Church Council

**Practice:** Meaning & Purpose, Operational Excellence  
**Meets:** TBD; **Time:** 7pm; **Location:** Greenwood Room + Zoom  
**Moderator:** Jodi Gruening; **Moderator-Elect:** Greg Kenyon  
**Secretary:** TBD  
**Members:** Nathan Blake, Julie Carroll, Erin Davison-Rippey, Lori Fenton, Irene Hardisty, Matthew Harvey, Lynn Hicks, Greg Kenyon, Jeff Marks, Doug Rumple, Shari Simmons, Bonnie Sunderland  
**Staff:** Lindsey, Braun, Mary Kate Buchanan, Cindy Eaton-Ecklund, Chris Goodson, Karen Jeske, Rushing Kimball, Sarai Rice, Georgia Sheriff, LeAnn Stubbs, Emily Tripp, Susan Waller

**Ministry Purpose:** The bylaws provide that the Church Council will carry out the mission, guiding principles, motto and strategic plan by engaging Plymouth members in visioning for Plymouth’s future, and by requesting and reviewing annual plans and programs from Council boards and committees. The Council will advise its Executive Committee of their recommendations and provide a progress report on all Council programs at the congregation’s annual meeting.

*We Agree to Differ. We Resolve to Love. We Unite to Serve, by Practicing Radical Love, Everywhere and Always:*
  - Hospitality & Belonging; Meaning & Purpose; Justice & Kindness
  - Operational Excellence

---

MINUTES – June 29, 2021

**Present:** Jodi Gruening, Sarai Rice, Emily Tripp, Anna Osborn, Alyssa Clabaugh, Jenn Jensen, Georgia Sheriff, Rushing Kimball, Karen Jeske, Lindsey Braun, Bonnie Sunderland, Shari Simmons, Matthew Harvey, Irene Hardisty, Christopher Goodson, Brianne Magel, Greg Kenyon, Jared Walter, Jeff Marks, Sally Pederson, Darrel Mullins, Emily Chafa, Lori Fenton, Doug Rumple, Mary O’Brien, Erin Davison-Rippey, Kait Scanlon, Lynn Hicks, Mary Kate Buchanan, Alex Cooney  
**Absent:** Julie Carroll, Nathan Blake

1. Invocation /Opening Prayer – All (Unison)  
2. Devotion – Jodi Gruening  
3. Introductions  
   - Name  
   - Board  
   - Year joined Plymouth  
   - Prior roles served at Plymouth
4. New Business
   • Jen Jensen – Member in Discernment – Amy Anderson/Lindsey Braun/Karen Jeske
     o **Motion** to Approve Jen Jensen as a Member in Discernment at Plymouth, and to recommend her participation in the Iowa Conference Committee for Authorized Ministry as an Official Member in Discernment at the Conference Level (Karen Jeske). Motion carried.
   • Church Council Orientation
   • Church Council meeting cadence – 4th Tuesday at 7 p.m.
     o Quarterly, per bylaws (4)
     o Bi-monthly (6) – June/Aug/Oct/Dec/Jan/Feb/Mar/Apr
     o Program year (7) – Sept/Oct/Nov/Jan/Feb/Mar/Apr
     o **Motion** that the Church Council Cadence be what is commonly known as the Program Year (as above), with an Annual Orientation meeting being held separately in the month of June, and with Vice Chairs invited to attend at any time but required to be present Jan-Apr. (Lynn Hicks). Seconded by Erin Davison-Rippey. Motion carried.

5. Approval of minutes
   • May 25, 2021: **Motion** to approve (Lori Fenton). Seconded by Doug Rumple. Motion Carried.
   • June 7, 2021: **Motion** to approve (Lori Fenton). Seconded by Doug Rumple. Motion Carried.

