

Sylvania United Church of Christ

Cabinet Meeting Minutes

August 8, 2022 – 6:00pm – in Person, in Chapel/Hybrid

Attendance: Vern Swett (Pastor), Steve Long (Moderator), Kathryn Helleman (Vice Moderator), Jeanne Brockmyer (Clerk), Sandy Scherf (Co-Chair, Chancel), Kelli Michael (Health Ministries), Russ Miller (Faith Formation), Mary Meadows (Minister of Faith Formation), Kate Russell (Membership), Warren Henry (Co-Chair, Trustees), Steve Ritzert (Co-Chair, Outreach), Mark Stender (Congregational Life), Sheila Banerji (Diaconate), Kendall Kleinschmidt (Youth representative), Gretchen Weston (Personnel), John Brenner (Stewardship)

Opening Prayer – Steve Long shared an opening prayer at 6:05 PM.

1. Approval of the July 13, 2022, meeting minutes: Motion made by Gretchen to accept the minutes as distributed, seconded by Russ, unanimously approved.
2. Review July 2022 financial report – Steve presented a report prepared by Jason Strasser. Jason stated he continues to be “cautiously optimistic” about this year’s finances overall. Giving is ahead of budget, but some recent maintenance expenses were over budget. There is a surplus of \$26,000 through the first 7 months of 2022.
3. Covid Committee Update: The Committee has not met recently but is monitoring changes in the Lucas County status. Reporting numbers are likely quite skewed since most home tests are not reported. Although cases are increasing, serious outcomes such as hospitalization and death have not increased substantially. Covid will probably be a long-term issue.
4. Open position: Vern stated that Jennifer Vasquez’ duties are temporarily being assumed by Vern, Mary and Bridget. The expectation is that lay leaders may also take on some additional responsibility as needed.
The Social Justice group has 5 action teams. Three teams have leaders (some were co-leaders with Jennifer), but 2 do not. Vern will work with this group as much as he can, as well as with other Boards and Committees.
Vern noted that we may have to back off on some activities where Jennifer was the driving force.
Bridget is working on the web site and other tech activities. She does a great job teaching herself new skills. Mary is helping Vern in various ways.
Vern is anxious to keep the momentum going as seen in VBS and visitors to church.
Next steps for the position: Cabinet agreed that the position is important to fill, especially in light of the Growing Forward in Faith (GFIF) initiative recently approved by the congregation.

Gretchen has sent the position description to the Personnel Board. No changes were recommended except to change the title (as appropriate) to Director of Connection and Engagement.

Cabinet discussed the contents of a job description in general; all details and expectations cannot be included but these can be shared with candidates who are serious contenders. For example, it is important for applicants to know that hours are flexible and that evening and weekend work will be required. The alignment document, which links Boards and Staff, should be useful. Members of the hiring team should include individuals from relevant Boards.

ACTION ITEM: Gretchen will work with the Personnel Board to assemble a hiring team.

5. Mission/Vision/GFiF: Steve L. and Sheila raised the issue that the church needs to “do what we say we do.” In other- words we need to follow policies endorsed by the congregation in the Growing Forward in Faith initiative, as well as in our Mission and Vision statements. In particular, spiritual vitality is important. Diaconate is currently considering how we can concretely demonstrate our commitment to our written policies.
6. Lightning Round:
 - Trustees: Trustees have finalized a document revising some financial procedures.
ACTION ITEM: Warren will send an electronic copy to Steve for distribution to Cabinet. The document will be discussed at Cabinet next month.
A Project Development Committee will soon be formed.
Head Start: Kitchen certification by the county is in process. After that, Head Start approval to start classes can be obtained. Our freezer is in Wright Hall to make room for the new Head Start freezer. The Trustees are discussing moving our freezer to space occupied by a closet, and moving the closet contents to a cabinet in Wright Hall.
A fence will be placed in an outside area with play equipment. There is a need for a rainy day play area. Head Start is consolidating two sites here. We agreed to add the Blue Room to their lease for an additional \$5500/year. This will be a shared space, as is all the space that Head Start is leasing. Currently the lease is at \$20,000/year.
A keypad has been installed near the kitchen and lower floor for the use of Head Start personnel. Each will have their own personal access code, which can be tracked for time of entry. It is not feasible to try to completely separate access to different parts of the building due to building codes.
 - Outreach: School supplies are being collected.
 - Faith Formation: A concern was received about a “lapse” in serving the LGBTQ community. After investigation and discussion no problem was identified.

This Sunday there will be a listening session for parents of young families at the Hildebrandt's home. Children will have activities at the church.

- Membership: The Board wants to sponsor a fall new member group.
- Minister of Faith Formation: This year's "kick-off" will be on September 11th.
- Personnel: Personnel received many comments about the proposed revisions to the Personnel Policy. These will be discussed, but the Board will prioritize working on the hiring process for the open staff position.
- Stewardship: The Board will soon start working on the pledge campaign (November). A special Christmas offering is also planned for December. Stewardship will have extra meetings in October when the stewardship campaign is in high gear. There could be a conflict with the drop-in dinner that month.
- Chancel: Chancel Board met at church to familiarize members with the locations of items needed for worship. The Board will be sponsoring the October drop-in dinner on 10/22, assisted by Toledo Campus Ministry.
- Congregational Life: There is a golf outing 8/21 and a mini-golf outing 8/27.
- Health Ministries: This Board is reorganizing. Covid had necessitated some changes in functioning.

7. Senior Pastor Reflections:

- November will mark the 20th anniversary of Rev. Joycelyn Degener's ordination. Dan Busch (the Association Pastor) would like to come on 11/13 and present her with a certificate and give the sermon. This is close to Stewardship Consecration Sunday so Vern wanted to check with Cabinet, especially Stewardship, to see if this would work. John did not see any conflict.
- "Dinner Church" or Potluck Worship"- Vern would like to explore the idea of an evening meal where some interactive, creative, experimental worship could take place. This would be a way to build community. It could be related to our drop-in dinners. Vern also noted that we are already doing a lot of things as a church and we need to maintain balance and make sure we remain grounded in God.
- Vern would like to change how joys and concerns are expressed in worship. Cabinet discussed ways to help people describe joys or concerns succinctly. A microphone will be needed, particularly for the streaming audience. Just using first names for privacy was mentioned. We need to figure out a way to incorporate concerns expressed in the live chat.
- On 8-15 through 8-24 the Chapel will be in use by the LPGA. Arrangements can be made for Zoom meetings in other locations (see Mary).

8. Drop-in dinner: A signup sheet is available for Boards to select a month to sponsor a drop-in dinner.

9. Old Business: **ACTION ITEM:** Steve asked Board Chairs to review the Board descriptions in the Procedure manual and send any updates to Bridget.
10. New Business: Kate suggested (and many others agreed) that there should be a brief paper guide to the service. This would be especially helpful for visitors. It could be one or ½ sheet, front and back. The impact of additional cost on the budget needs to be investigated. **ACTION ITEM:** Vern to investigate with Worship team.
11. Kathryn gave the closing prayer at 7:25.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Jeanne Brockmyer, Clerk.