PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Church Council Minutes, April 23, 2019, Greenwood Room
Mark Rosenbury, Moderator; Sally Pederson, Moderator-Elect

Voting Members Present: John Childers, Franklin Codel, Judy Diedrichs, Pam Duffy, Jodi Gruening, Kerry Gumm, Irene Hardisty, Beth Stelle Jones, Linda Knodle, Nancy Landess, Deb Ledesma, Jon Merkle, Cheryl Morton, Sally Pederson, Terri Sterk, Annette Weeber, Christine Woods

Voting Members Absent: Fred Dorr, Kirk Johnson, Rick Miller, Jon Reinders, Mary Riche

Others Present: Mary Ann Beard, Kathy Dewald, Cindy Eaton-Eklund, Christopher Goodson, Reverend Nikira Hernandez-Evans, Jennifer Hines, Karen Jeske, Reverend Doctor Matthew Mardis-LeCroy, Reverend Doctor Valerie Miller-Coleman, Kathleen Murrin, Reverend Laura Robinson, Mark Rosenbury, Reverend LeAnn Stubbs, Susan Waller

Introductions & Welcome: Mark Rosenbury called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Devotions: Deb Ledesma reminded us of what Easter and spring bring to us.

Minutes: March 26, 2019—Motion to approve, Judy Diedrichs; second, Nancy Landess. Minutes approved as submitted.

SPECIAL REPORTS AND OLD BUSINESS
Subject: Board Recruiting and Annual Meeting, Mark Rosenbury
• Cindy Eaton-Eklund needs all board reports by May 5.
• Deb Ledesma reported that the Board of Christian Education is not yet filled.
• Board of Deacons needs two more members.
• Annual meeting is Tuesday, May 14, 7 p.m., Waveland Hall.

Subject: Moderator-Elect, Mark Rosenbury
• Irene Hardisty moved the nomination of Sally Pederson to replace Pam Kenyon as Moderator-Elect. Second, Annette Weeber. Motion approved.

Subject: Long-Range Planning Task Force and Grant Requests, Rev. Matt Mardis-LeCroy
• Grant application requests a strategic gift of $4,500 from the Plymouth Church Foundation to support staffing assessment process with the assistance and recommendations of the Reverend Sarai Rice.
• Grant application requests a strategic gift of $6,700 from the Plymouth Church Foundation to bring the Reverend Doctor Allen Hilton to Plymouth Church in the fall of 2019.
• Jodi Gruening moved that both grant applications be accepted. Second, Christine Woods. Motion approved.

Subject: Youth Executive Committee, Mark Rosenbury
• Susan Waller addressed the issue of the YEC asking to become an official board. They still want to be represented but need more time to assess the options. She is withdrawing the proposal made at the March Church Council meeting.
• Mark Rosenbury suggested we review the by-laws relating to this and other matters. He will bring a review plan to the May 28 Church Council meeting.

Subject: Jennifer Hines, Director of Operations and Finance
• Submitted her letter of resignation. Will be leaving Plymouth Church in 30 days.
• Pam Duffy moved to commend Jennifer for her service to the church. Beth Stelle Jones, second. Motion approved.
• Franklin Codel, Board of Trustees, will work with Jennifer on operational continuity.
• Search committee names will be announced at May council meeting.
• Position to be held open pending staffing analyses and recommendations by Rev. Sarai Rice.
COMMITTEE REPORTS

Arts, Memorials & Architectural Changes: No report.

Personnel: No report.

Plymouth Foundation: Mary Ann Beard
- Moved to approve Mickey Carlson to the Foundation Board. Motion approved. (Pam Duffy abstained.)
- Board will meet Wednesday, April 24, to review grant requests.

Plymouth Women: Annette Weeber
- Plymouth Women’s Fellowship Scholarship Committee is working on requests.
- Next Lunch & Learn is Thursday, May 16, with a presentation by the Plymouth Church Anti-Racism Committee.

Stephen Ministry: Kathy Dewald
- Group completed a session on the Enneagram.

Transition into Ministry (TiM): Kathleen Murrin
- New TiM committee members are:
  - Mark Bush
  - Kay Riley
  - Doug Rumple
- New TiM Associate Minister, Reverend Mary Kate Buchanan, will join us June 30.

