. Head Start: Chris Deter, Jo, and Pastor Caroline had a productive meeting with the new director. Head Start hopes to launch a food closet plus a program sending food home for holidays and other breaks in the schedule. Chris will try to set up a pilot program for this winter holiday, just to see what's possible. Head Start will research how many kids will need food assistance. The program is still trying to hire qualified employees in order to boost student attendance.
15. Justice Matters: Justice Matters has a new organizer, Emily Fetsch, a Lawrence native and former children's advocate at the state level. She's been great to work with. Justice Matters' current primary focuses are elder care and ending chronic homelessness.
16. Family Promise: Plymouth is hosting the week of November 13 at the program's new static site. Volunteers are needed to host at meal time and overnight. We now supply dinners three nights a week – Monday, Wednesday, and Friday – and each night has a specific menu: Mondays, for example, are for Mexican food. Pastor Caroline recommends that we use the *Rock* to communicate these changes to the congregation. Ideally, with Family Promise's new system, we'll need fewer volunteers. Board members agreed that we should use some of our Family Promise funds to re-stock grocery cards for the Family Promise. Plymouth member Garrett Ernzen would like to use Plymouth as a drop-off for his Eagle Scout project: hospitality baskets of toiletries and cleaning supplies for Family Promise families. Board members agreed that using the church is fine, but we need to avoid clashing and/or competing with existing Plymouth drives. We also need to be aware of precedent that this might set for similar projects – but Garrett's project has the advantage of being for a current mission partner. Pastor Caroline said

that February or March would be ideal and that Garrett should work with Matt to find a place to store the donations.

### **Unfinished business**

- Selecting recipients for the Christmas Eve offerings and preparing a related *Rock* article: Board members selected OCWM and Justice Matters, in part to help fulfill our financial pledges to those organizations. That combination also has the advantage of global and local action and impact. Because we lack a quorum, we'll have an email vote on this as soon as possible. Caroline Rothnie is drafting an informative letter for the congregation. Caroline Rothnie will do a Mission Moment on December 17. Chuck can cover for her if she has a conflict.
- Lawrence Community Shelter: Caroline Rothnie will organize a supplies-collection drive for the Lawrence Community Shelter, and she'll see if Beth is willing to train to take it on.

### **New business**

- Thanking our Mission partners: Rather than using large (and expensive) poster-boards to be signed by the congregation at the Thanksgiving meal, Brandy will purchase large greeting cards that can hold many signatures. Present board members agreed to share the cost with her. Brandy will develop a related Thank You message for the bulletins.
- Nominees for future terms on Mission Board: Board members discussed several possibilities.

### **Save the date**

- Nov. 20: Lawrence Transgender Day of Remembrance at ECM

### **Upcoming Mission Moments**

- Nov. 5, 12, 19: Annual Appeal
- Nov. 26: Open
- Dec. 3: Communion Sunday (we try to limit Mission Moments on big communion Sundays)
- Dec. 10: KIFA/Rabbi Moti Rieber
- Dec. 17: Details about Mission Board Christmas Eve offering

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# MFA Board Board Minutes: November 2023

**Plymouth Congregational Church**

**Music and Fine Arts Board**

**Meeting Minutes November 14, 2023**

**Members Present:** Susan Anderson, Kathy Bowen, Sharon Kindall, Harry McDaniel, Jenny O'Brien, Tim O'Brien, Paula Pepin

**Members Absent:** Judy Burch, John Dvorske, Emily Sharp

**Staff Present:** Kim Manz

**Guests Present:** None

Harry conducted the meeting which began at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom.

**I. Devotional:** Harry shared a devotional regarding decisions and changes from Liz Miller, Designated Term Pastor of the Granby Congregational Church.

**II. Approval of Minutes from the October Meeting:** Jenny moved and Sharon seconded the approval of the minutes from the October meeting. The minutes were approved as submitted.

