Mandarin United Methodist

LONGLEAF CHURCH

Mission - Love God and Neighbor, Build Community - - No Limits

**Church Council Meeting Minutes**

**Meeting Date: Tuesday January 28, 2025, 7:00-8:30**

**Meeting Place: In Person, Wesley Hall**

- Council Meeting call to order - Mike Overton
- Opening Devotion and thoughts – Mike Overton
    - Reflection on the church council as the local executive agency of the charge conference with the purpose of using our gifts and skills to guide and further the ministries of the church
- Approval of the Council Meeting notes Dec. 3, 2024 (see attachment)
    - No additions/corrections; minutes approved by default
- Committee Reports:

Staff Parish Relations - Mike Overton (in Linda Hurley's absence)

- No updates

Trustees- Andrea Wheeler

- Choir building roof was repaired at a cost of $18,112
- The church bus will be returned when the lease ends in February. The ski trip will be the last use. We are expecting to incur additional costs when turning it in. Youth will not need transportation until end of May/June, so a decision will be made as that time frame approaches.

United Methodist Men – John Lewis

- Money left from 2024 was used to pay for a new freezer for the Wesley Hall kitchen. The current one will go to either Kasey Mogle or concessions.
- $3,000 each has been allocated to both children's ministry and youth ministry
- They are working to build up the ministry so as to support the campus, youth etc.

United Women in Faith – Lisa Kirk

- Hosting a luncheon Saturday 2/22; the speaker will be Amanda Nelson from the Interfaith Coalition for Action, Reconciliation and Empowerment (ICARE).
- There are new board members and the group will have new programming

Generosity - Jeff Hayes

- A recap of the 2024 4th quarter was given in all services this week:
  - Craft festival highlights include the Children's Shop
  - Pumpkin Patch had 392 volunteers covering 845 shifts with over $52,000 earned
  - The 150th anniversary of the church was celebrated in November with gifts of $101,648, inclusive of $10,000 given by endowment, to help reduce the mortgage
  - The church hosted Journey to Bethlehem in December with over 300 in attendance
  - The Methodist Men tree lot earned approximately $21,000

- Total 2024 contributions were 187 pledges of $925,971; actual receipts totaled $942,876. Other contributions $329,364, total 2024 contributions $1,254,240
- The 2025 generosity campaign collected 170 pledge cards for a total of $971,392.

Finance – Alex O'Connor

- 2024 finished much improved with a $21,368 loss compared to the 2023 $216,950 loss.
- In previous years, the church has had financial assistance from tax credits, COVID grants, Learning Ladders grants, and a $200,000 grant from the conference. We will have challenges in 2025 as most of those extra funds are no longer available to us. The conference has promised $150,000 (which is in the budget); more may come but they are waiting to see what the congregation does in the first six months.
- 2024 showed many positives, including gains in new members; increase in attendance (i.e. connection service has really grown), giving has increased. We will need to continue this growth in 2025 to support tithing so there are more dollars available to replace the extra funding we are losing.
- Our church was built to support 1,500 people; 5-1/2 years of mortgage remain at $22,000/month. It is a great asset but also a great expense. The loss projected for 2025 is $95,783; if we don't raise more money, we might have to adjust the budget. No one wants to do this, as it stifles growth.
- Learning Ladders is looking into a rate increase. John Hogendoubler is on the board and is researching where they are in tuition compared to others in the area.
- Alex requested a vote on the budget. Rick Thomas motioned to accept; Rick Smith seconded the motion and the budget was approved as submitted.

- Announcements and updates:
  - Pastor Reports – Kevin, and Missy
  - Kevin – Know, Grow and share God's love as our united goal. The youth group is growing and has a very positive vibe; there is excitement in the new member class. To broaden and deepen our discipleship and faith connections involves sharing, storytelling of individuals to hear the "how" of God. As an example, Kevin used to teach

high school English. He focused on stories to engage students via curiosity about others stories and life experiences. We must have courage to open up and share, be vulnerable. In 2025 we want to focus on sharing to build culture within church. 1 Thessalonians 2 says …Because we loved you so much…we are delighted to share…

- Missy continued on the emphasis of sharing stories. To achieve we must be: “story collectors”; illuminators not diminishers; engage in the persistent curiosity of others; lit up.

- The council divided into small groups to discuss/share

- Closing Prayer – Pastor Missy