BOARD REPORTS

Benevolences: Christine Woods
- Moved to approve Ted Kempf for a one-year term on the board. Motion approved.

Christian Education: Report submitted by Deb Ledesma is attached.

Christian Social Action: Kerry Gumm
- Board is assessing the purpose of the work they are doing.

Christian Stewardship: Beth Stelle Jones
- Offered thanks for the support received for the Tower reconstruction project.

Deacons: Report submitted by Fred Dorr is attached.

Membership: Report submitted by Nancy Landess is attached.

Music and Fine Arts: No report.

Spiritual Growth: Report based on the Board of Spiritual Growth meeting minutes is attached.

Trustees: Report submitted by Cheryl Morton is attached.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

Member at Large: No report.

STAFF REPORTS
Cindy Eaton-Eklund
• May 6 is the deadline for boards’ annual reports.
• Slashed the advertising budget $5,000 this year. Will be concentrating on the Ingersoll Live booth, Saturday, August 24, 4-11 p.m. Would like to have 2-3 people from each board to staff the booth for an hour each.

Christopher Goodson
• Choir graduation is coming up.
• Holy Week was very successful.
• Meg Smith is retiring as Hallelujah Choir director.
• Choir reconfigurations include combining grades 3 and 4 together, combining boys and girls in grades 5 and 6 together, eliminating the Descant Choir and creating a PreK program for 3- and 4-years-olds.

Nikira Hernandez-Evans
• Spend Holy Week discussing grief. Last Saturday, we celebrated the ritual of grief.
• Participated in the Ecumenical Stations of the Cross in downtown Des Moines on Good Friday.
• Covenant group is celebrating with a potluck.
• Leading a group from Plymouth Church to the Boundary Waters for a six-day backpack/canoe trip.

Karen Jeske
• Maundy Thursday dinner served more than last year.
• All-church survey results will be available soon.
• Will not do a full-year calendar for next year. Will provide more of a seasonal-calendar approach.

Valerie Miller-Coleman
• Has been voted in as new Senior Minister, Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ, Lawrence, Kansas.
• Will preach all services Mother’s Day weekend, May 11 and 12. Memorial Day weekend, May 25 and 26, will be final weekend here.
• Submitted her letter of resignation. Motion to accept her letter, Beth Stelle Jones. Second, Kerry Gumm. Motion approved.

Laura Robinson
• Confirmation retreat is this coming weekend, April 27 and 28.
• Will candidate in Washington on Mother’s Day weekend. Last day at Plymouth Church is June 1.

LeAnn Stubbs
• Last Thursday was an extraordinary day, including the annual worship service at Scottish Rite Park retirement community.
• Did hospital calls to provide communion.
• Feels so fortunate that she gets to do what she does.

Susan Waller
• Training for Matins Tour chaperones is beginning with four meetings prior to the tour.
• Leaves this Thursday for a pilgrimage in Ireland for two weeks. Will return May 15.

Matt Mardis-LeCroy
• Kairos is the Greek word for time. Kairos, a season of possibility. Easter is a kairos season for Plymouth Church.
• Rev. Lindsey Braun is to be featured on the NBC Today Show sometime in the future.
• Regarding Holy Week, everyone did a great job.
• Rev. Valerie Miller-Coleman is entrepreneurial. She sees things that aren’t there and says, “Why not?” She came here with the goal of entering into relationships with people.

Sally Pederson
• Offered remarks about assuming the Moderator-Elect position.

Mark Rosenbury
• Prior to adjourning the meeting, Mark invited Church Council members to the Thoreau Center for a reception following the May 28 Church Council meeting.

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION: Tuesday, May 14, 2019, 7:00 p.m., Waveland Hall

NEXT MEETING: May 28, 2019, 7:00 p.m., Greenwood Room

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Knodle, Secretary
March Plymouth Church Council Boards Reports

Plymouth Church Foundation, Mary Ann Beard
- As of February 28, 2019, the Plymouth Church Foundation’s total to-date assets are $8,220,892. This includes restricted assets for the Transition into Ministry (TiM) campaign fund totaling $1,141,424. Total net income is $173,624.
- Board will review and approve competitive grants at the April meeting.
- Foundation by-laws provide for nine directors for the corporation with three to be elected each year. One director shall be elected by the Church Council prior to June 1. The other two are elected by the following:
  - Board of Trustees
  - Church members at the Annual Meeting of the Congregation.
- The Foundation Board nominated Mickey Carlson to serve a three-year term on the board at the April 23 Church Council meeting. Motion was approved.

