

## **Unified Church Board of UMCM Minutes from February 17, 2025**

Board Members Present: Kevin Smith, Doug Wyer, Gina Picoult, Linda Blankenship, Peggy Spraggins, Julie Bahr, Dave Fike, Brett Neff

Board Members not present: Susan Hohns, Paul Pendleton, Kent Shellko

Staff Present: Pastor Josh, Jill Marlow, Cathy Miller

Guest Present: Debbie Rudder

Pastor Josh Elliot – opened with prayer

Devotions: Dale Leppo asked us to share a 30 second story of how we felt God last year

Minutes from January 13, 2025 UCB Meeting: *Motion to approve, Peggy/Kevin. Approved*

Church Finance Report – Doug Wyer (see attached report)

Pledges 80 pledges vs 91 from last year. \$40k less pledged, but this might still be made up with unpledged giving, if we had equivalent dollars pledged. District apportionments are less this year. Last year we made an extra contribution. Make a motion to pledge \$1600/month towards apportionment, which is about 50% but includes 2 funds at 100% (that is how they got \$1,600). *Motion to approve, Doug/Linda. Approved*

Beard Scholarship Funds-Since we are using the principal to pay down the mortgage, we need a log to track the interest paid back. There have been several revisions to capture what the account is doing. Beard scholarships are paid out in December. We will have to see what funds we have available, otherwise we don't offer it. We will check in October to see if it's feasible.

Vanguard has an FDIC insured product. The account we have IS insured, just SIPC up to \$250K. However, we are going to maintain what we have, but the team is always looking.

Still waiting for \$30k COVID reimbursement from government. Paychex is working on it. Finance Guidance Team recommends using it to reduce our mortgage before August. Jill got an email from Paychex still trying to figure out who the power of attorney is. One of four quarters have been resolved. It was \$9k for one quarter.

Crypto machine for congregation...Josh will issue MOU to congregation, so the congregation understands what the funds are doing. Electricity paid by church for only that machine. We will invoice the rest of the folks. Not going to post to website. We don't want to let outsiders know we have expensive machines in the barn.

Finance Guidance Team started looking at refinancing. Still waiting on Bernath donation. Existing mortgage is \$250K. It was \$640K five years ago. Note that commercial loans are different, and we don't want to have a prepayment penalty. Had to stagger the \$100K from Beard scholarship to avoid pre-payment penalty. Finance Guidance Team will put a binder out in Welcome Center to share the info with the congregation as they are trying to be transparent.

**TRUSTEES** - Kevin Smith (see attached report

Our volunteers donated 200 hours of work this year. See attached notes. Back flow testing was done today. Kevin will send information later.

Parsonage needs improvements for the air flow. This needs to be on radar for summer so it's ready for winter. Precision has given us an idea not a quote. Kevin has one other company he's talking to. FYI, any projects over \$500 needs three bids. *Motion to approve, Kevin/Julie. Approved.*

We have \$34K for kitchen renovation.

St. Gregorio's contract to using our parking lot UPDATE: the contract with St. Gregario's was revised by the city which we feel only benefits them and not us. Dale is reviewing this with their special meeting on 3/5/25. We need to redo and reword contract. City doesn't want us to dictate specifics. Either all or nothing. Josh said unless there is a compelling reason NOT to, then we should. They should have to ask us first and as long as we don't have anything going, they are welcome to use it. We only ok'd a five foot wide walkway, not cars. For additional parking, they have to contact Denise. We are asking for a week's notice...may change to 2 weeks. Brett suggesting do as an "as needed" situation so we can decide if we are able to do this or not. Kevin is working on this.

**CHRISTIAN EDUCATION** - Cathy Miller

Eggstravaganza is Saturday, April 5 from 1-3PM.

Christian Ed Board is meeting Monday, March 3. Had to keep rescheduling due to illness and Rich's hospital stays.

**Old Business**

**Photo Directory** - Kathy Kohrs/Cathy Miller

Close to being done. We want to finalize any last parishioners interested in being in the directory.

**Enhanced Revenue Task Force**-Peggy

Narrowed down from the committee's list:

Vending machines

Electric charging stations

Solar panels

Gift Card program- We need an administrator/liaison. Gina's suggestion. Sales on Gift Cards are offered as well. Just like Giant Eagle, they earn their money through their vendors. Shipping costs MIGHT come out of our funds.