6. Special Reports and Old Business
   • Financial Update – Emily Tripp
     o **Motion** to approve the Financial Update (Jeff Marks). Seconded by Irene Hardisty. Motion carried.
   • Board of Benevolences – Irene Hardisty
     o Shelter Meals Sign Up
     o Our Church’s Wider Mission (OCWM)
       • **Motion** to Approve 7% of monthly Pledge & Plate Collection, not specified for other designated purposes, be allocated to Our Church’s Wider Mission (Irene Hardisty). Matthew Harvey seconded the motion. Motion carried.
   • Open Board Positions – Jodi Gruening (Tabled)
     o Christian Education
     o Christian Social Action
     o Deacons
     o Stewardship
     o Council Secretary
     o Member-At-Large
• Thanksgiving Service, next steps – Chris Goodson
• Horizons Strategic Grant – Jeff Marks/Rushing Kimball
  o Motion to Approve the $30,000 Strategic Grant to Horizons Stewardship (Jeff Marks). Seconded by Doug Rumple. Motion carried.
• Senior Pastor Search Committee Update – Emily Chafa
• Executive Committee Report – Jodi Gruening
7. Member-At-Large – Nathan Blake
  • No Report
8. Staff Reports
  • Mary Kate Buchanan
  • Christopher Goodson
  • Rushing Kimball
  • Karen Jeske
  • Lindsey Braun
  • Emily Tripp
  • Georgia Sheriff
  • Sarai Rice
9. Volunteers for next meeting’s Devotion & Closing Prayer
  • Will be done via email
10. Benediction/Closing Prayer – Matthew Harvey
MINUTES – July 29, 2021

1. Devotions: Megan led us through devotions “focus on LOVE” “Love isn’t love until you give it away”. Lead with love and not fear. Plymouth everyone is welcome – love you in every walk of your life. Have lots of work to do on this board and we have a charge. Do this because we love this place. Silent reflection.
   - Sign up for devotions here.
2. Attendance: Members in attendance indicated above. Darrell Mullins, Board of Trustees Vice Chair and staff member Georgia Sheriff also in attendance.

3. Approval of minutes
   - Megan moved to approve May and June minutes. Amy seconded. Minutes approved.

4. Board of Trustees Update
   - Darrell shared that Matt Harvey is the new chair of the Trustees, and Darrell is the vice-chair. Darrell shared that Trustees are looking at special offerings, the annual stewardship campaign, and the function and direction of the Plymouth Foundation. The church is engaging a consulting group to improve stewardship and fundraising. Pledges were down about 15% but appear to be rebounding. Roof rehabilitation will be a necessary investment in the near future.
   - Darrel and the board members discussed the Trustees guidance to encourage boards to utilize restricted or designated funds, and reviewed the processes and authorization for using funds.
     - BCE will look into designated/restricted funds and determine what action to take.

5. Board Construction – committee structure discussion
   - The board discussed a proposed structure to create committees on the Board of Christian Education. The proposed structure organizes the committees by function instead of by age. Proposed committees:
     - **Education & Faith Formation Committee**: Church School & other faith formation programs, like programs for high school kids; summer programming/Vacation Bible School; OWL; Confirmation.
     - **Family Connections Committee**: Programs for families, such as Stepping Stones; social events for families; connecting with new members & families with kids newly baptized.
     - **Service Projects/Social Action Committee**: Project Memories (Christmas gifts for those in need); Shelter meals; Food Pantry.
     - **Safety, Security & Space Committee**: Physical space planning & updates; Safety & security plans & policies.
   - The board decided that committees would be chaired by BCE members and committee members, but committee membership would include people not on the board. The following board members volunteered to chair committees: Anita – co-chair Education & Faith Formation (need to identify a co-chair); Amy: Family Connections; Kelly: Service Projects/Social Action; Megan: Safety, Security & Space. Committees will ideally have a
6. Member Recruitment Discussion
   • The board reviewed the various experiences and expertise that would be represented by members of the board. Ideally, the totality of the board would represent the following experience or expertise:
     o Birth to Preschool
     o Elementary age
     o Middle school
     o High School
     o Young Adult
     o Expecting parents
     o Plymouth Nursery School (liaison role req’d in by-laws)
     o Connections to greater membership
     o Professional background in education
     o Experience or expertise with children with different abilities
   • The board discussed recruitment tactics, such as using church communication vehicles, like the newsletter, to invite people to join the board or committees. As the scope of the BCE has expanded, it is important for the Board membership to have representation from those new areas, like older youth programming.

