

Congregational Meeting 1/31/2023

Minutes taken by Administrative Director Dana Boyes

7:05am start

Pastor Tracy - Prayer

Ice Breaker question: Talk about something you enjoy doing.

(Janis Bady shared she is a huge Star Trek fan... like has VHS tapes of allllll the Star Trek episodes....)

Pastor Tracy - when we had the New Members Class the other week, leaders and those attending shared about why they love Cornerstone / why they're drawn here. Wanted to give the opportunity for others to share tonight as well.

Sandie Jordan - authenticity of the preachers was amazing. The community and family that we've become.

Ann Smith - drawn here because the churches I've attended in the past have been very legalistic and bounded... it's the authenticity of pastor Tracy and the elders and the ability to be real here

David Outlaw - first my wife, then the preaching then the singing. I love the different groups of musicians bring everyone together in worship.

Joanne Earley - I realize that I'm growing along with each one of you and it's a place that I can be loved and love. And we're just getting started.

Sylvia Angelini - no fake Christians

Joe Newsome - I stayed away from going to church for a long time and I felt a yearning and God calling me and he brought me here. I've never felt instantly comfortable in a church and it immediately became home and the place I can grow in my relationship with God.

Kathy Chilcote - 12 years ago drawn here for its multi-culture, multi-this and that. The one thing I felt when I came in the door was that I didn't have to pretend to be wealthy or all put together. It was ok if I didn't want to raise my hands and it was ok if I did.

Brooke Christie - I love to learn and I feel like we are all in process of learning and willing to continue the journey of learning and being among other learners.

Kassel Coover - I was tired of straight white mainline churches

James Bady - The authenticity of people and that they were going to enjoy God in whatever way they want. What keeps me here is that we continue to wrestle and push with the journey toward God.

Pastor Tracy – Finances

Introducing Ted & Gina Edwards to talk about the Finances

-We walk the fine line of what is helpful information and the best communication we possibly can. Our doors are always open to further explain things regarding our finances. Thank you to Ted and Gina for their diligent work!

Ted Edwards

Tonight we're looking at a brief history of the last couple of years and some things we need to look at as we forecast for this next year.

2020 with Covid was actually helpful with all the government programs

First time we were in the positive in several years

Avg. giving was \$24k a month

Excess of \$19k at the end of the year

2021 Average giving was \$25k

Excess of \$38,000 at the end of the year

2022 did not have Covid benefits and some key giving families left

Deficit of \$78,000 at the end of the year

We need to refinance the mortgage every 5 years... that is for this August 2023.

In order to do that, we need to balance that deficit. The bank has been working with us and has been impressed with our creativity (GoFundMe, Rentals, other Fundraising efforts, etc.) so they are willing to work with us.

What we need to do to break even from the deficit:

We negotiated with the bank and for the months of March, April and May for 2023 we will have an interest-only mortgage, which is going to save us \$5,200 per month for those three months.

Starting in January we lowered salaries, saving us \$3,500 per month

- Pastor Tracy and Joni have taken a 30% pay cut

We are instituting a Flex Space program to sell space on a daily or weekly basis

When we refinance in August, we will save \$1,000 per month on the mortgage

IF we do this, we are forecasting a \$9k excess at the end of the year

Once we get to July and August, we are forecasting breaking even.

Right now we have about \$75K in the bank, so as we continue to move forward, we have a little bit of a contingency.

But we are needing our giving average to be more consistently \$25k per month just to break even.

Pastor Tracy

In setting up the flex space, we are building a website.

Tony has a team for facility usage of the flex spaces.

And now Matt's going to come up to talk about a curious thought we had and explored.

Matt Kistler

We had a curious thought - what would it look like if every family was giving?

What would it look like to meet a FULL budget?

\$25K brings us to a balanced budget (with still reduced salaries)

\$35K per month would get us to where we would like to be

We currently have 135 families in our community

Divide \$35K by 135 families and it comes to roughly \$260 per month... so if all 135 families in our community gave \$260 per month, we would meet our goal of \$35K per month.

We also recognize there are families on fixed incomes, facing inflation, etc. We thank you for your giving. We don't want you to give beyond your means.

Our approach and feel about giving has never been legalistic, but out of the heart and idea of *generous giving*. More or less does not indicate your closeness to God. Whether you can or can't, we feel like this is doable and we hope this time encourages you all. You don't have to be afraid.

Pastor Tracy - open to questions/remarks

Sophia - wanted to say something about the salary cuts. That was a 30% cut for Pastor Tracy and Joni - which means less hours and needing to supplement those hours elsewhere. Just to put that out there so that we are mindful of where they are and what the situation is right now. If you feel led to send them an encouraging word, a card, etc, go ahead and do that!

Sylvia - With the projections that you made for the \$25K, what's it going to take to get there?

The current interest rate on our mortgage is 5.9% and we pay \$9,200 per month. When we refinance in August, it will be an interest rate of 8% but over the course of 15 years, so will bring down the payment to \$8,200.

Dr. Deborah Tanksley-Brown - With full disclosure, I'm not a member, but I'm discerning my connection with this body. One of the pivotal reasons why I find this body welcoming is because of your endeavor to try be the Pentecost church (the Acts 2 church) in being multi-cultural, intentionally inclusive, and spreading God's love and Kingdom. And all of that is centered in how we are part and parcel to the Kingdom of God. Acts 2:42-47

We are not a business organization - we operate under the power of the Holy Spirit. When 2 or 3 are gathered in God's name and are aligned in God's will, all that we do will be blessed. When we are giving, not out of our poverty, but out of God's blessing to us, then out of our love and appreciation, we give back what is given to us.

Kristine Vuocolo - I wanted to say thank you for a few things. The newsletter coming out on a weekly basis has been a blessing and help. Also I am very grateful for our church. I love that this leadership has listened to the community over the years and you hear and act on it.

James - Many hands make light work. That's the reason Matt gave that number of what is doable to bring our budget to where we'd like it to be.

Dana Boyes

Talking about need for volunteers for local community presence at various events, festivals, etc. in West Chester. Working on getting some T-shirts with

Kassel question – why aren't we going beyond West Chester?

Pastor Tracy – yes... if there is an event or you hear of something going on in a surrounding town/area that you think we should represent at, let us know and we can help to arrange for volunteers.

Kristine - question for Marketing Committee if people would be willing to "sponsor" a table or booth and/or things to hand out at these various events?

Pastor Tracy – Moving on to Elder Appointment & Charter info

We updated our charter (took 2 years) to update the language of the document reflects who we are today

We updated the Elder/Deacon process

Janis Bady

Role of Elders from charter

1. Lead by example and embody mission and core values
2. Lead & care of the community
3. Make directional decisions together
1. Rely on the guidance of the Holy Spirit
2. Listen to and respect the different voices at the table
3. Make decisions by consensus

Updated qualifications and process of Elder appointment

Elder-led Congregation

If you have a concern or question about the person being appointed, we encourage you to come to the existing elders to discuss that.

Appointing new elder: Sandra Anderson

Please affirm and encourage Sandra over the course of the next few weeks. And if you do have a check or concern, please come to one of the other elders with that concern.

Matt Kistler – Closing Prayer

END 8:32pm