**III. Financial Report (Kim):** The latest financial reports were distributed with the agenda, accompanied by the following notations:

- a. Account 3709100 – Over \$4,000 has come in for the Handbell Choir wreath sales. Once the greenery has been paid for, we will know the profit from this fundraiser.

b. Account 3708000 – Fine Arts Program Fund has covered the initial cost of the gingerbread houses for the upcoming joint effort with Christian Education for the Gingerbread House Extravaganza. All registration fees will also go into this account to offset the cost of the houses.

#### **IV. Reports of Committees:**

- a. Council Report (Kathy): Kathy provided a link to the minutes from the most recent Council meeting. Highlights included the following:
- i. The 2024 budget numbers reflect an aspirational ask. Everything that was requested was included in the budget, which resulted in a 13% increase over the previous budget. An update on the Annual Appeal was provided.
  - ii. Goals and strategies for the Facilities Management Plan and the capital campaign were discussed, including the Generis fee and proposed timeline regarding the campaign. Kathy encouraged everyone to read the comments and general discussion in the link.
  - iii. Council will start reviewing the policy book at the next meeting.
  - iv. A new Director of Operations was hired to replace Nikki. His name is Jaron Asher.
- b. Staff Report (Kim):
- i. Harry and Kim thanked everyone for the work with the Art Fair and Dinner Theater.
  - ii. The High School Handbell Choir performed on October 15 and October 29.
  - iii. The Cherub Choir performed on October 22, directed by Paula Aiken and accompanied by Merilee Dymacek.
  - iv. The Middle School Handbell Choir performed on November 5.
  - v. The Covenant Ringers performed on November 12.
  - vi. The Chapel Choir performed on November 12, directed by Emily Bennett and accompanied by Doni Mooberry Slough.
  - vii. Choir robes have returned for the Celebration of Worship service.

viii. Kim attended a Worship Planning Meeting and a Program Planning Meeting since our last MFA Board meeting.

ix. The Organ Committee met once since our last MFA Board meeting.

x. Oktoberfest was held on October 27.

xi. The Art Show was October 22–29.

xii. Dinner Theater was November 3 and 4. A special thanks to Susan Anderson for picking up the food on Saturday since Hy-Vee was unable to deliver and to Judy Burch and Debbie Schmidt for donating wine and beer.

xiii. The piano in the Mayflower Room was recently tuned.

xiv. The three octaves of refurbished handbells were returned.

c. Organ Committee and Facilities Plan (Kim, Kathy):

i. Approximately 60 people attended the Organ Information Session on November 13. Kim provided a history of the organ and provided a behind-the-scenes look at the workings of the organ.

ii. The hunt for a company to refurbish the organ was narrowed to five companies. One of these visited Plymouth on November 14 and spent time with Kim and the organ. A report will be provided summarizing their findings and recommendations.

d. Memorial Fund and Gift Committee (Kathy): No update.

e. Fellowship Liaison (Paula): Judy Burch talked to Linda Mannering of the Fellowship Committee regarding the coordination with MFA to host the Doane University Choir. The Fellowship Committee will provide the meal for the choristers on the night of the concert. MFA will take responsibility of arranging housing.

## V. Unfinished Business:

a. Cooking Classes:

i. The Oktoberfest event was held on October 27.

ii. Although Paula will be rotating off the MFA Board in 2024, she has volunteered to help the planning and facilitating of additional cooking classes in 2024.

b. Doane University Choir Tour (Judy): The concert is scheduled for February 9. MFA and Fellowship will work together as outlined above.

c. Gingerbread House Extravaganza:



i. This is scheduled for December 3. As of this date, only 29 of the 100 houses are sold.

ii. An updated notice in the Bulletin and in the weekly emails are recommended, as well as an official announcement before service on Sunday.

iii. Signup will be available at the Featured Ministry Table on Sunday, November 19. Kathy will man the table before service and Harry will do so between services. Volunteers are needed to do the same on Sunday, November 26.

iv. Volunteers are needed to provide soup, bread, and cookies. Volunteers are also needed to serve as greeters and kitchen help on the day of the event. Volunteers are also needed to show up at 3:30 on the day of the event to help open the packages. Signup is available online.

