

Saint Mark UMC
Church Council Minutes
July 24, 2018

6:30 P.M. Meeting called to order by: Richard Nelson

Welcome and Approval of Minutes: The May, 2018 Minutes were provided to members by email. Richard asked if there were any questions or comments about May's minutes. There were none. Richard asked for a motion to approve. Motion made by John Mark Owen; seconded by Scott Myers; all voted in favor.

Core Values and Leadership Development -

Richard addressed Culture of Invitation. Focus on Hospitality. Richard's emphasis was on how we can be friendlier and welcome visitors.

DREW CLAYTON: addressed The 15 Commitments of Conscious Leadership
Commitment #9 – "Play."

The best story in the world: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." – Matthew 11:28-30

Reminder to live above the line ("by" me) - not below the line ("to" me).

Asked everyone to read out loud together:

1. WHEN LIFE HAPPENS TO ME:

I commit to seeing my life as serious; it requires hard work, effort and struggle. I see play and rest as distractions from effectiveness and efficiency.

2. WHEN LIFE IS LIVED BY ME:

I commit to creating a life of play; improvisation, and laughter. I commit to seeing all of life unfold easefully and effortlessly. I commit to maximizing my energy by honoring **rest**, renewal and rhythm.

Drew asked who our spiritual mentor is/was in our life. Emphasized laughter – spiritual waters run deep; positivity.

Celebrations and Collaborations –

Asked SPRC – Scott Perry to come forward about staff changes:

Facilities Manager: Scott wanted everyone to know that although Ashley Kirby is on maternity leave, she pre-planned her leave very well and any meetings or events inside the church that were on the church calendar were pre-programmed for HVAC and many members (Paul Conner, Karl Turner, and others) are chipping in to help with any needs that have been brought to Secretary Ruth's attention.

Student Ministry: Scott addressed the vacancy we presently have since Tina Nelson's resignation the end of June. SPRC and our Senior Minister met with youth group and parents two Sunday's ago and there have been some one-on-one's for those that made that request. The position has been posted with the Conference, Facebook page and church webpage. We've also partnered with a firm called "Connect YM – Consulting Agency" which was formed about 16 months ago. Their specialty is "connecting the local church and youth workers" – which ties to Trinity UMC where Robert Sturdivant, who certainly has a connection with Saint Mark, is one of the founders of this agency. SPRC felt the

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need to vet candidates more thoroughly and Connect YM has met with Saint Mark's SPRC and Ruth Miller. SPRC has used discretionary funds in their budget (\$1,200 to engage their services). During this interim, we are saving money with this vacant staff salary. If Connect YM finds the candidate for us, we will pay a percentage of the starting salary. SPRC wanted finding this position done with care and wants to make sure the right candidate is a good fit for the church. We should know something in about 2-3 weeks.

It was asked if Connect YM had a paring down process. They do because we need to make sure the person is a good fit for the church.

Scott noted that our incoming Youth President (Cassady Wade) is attending tonight's meeting and also attending is our outgoing Youth President (Katherine Voorhees) – they are working very hard to keep things moving smoothly and keeping the Youth Calendar in place, and keep programming in place for the rest of the calendar year.

It was asked if the job description was changing. Yes, somewhat since the position is more than for youth – it also entails keeping a connection to our college students which has been great since many of them have come back to help with youth events like Discovery Weekend, etc.

There were no further questions.