Board of Christian Education, Deb Ledesma
- Filled three of five board positions to date.
- Mindy Borgstadt will lead Vacation Bible School.
- Covered our two weekends for cookie duty.

Board of Deacons, Fred Dorr
- Recruitment of New Deacons: Board currently has commitments from four females and two males. Additional contacts were assigned.
- Shelter Dinner: Cathy McMullen reported the dinner was a success with approximately 250 meals served at a cost of $377. Thank you to everyone who served and participated.
- Committee Leader Transition: Committee chairs change effective May 14, 2019. All current chairs are encouraged to share any necessary information with the incoming chairs.
- Plymouth Church Anti-Racism Committee report to the Deacons: Becky Strope-Boggus and Rex Anderson discussed current activities at Plymouth Church. The committee is trying to build relationships with other churches in the Des Moines area, such as Corinthian Baptist Church. It was suggested the committee reach out to the Des Moines Area Religious Council.
- Maundy Thursday Service: Maundy Thursday service is April 18. Participating Deacons should be at church by 6:45 p.m. Rehearsal is Tuesday, April 16, at 6:30 p.m.
- Good Friday: Beth Koenig will email participating Deacons about Good Friday responsibilities.
- Easter Sunday Services: Review of responsibilities was held.
- Communion: Next Communion is May 5. There will be home communion associated with it.
- Funerals: There have been four funerals: Doug Weeber, Donald Willis, Catherine Evans and David Burt.
- Social Committee: End-of-the-year get together, including the new Deacon class, is May 31, 5:30 p.m., at Beth Koenig’s.
- Vespers: Eighty-one persons attended last Thursday’s vesper service.

Board of Membership, Nancy Landess
- Four new members are joining the board in June:
  - Amy Cox
  - Fritz Craiger
  - Jennifer Jensen
  - Doug Rumple
- Church Membership Roll: Voted to reinstate the membership of Lynn Paff Boal and deactivated five members.
- Reviewed 65 names that had been pulled by the Fruitful Change Committee who did not receive that mailing. Some names will be followed up by board members and the rest will receive a letter asking if they wish to remain on the church roll.
- Board members will begin writing notes of care to Plymouth Church members at each meeting.
- Quilting group is part of our board, and a grant has been submitted to the Plymouth Foundation on their behalf.

Board of Spiritual Growth, John Childers
• Planning continues on the reorganization of the church library in the Inspiration Lounge.
• Summer Evening Prayer Services: Application submitted to the Plymouth Church Foundation for a grant to cover the cost of three prayer services in July.
• Reverend Lindsey Braun reported that the Bible in 90 Days has concluded and was very successful.
• Discussion was held about holding a Thanksgiving Eve Gratitude Service. The board will investigate this idea further.
• Board has three new members: Amy Myers, Kay Riley and Anne Stelle.

Board of Trustees, Cheryl Morton
• Financial results for March 2019 were positive. Income was $33,000 better than budget for the month and pledge receipts were driven up by higher-than-expected stock transfers, some of which will be timing.
• Expenses were $21,000 better than budget. For the full year, we are projecting the full $40,000 of "to find" savings will be realized. Additionally, the use of reserves for the year is currently forecast to be approximately $65,000 versus $86,000 in the budget.
• Two areas being monitored for potential future adjustments to the forecast are new-member pledge income, which is running much lower than budget, and potential expenses related to the hiring and search process for open positions later in year.
• Trustees reviewed the status of the TiM Fruitful Change funds, which are being invested by the Plymouth Foundation. The quarter’s activities are as follows:
  o Beginning balance January 1, 2019 $1,000,226
  o Additions during first quarter 154,214
  o Income (net of fees) 4,722
  o Market return 89,696
  o Market value as of March 31 $1,248,858