## **VI. New Business:**

a. Nominations for MFA Board for 2024 (due November 18): Paula, John, and Sharon will be rotating off the board in 2024. Additionally, Jenny and Tim are forced to resign due to other commitments and family needs. Various names were offered for consideration. Additional names should be forwarded to Kim. He will narrow the list and submit it to the Nomination Committee.

b. Hanging of the Greens is scheduled for December 2. Volunteers are needed. Some work can be done in advance of December 2, if availability permits.

c. Annual Report: The MFA Annual Report is due in December. Paula wrote it last year and let Kim review it. Harry will do the same this year, with input from Paula and Kim.

## **2023 Goals:**

- Cooking Classes
- Hanging of the Greens (December 2)
- Gingerbread House Extravaganza (December 3)
- Major Choral Work (December 10)
- Children's Pageant (December 17)
- De-hanging of the Greens
- Advocate for MFA in relation to the Facilities Master Plan

### **2023 Accomplishments:**

- De-Hanging of the Greens (January)
- Damp Chaser Humidity System installed on Sanctuary piano
- Curry Cooking Classes (February 27)
- Dinner Theatre (March 3–4, 2023)
- Pasta Cooking Classes (April 10)
- Major Work (May 7)
- Children’s Musical (May 14)
- Pride Party (June 11)
- Justice Banner Art Class (June 19)
- Independence Celebration (July 2)
- MAP Document
- Jazz Sunday (August 20)
- Mission Fair (August 27)
- Writing Your Salvation Class (August 20 and 27)
- Architectural Photography Class (August 27)
- Basic Woodworking (September 2 and 9)
- Multi-Station Miniatures Class (September 9)
- Family Tie-Dye Class (September 23)
- Needle-Felted Mini-Mushrooms Class (October 1)
- Fused Glass Ornaments Class (October 1)
- Art Show (Setup October 20; Show October 22–29)
- Oktoberfest (October 27)
- Dinner Theater (November 3–4)

**Adjourned:** The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

**Next Meeting:** December 12, 2023, 7:00 p.m.

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## Stewardship Board Minutes: November 2023

November 8, 2023 5:00 PM

**Members Present:** Mark Reedy, Linda Gutierrez, Larissa Long, Emilie Burdett, Timothy Metz, Sarah Cauthon, Andy Booth and Debra Schmidt

**Members Absent:** Dudley Alexander

**Staff Present:** Valerie Miller-Coleman (Senior Pastor)

**Others Present:** Doni Mooberry-Slough (Treasurer), Rich Bireta (Deputy Treasurer), and Stephen Carter (Finance Team member)

Debbie Schmidt, Chair, called the meeting to order. The minutes of the October 11, 2023 meeting were reviewed and approved by acclamation.

**Financial Report:** Rich Bireta reported that as of October 31, 2023, we were 83% of the way through the year, have received 85% of the budgeted income and have spent 81% of budgeted expenses.

**Tax Credits** The Church has received \$36,000 in state tax credits for work done from 2021 - 2023.

**Year End Estimates** Doni Mooberry-Slough reported that she, Melissa Praderio, Rich and Stephen Carter had reviewed the current financial information and estimated that we will end the year with a surplus of between \$4,000 - \$7,000. The projection at the beginning of the year was that there would be a shortfall of \$47,000 at the end of 2023, but the receipt of a one time life event gift of \$21,000 and additional pledges in the amount of \$26,000 received after the first of the year and from new members joining during the year eliminated that projected shortfall.

**Council Report:** Larissa reported that the Council reviewed and discussed the Generis report and discussed the policy book with that discussion to continue at the December Council meeting. Amy Fishburn, a new member and UCC minister was introduced. The nominating committee was established with Sonia Jordan as Chair.