7. Senior Minister Search Committee Report - Kait
   • Kait reported that interviews are starting and there is a good group of candidates. For the timeline, it is a good sign that the committee is already interviewing candidates. The search firm continues to lead the process and assist with the work.

8. Strategic plan committee - Anita
   • No report – the committee has not met since the last BCE meeting.

9. Staff Report – Georgia
   • Report attached
   • Georgia noted that volunteers are needed for VBS bags and to work on cleaning up the nursery and young child rooms on the lower level.

10. Closing Prayer - Georgia
Board of Deacons Minutes June 8, 2021


**Unable to attend:** Nancy Strickler, Nancy Landess, Dave Mitchell, Ann Hoeppner, Judy Stark, Bill Wedeking, John Bunz.

**Staff in attendance:** Sarai Rice & Christopher Goodson

1. **Call to order** – Julie Carroll called the meeting to order at 7 pm. Julie announced that we may meet in July even though boards usually do not, due to the rapidly changing worship service details. Julie also announced that we would go back to a deacon giving the devotion and benedictions for our meetings instead of ministerial staff.

2. **Devotions** – Led by Julie Carroll, next month will be Cecil Goettsch

3. **Welcome new deacons** – Julie Carroll

4. **Five minutes with Sarai** - Sarai thanked all the deacons for helping to get worship services back up and running and that we are getting closer to what Plymouth recognizes as church. She thanked the deacons for their work, flexibility and smiles, as they are reassuring to the staff.

5. **Approve minutes** – The minutes of the May 4, 2021, meeting were approved as presented with no changes by consensus vote.

6. **Senior Deacon Introduction** – Julie Carroll introduced herself as Senior Deacon. She advised us she is the Board of Deacons representative on Church Council and her duties are to run meetings and make sure that as a board we are doing the work of Plymouth’s strategic plan.

7. **Junior Deacon Introduction** – Cecil Goettsch introduced himself as Junior Deacon and his primary responsibility is setting of the schedule. He will also consult with Julie and learn from her in order to learn from her for leading the board next year.

8. **Board Secretary Introduction** – Julie Carroll announced Pam Dunlap-Johnson will serve as secretary.
9. Get to know the 3rd years – Julie Carroll had the third-year deacons introduce themselves and share one thing they enjoy about being a deacon.

10. Old Business
   - Julie Carroll gave a church council update. There are new by-laws. Only board chairpersons vote, anyone is welcome to attend. If you want to attend a church council meeting by Zoom, a link is in the church calendar. Julie is serving on the executive committee. She suggests everyone reads by-laws and contact her with questions. Their first meeting was to amend the worship recommendations. The amended schedule approved by the council was:
     - June 12-13, same schedule
     - June 19-20, same schedule, masks optional for 11am
     - June 26-27, Saturday service outside, Sunday 9am inside masks required, Sunday 11am inside masks optional
     - Sarai summarized this is the plan schedule through Labor Day. After that, the Saturday service will move back to Waveland Hall.
   - Chris Goodson announced we would have communion the first Sunday of the month and every Saturday service. Individual communion cups through the end of the year, if not longer. No change in how we will handle offering for now.
   - Cecil Goetttsch talked about revising the schedule. On Sundays will add back a 2 and a 7 position. Sending new schedule tomorrow and leaving town for two weeks.
   - Senior pastor update – Bryan Fiala advised they have met and hoping to get applications by July.
   - Standing committee reports
     - Communion – Tim Blutt – No report
     - Funeral – Chad Waller – Chad and Linda Railsback are joint contacts for the committee. Please respond ASAP to these requests. Linda reported they had the first funeral in May and it went reasonably well considering it had not been done in a year.
     - Saturday night team – Linda Railsback – No report. Julie Carroll asked that the supply closet be checked before indoor Saturday services resume. Nancy Williamson said she will inventory the closet.
     - Event committee – Social committee, no report. Julie thanked the committee for organizing the picnic.
     - Music and Fine Arts – No report
     - Home communion – No report
Thanksgiving – No report. Chris Goodson did advise the board of Music and Fine arts is forming a task force to plan what Thanksgiving looks like this year and going forward. Two deacons will need to serve on this board.