Richard Nelson asked for “popcorn” reporting for May and June (since we didn't meet in June due to VBS):

Celebrations:

- Ruth Miller – Music & Arts Week was wonderful with Dan Cater being the Youth Clinician and Ken Berg was Children's Clinician. We had so many Saint Mark participants, as we do every year.
- Ruth Miller – Godspeed Getaway is 8/17 at Hargis Retreat Center and that's always a great weekend to get the new year started.
- Katherine Voorhees – Choir Tour was a wonderful experience this year; there is Youth Leadership Training at Trinity UMC on 8/10-11, many students and volunteers will be attending.
- Ryan Karr: Youth Celebration Sunday is this Sunday (7/29) and everyone is excited about that; Paint ball event (8/4) for youth and all of us here – hopes there's a great turnout; Modern Worship is going great; the band members/singers with Dan Cater are great; Rob Wood (back there) helps us with sound every Sunday.
- Bettye Brown – we need a volunteer for Communion/Prayer Coordinator. The people who have been asked have declined.
- Frankie Hays – we've had 3 deaths in 3 days which was an overwhelming need for food and it was very refreshing to see LOTS OF FOOD that had been delivered to the kitchen; do not know who all delivered it, but it certainly was appreciated.
- Liz Benninger – Vacation Bible School praise – we had over 80 volunteers and 85 kids!

Collaborations / Upcoming Events:

- Amie Smith – Youth Pool Party at Donna Davitte's house on Wed. 8/1

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- Liz Benninger – 8/4 is Backpack Blessing Sunday; 8/12 is Promotion Sunday 3K – 6th Graders with breakfast provided and all rising 3rd Graders will receive their Bibles at 11:00 AM Service; and 8/12 4:00 PM is Back to School Bash – Upper Parking Lot water slide, etc.
- Paul Conner referred us to Trustee Highlights: approved the purchase of flooring and related materials for ELC-Sunday School entrance way and coffee shop to be split between Trustee capital budget and ELC which Darren Wade and Deanne Holmes have helped us with that; 2nd item Trustees have discussed steps taken and next steps to handle dispute with Birmingham Water Works (BWW) over exponentially high water bills for the last two months (over \$6,000) – the water meter has been replaced and they are having conversations with BWW to hopefully make an adjustment versus the full \$6K.
- Drew Clayton: asked to help support Dan and Laura Cater on their yard sale this coming weekend (7/28) which is the same weekend as the Missions Garage Sale but they are trying to raise funds for their adoption and asked if some support can be thrown their way.

“FRESH EYES” ACTIVITY - Objective: *Hospitality* is central to the experience of new people who arrive at the church - provided a handout form. Asked for groups of 2-3 to walk around the campus, making observations from the perspective of one or more of the following: child, young family, young single family, single young adult, student, any aged person with a physical or mental disability, senior adult. This activity is NOT a punchlist – the fall season creates people returning to church – “If I was new here” – “THINK BIG “outside the box.” The form had 3 categories to write-in observations: (1) What I noticed that is commendable and worth celebrating; (2) What I noticed that is a barrier to newcomers to the church; and (3) Any ideas for creating a more hospitable space. Asked that we return in about 20 minutes and share.

Comments made:

- Landscaping – there are several seating areas and all look very nice
- Signage is better than it was (but still not that great)
- Noticed that the prayer cards, Bibles behind the pews, etc. are well stocked
- Warm body – smiling faces
- Student Center was impressive – well maintained – clean
- We have beautiful artwork
- History hall downstairs
- Barriers for new visitors: sidewalks split by the playground
- there’s no sign on lower door at back of church – from parking to playground
- someone (warm body) needs to man The Welcoming Center; talk to people – not just handout brochures
- Need a visitors entrance
- There’s not a “clear” main entrance
- There are multi-levels; multi-entrances
- We need a hospitable space – a cry room/nursing room off the Sanctuary
- Liz Benninger is working toward getting the children’s Sunday School classrooms brightened up and color coordinated

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Richard Nelson further stated that if there were other observations that were not discussed at this meeting to please fill out the form and return to the box outside Drew's office.

BUSINESS (Old and New):

After determining there was no further business to report, Richard Nelson asked for a motion to adjourn. Proper motions were made.

The meeting was adjourned after Rev. Clayton provided a prayer of dismissal.

Our next meeting will be August 28.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Wood
Recording Secretary

P.S. Note from Sue Wood:

You can go to connectym.com to read and learn more about the agency hired to help find someone for Student Ministry.