**Facilities Report:** Sarah reported that Matt has a painting contractor to paint the hallway in the north church, hopefully in the next three weeks, but we need to get on his list.

**Personnel:** No report

**Endowment:** Emilie reported that the committee finalized the tri fold giving brochure.

**Memorial Gifts:** No report

**Annual Appeal:** Larissa reported that \$459,145 in pledges has been received which is 47% of the proposed goal.

**Staff:** Valerie reported that Jaron Asher, the new Director of Operations is working out well.

Other Reports:

**Virtual Auction Update** Debbie reported that the final amount raised from the Virtual Auction was \$8,762.27.

**Comments from Facilities Meeting held 11/05/2023.** Debbie reported there were good questions asked at the meeting and people seemed supportive, however they wanted more cost information and more details on the projects to be included in the renovation work..

Old Business

#### **Phase I Facilities Master Plan Updates**

**Carpeting** Sarah reported that she has received a bid from Krings and is waiting on a bid from a second vendor.

**Audio Visual Improvements in Mayflower Room** This is being worked on, but no additional report

**Hearing Aid Support in Sanctuary** The information on this project has been handed off from Nikki to Jaren and is still in process.

**Solar Panel Progress/Updates** As previously discussed, the City will not approve the solar panels on the south church, but City staff suggested we seek approval for the solar panels from the Historical Resources Committee. Motion was made and passed to authorize Jaren and the Facilities team to apply to the Historical Resources Committee for approval of installation of the solar panels on the south church. If the panels are approved, a new bid for the cost of installing the panels will be needed.

**New Business:**

**Capital Campaign/payment of Generis Contract.** Debbie provided copies of the proposed Contract for consulting service with Generis for review and discussion. The only concerns expressed with the proposed contract were in regard to the arbitration clause in Section 7(g) with the suggestion made that a standard arbitration clause be substituted for the paragraph currently included at Section 7(g).

Motion was made and passed to communicate to Council that the Stewardship Board has reviewed the Contract for consulting services with Generis and is satisfied with the contract subject to further discussion regarding the arbitration clause at Section 7(g) with perhaps substitution of the existing clause with the standard arbitration clause.

Payment of the \$40,000 consulting fee to Generis was also discussed with motion made and passed that the \$40,000 consulting fee be paid from capital campaign funds with a current loan from the operating reserve fund to be paid back as capital campaign funds become available.

**Annual Appeal Update on December 3rd** Doni reported that the intent of the update on December 3rd will be to talk about this year's budget, provide an update on the status of 2024 pledges and get feedback from the congregation regarding any modifications to be made to the 2024 budget.

**Sale of Tax Credits** Discussion was held, led by Doni and Tim Metz, regarding the sale of the tax credits the Church has received. The sale involves a fair amount of paperwork between the buyer and the Church as Seller. The sale would be at a discount and since there is no benefit to waiting, the sale should be done now rather than waiting. The state maintains a list of people interested in buying tax credits which Tim and Doni recommended utilizing to find our potential buyer since the individuals on the state list have experience in the purchase of these tax credits. Debbie will get the paperwork the church has regarding the tax credits to Doni so she and Tim can proceed and report back to the Stewardship Board in December.

**Cash Management Plan** Rich presented a Cash Management Plan for reinvestment of maturing certificates of deposit and realignment of cash deposits held at various financial institutions so that no deposit accounts at any one institution exceeds the FDIC insured limits as follows:

Balance	Rate	2024 Interest
FSBT Money Market 220,000	5.00%	11,000

Cap Fed 220,000	5.25%	11,500
Intrust CD 120,000	5.35%	6,420
IntraFI Overnight Sweep 204,183	3.10%	6,330
TOTAL 764,182		35,300

Maintain operating account balance of \$90,000 to \$100,000

After discussion, motion was made and passed to authorize Rich to implement the Cash Management Plan as proposed.

The meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

**Next Meeting:** December 13, 2023 at 5:00 PM at the church.