Christmas – No report

Shelter dinners – Leigh Ebbesmeyer reported our dates are October 26 and April 26.

Lent and Holy week – Tuesday, March 1 is the Shrove Tuesday pancake supper. Chris Cakes has been reserved. All hands on deck.

- Bill Kusy will be acting Junior/Senior deacon from June 11-19 as both Julie and Cecil are unavailable.

11. New business

- Julie would like to review committee structures to see if any can be combined, removed or added. Much discussion and Julie to e-mail committee list to all for their feedback.
  - Can communion and home communion be combined?
  - Can Thanksgiving and Fall décor be combined?
  - Can Advent be added to Christmas eve?
  - Can Lend and Holy week be combined into one?
  - Can pancake dinner be combined with Holy week?
  - Possibly add safety committee. Discussion on if this is a Deacon committee or a church wide committee with Deacon reps. Rocky Morton and Craig Bittick volunteered.
  - Chris recommended lump together Christmas and Easter and call it special services.

- Chris wanted to know how we assign Deacons to committees. Julie advised Deacons submit their top 3 preferences and the Senior/Junior assign.

12. Staff update

- Sarai shared the following:
  - The new Executive Administrative Assistant is Dan Schott. He is full-time now.

13. Benediction – Julie Carroll, next month is Marilyn Stone

14. Adjourn – The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Next Meeting - Tuesday, July 13, 2021 @ 7:00 pm, Greenwood Room
### Plymouth United Church of Christ Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes: June 22, 2021

**Present:**
Matthew Harvey, chair  
Jan Franck  
Aaron Barker  
Rachel Boon  
Wade Dewald  
Peter Pashler  
Deb Ledesma  
Amber Leon  
Kathy Murphy  
Darrel Mullins  
Lorna Truck  
Emily Tripp, Director of Operations and Finance  
Rushing Kimball, Associate Minister

**Not Present:**
Dick Jones, Treasurer  
John Harri  
Erin Netteland-Sandvig  
Richard Swanson  
Sarai Rice, Interim Senior Minister  
Mary Kate Buchanan, Associate Minister

**Time Called to Order:** 7:10 p.m.

**Location:**  
Hybrid – In-person and Virtual/Zoom

**Prepared by:**  
Aaron Barker

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGENDA</th>
<th>DISCUSSION</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Devotion</td>
<td>Matthew Harvey opened with prayer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approval of Minutes</td>
<td>Minutes approved for May.</td>
<td>Motion to Approve—Kathy Second—Peter Carried</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| April Financials | Emily presented the financial reports.  
  - Emily presented the financial reports. If people go back and forth between pledge and non-pledge gifts, it is hard to track in the current software; Shelby Next should be better.  
  - Right now, showing a surplus of $286K – but most of that is PPP forgiven loan  
  - Income is 7% ahead – ahead in pledge and non-pledge. We would not expect non-pledge income to continue to be strong.  
  - Over the past year, Emily and the trustees have moved money out of the general checking out to term notes as well as money market accounts.  
  - Darrel inquired about negative balances for certain line-items, specifically general and capital. | Motion to Approve May Financials— Darrel Second— Kathy Carried |
This is negative until the tax credits for the project are approved.
- Wade asked about if the negative items indicate that money is being borrowed from other accounts, which is correct.
- Emily explained the “corridor” of fund balance that has recently been established.
- In 2020, pledge income fell by about $200K – about 10%