Rent church space – currently we have Northern Waters offices, Lollipop, and Jazzercise. New tenant is Storybook Yoga. Advertise for church weddings/showers but we would need a wedding coordinator.

Recycling – Not really profitable at this time.

Real Estate commission – Need to offer this to all real estate agents in our church

Band cards – Will discuss with Sherri Jucha. Is there a company that would contact the vendors?

Selling the Crown Hill Cemetery plots.

RCI-Joe Pastino-ask Brett.

As long as the money goes back to the church, we don't have to pay PROPERTY taxes.

**Rejoicing** – Peggy

Well received. Please submit any ideas for future articles to Peggy.

**Mission Trip** – Josh

Date was changed to July 6-12. WAS near Ashville, NOW it's Jackson area ministries in Ohio.

Partnering with a Baptist church in Cleveland. East Ohio Conference is now interested in

documenting this journey. There is \$2,400 is going back to the work trip that was moved to

General Fund since we hadn't gone on a Mission Trip in years. All adults invited to go, youth 7<sup>th</sup>

grade and up. Must be background checked. UWF will donate to the Mission Trip.

## **New Business**

**Bishop's Day** – Linda Blankenship

This was an update on what needed to take place for the Bishop's Day, February 27. Since this has already occurred, no need to communicate this info. However, we will have a debriefing meeting about the day as we hope to be asked to do this again.

**Scatter Garden** – Debbie Rudder

## **Scatter Garden-Fees & Who Qualifies:**

### **Current Church Fees for Members:**

1. Funeral service in sanctuary-Free
2. Family visitation in the Narthex prior to funeral-Free
3. Viewing of deceased in the Holbrook Room before funeral-Free

4. Funeral Luncheon-Free
5. Wedding in the sanctuary-\$300+additional fees
6. Wedding in the chapel-\$150+may have additional fees

**Scattering Fees at other places:**

1. Worthington UMC-Memorial gifts are welcome.
2. St. Timothy's Episcopal Church (scattering or ash burial of humans or pet remains)-Free
3. St. Hubert's Episcopal Church-Unknown
4. Cuyahoga Valley National Park-Free-apply & follow guidelines
5. Great Smoky Mountains National Park-Free-Go to website and print copy of letter of permission to take with you.
6. Scattering in Lake Erie-Free must follow regulations, \$125 to have a service scatter for you, \$700 for up to 6 people to participate in the lake scattering. (Boat is necessary because it must be 3 miles from shore.)
7. Cemeteries & Memorial Gardens may charge \$100-1,000 per AI on Google.

**UMCM Funeral Luncheon Requirements:**

All who have requested a funeral luncheon have been given one.

**Scattering Requirements for Churches:**

1. Worthington UMC-All are welcome
2. St. Timothy's Episcopal Church-Church members & families, including pets. Others who use the church will be considered.
3. St. Hubert's Episcopal Church-Unknown

Summit Metro Parks does NOT allow scattering of cremated remains.

Macedonia Parks has no policy on scattering because no one has requested to scatter cremated remains.

*Discussion at UCB Meeting: Scatter Garden Committee purposely didn't want to put anything in writing to give them flexibility. The board asked Debbie to come up with a policy in writing. Peggy recommending one more meeting to address some questions like funding and who qualifies-"members" or regular attendees? Or just like to Funeral Dinners? We need some type of structure. Table for next meeting.*

Follow-up from Debbie:

The Scatter Garden Committee met multiple times over multiple months and discussed every conceivable situation for our scatter garden, including if and how much we should charge for being scattered in our garden and who should be scattered. We did not dismiss any concept. We purposefully decided not to charge a fee and to allow anyone to be scattered in our garden.

This past week, I have gathered information on fees that our church members pay for use of our building and fees charged by other places for scattering remains. I have also inquired as to

the requirements other churches have for who can be scattered in their garden. I am attaching a document of my findings, which I have sent to the Scatter Garden Committee. I will see you all at the March UCB Meeting with our recommendations on who should be scattered and at what cost in our garden.

The Scatter Garden Committee will meet again to re-discuss who could be scattered in our garden and the cost.

**Jason Moore** – Video meeting follow-up  
Postponed until our next meeting

**Building users from Excel spreadsheet.** Denise needs to send out. Put on agenda for next meeting.

**Next meeting: Monday, March 10 @ 7PM**