

OUR CHURCH COUNCIL

Executive Team

Moderator: Jason Jacque (2024)
Associate Moderator: Jodi Cowen (2024)
Clerk: Rhonda Thompson (2025)
Treasurer: Phil Stepanski (2025)

Team Representatives

Christian Education: Shandy Roehrig (2024)
Fellowship: Jennifer Dimmer (2025)
Staff Support and Review: Ken Matthews (2024)
Property: Bill Bond (2025)
Community Outreach: Eric Olson (2024)
Liturgy: Tracy Greymont (2025)
Stewardship: *currently vacant* (2025)

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

The January minutes were approved at the February 18, 2024 Church Council meeting.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
Church Council Minutes
January 11, 2024, 6:30pm

Call to Order – by Jason Jacque, Moderator, @ 6:30 pm.
Pastor Scott, Jason Jacque, Tracy Greymont, Bill Bond, Eric Olson, Jodi Cowen, Jennifer Dimmer, Shandy Roehrig and Rhonda Thompson.

Opening Meditation – (Tracy) Tracy shared a daily devotional and prayer, titled “Go!” by Talitha Arnold, a Senior Minister of the United Church of Santa Fe.

Approval of the Council Minutes – December 2023 (Rhonda) – Bill motions to approve the December minutes and Shandy seconds the motion. The minutes are approved.

Financial Administrator Updates (Jason on behalf of Phil)- Financial statements have not been completed yet and therefore not provided and there are no year-end balances as of this meeting.

- Stewardship Pledge Update – Total pledges received as of January 4, 2024 were 66 for a total amount of \$140,876. That leaves us short 27 pledges compared to 2023 pledges received.
- Christmas Tree Sales Update- There was a profit of \$12,148.56.
- Breakfast with Santa -There was a profit of \$926.

Old Business

Property Team (Bill)-

- Elevator Repairs Update-Bill has gotten an email from MEI stating the jack should be here about January 26. MEI would like to start with the old jack removal and will proceed with installation as soon as the new jack arrives. Bill will email Phil and ask to get the loan process started ASAP. Josh Jacque raised \$1154.29 on a Go Fund Me page for the elevator repair.

CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES continued...

- Building Maintenance: Smoke Detectors, Solar Panels, Tree Trimming. The smoke detector is repaired and functioning. There is one small repair that they need to come back for at a later date. The Solar Panels are starting to age and are not as productive, but the snow may be hindering productivity. The repair guys would like to save us some money by coming later when the snow melts and they can fix the bracket. The trees have been trimmed some more.
- Church Security. The Port Police shift commander visited and provided a report for safety consideration. The biggest factor in safety is making a plan and then educating the members on the plan. The Property Team will work on a plan and show it to the Council for review.

Council Positions: Financial Administrator (Pastor Scott) - Kristina Tontis, a CPA, has submitted a letter of engagement. She would be considered a contracted service and has a fee of \$800 a month to pay bills and do payroll. She currently works with four churches and is familiar with church finances/taxes. She would work online and remotely while Beckie and Phil handle things like gifts/donations and deposits. Her fee over the year is a little more than what we currently pay for payroll and accounting services, but her expertise would be worth it. The Finance Team recommends we hire her for these services. Bill motions to hire this independent contractor. Jennifer seconds the motion. The vote passes unanimously. Pastor Scott will contact Kristina and let her know we accept her terms. Jodi nominates Phil as the new Treasurer to start January 15, 2024. Jennifer seconds the motion. The vote passes.

Thrive Team Update (Pastor Scott) – The Thrive Team would like to come to a meeting to present the Council with a sample of materials received and discuss what the next steps might be to share the material with the congregation. They meet January 20 at Marquette to discuss how to engage the congregation.

Council updates from Pastor Parish Relations (Shandy) – The team met yesterday. The team is pausing until early February to see what happens with the budget and how the congregation votes on the budget.

Additional Team Updates (Shandy, Eric, Jennifer, Tracy, Ken) – Christian Education is going to color thank you cards for Stewardship. Two new families have been attending. The kids are younger, so things need to be simpler. Nothing new for Community Service, except sharing the thank yous we received for the support. Tracy will share contact info with Eric for Family Sharing. An idea for Lent would be to give something away instead of giving something up for each of the weeks. February 18th is the First Sunday in Lent. Jennifer says Fellowship Team is hosting hot beef sandwiches for the third Sunday, January 21, and then February 18 will be Soup and Salad. Seuss Breakfast is a go for March 2. Eric would like to add to the flyers asking for a donation of food to contribute to the Food Pantry.

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CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES continued...

2024 Budget (Phil/Jason)- An updated status quo proposed budget with pledges reduced to reflect those received by January 4, 2024 totaled \$140,000 that was changed; a \$5000 added fundraiser amount and a change to reflect the new accounting contractor fee, leaving a deficit of \$41,000. Another working budget option with reduced services in addition to changes listed above with a deficit of \$9,100. Bill is generously paying for 2024 snow removal; that line can change from \$600 to zero. Property Team has agreed to clean floors and windows with a cleaning party twice next year and that \$1000 can also become zero. The elevator maintenance and repair should be adjusted from \$2,000 to \$1,170. Any delay in approving a budget will cost about \$2400 a month. Jodi motions to present the full-time minister budget but because it's not working, we recommend the second budget with part-time minister services. Then offer some form of education, but not for an extended time as it will cost \$2400 each month we don't vote and approve the budget. She recommends tabling the final vote until a Special Congregational Meeting on Sunday, February 25. Listening Sessions will be provided prior to the special meeting to help educate members with an opportunity to submit or ask questions prior to the special meeting. Eric seconds motion. Motion passes.

New Business

Preparations for January 28th Winter Congregational Meeting (Jason)- Create a cover letter with Stewardship numbers to be shared. The full-time budget and the part-time budget should be shared. A Google form for questions as well as a box located at church for questions. Make an announcement for the Special Congregational Meeting on February 25, 2024 to vote on the budget. Offer Listening Sessions. Print copies of both budgets and the cover letter for distribution this Sunday, January 14. The plan should be mentioned in the newsletter.

Review of Building Usage and Fee Schedule (Pastor Scott) – Scott presented a form with existing prices. It was discussed to remove the fee for the Dennett Room and the Library for members. Fellowship Hall will only be allowed use for members until the elevator is fixed. The nonmember fee will be increased from \$150 to \$200 once the elevator is fixed. Add lower classrooms as well with the possibility of kitchen use. Scott will bring it next month revised and consider alcohol policy changes.

Any other new business to come before the Council? The Council will ask a Fundraising Team to look into getting an alcohol permit. We were invited to participate and host one service in a community organized event for Wednesday's Lenten service and supper. Pastor Scott will let them know that we would like to be included. Ash Wednesday service would be here, as well as Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Let's look at switching Council meeting dates.

Closing Prayer and Adjournment 9:16 pm
Submitted by Rhonda Thompson - Clerk