**Audit Report**
- Peter reported that it was a clean audit.
- Dick mentioned via email that the definition of the Foundation is outdated. Definition of functions will need to be sorted out given that we have changed our bylaws.
- Matt inquired how difficult it would be to edit Note 4 per Dick’s suggestion and how much it would impact the approval of the audit.
- Emily pointed out that the “with donor restrictions” is fairly broad and would not cover TIM.
- Motion: Approve: 6, Reject: 2, Abstain: 1 --- passed
- The Trustees will request that the aforementioned stale text be updated for future years. This will be taken to the Audit Committee for next year.

**Designated Accounts Policy (DAP)**
- Designated accounts policy (DAP) has circulated for multiple months. This policy is intended to give more ownership of designated accounts to the appropriate boards.
- We already have a gift acceptance policy to handle what gifts can be accepted; this policy is to determine how much can be spent from designated accounts.
- This affects the church, not the Foundation.
- Jan raised concerns about wording of the policy.
- Emily brought up a scenario where a large gift is made that would be disbursed over many years under the lowest threshold.
- Amendment to the seventh and eighth bullet points of proposed Designated Accounts Policy:
  - “Owners may disburse up to a total of $10,000 of a designated fund per year on their own authority.”
  - “Owners may disburse from a total of $10,001 to a total of $25,000 of a designated fund per year, subject to prior approval of the Board of Trustees”

**Technology Planning Group**
- Church is looking at doing an RFP to update all basic technology services of the church: internet, Wi-Fi, phones, software, etc.
- Shelby Next implementation continues to progress – target date of August
- Jan is not the only person who gets lost on the website.
| **Roof Claim** | • Working on the contract between the Church and an organization called Premiere; they develop proof that you’re entitled to an insurance claim, and then they negotiate with the insurance company.  
• New roof would cost $1.25 million. Peter says that we need a new roof, but not necessarily right now. We have a claim that it was damaged in the derecho. Peter is now leading the negotiations with Premiere.  
• Peter recommends that we have a roof committee, and Trustees should be on the committee. |
| **Stewardship Consultant** | • Rushing mentioned that Horizon Stewardship has had the discovery group meetings with various stakeholders throughout the church.  
• Rushing presented a strategic grant proposal for $30,000 for the second and third phase of the stewardship project. This would set up a team that is broader than just Stewardship in order to run the 2022 stewardship campaign. The plan would include six months of coaching and six months of stewardship campaign assistance. Goal is to change the culture of stewardship over time. The intent of the request is to make the money available from the Foundation.  
• Decision on whether or not to spend the money will happen after the initial report is submitted to us from Horizon Stewardship from the first phase.  
• Aaron raised a concern about the late hour of this request and what role Stewardship would serve given the formation of this larger body. | Proposed action: Table discussion until July meeting  
Motion: Aaron  
Second: Peter  
Vote: 4-5 against – failed  

Proposed action: Approve the strategic grant request to the Foundation  
Motion: Jan  
Second: Kathy  
Vote: 6-3 - approved |
| **Board/Committee Updates** | • With the new bylaws, if we have liaisons to boards, then they will need to be approved by Church Council. |  |
| **Committee Appointments** | • Human Resources – Rachel is nominated and approved  
• House and Space  
  o Roof Subcommittee – Peter will be on it  
• Arts and Memorials – Lorna | Vote to approve Rachel as member of the Human Resources committee - carried |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Report/Meeting Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BCS</td>
<td>No July Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BoM</td>
<td>No July Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSG</td>
<td>No July Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephen Ministry</td>
<td>No Report for July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plymouth Women</td>
<td>No Report</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>