

**LITTLE RIVER UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING
DECEMBER 11, 2019 – 7:00 P.M.**

Members Present: Nancy Hall, Moderator; Larry Roth, Moderator-Elect; Dave Curtis, Historian/Archivist; Jan Curtis, Historian/Archivist; Amanda Halstead, Music Committee; Adam Honeysett, Stewardship; Andrew Hunter, Trustees; John Mingus, Past Moderator; Tom Ross, Nominations and Appointments; Chris Weakley, Deacons; Brian Payne, Endowment Fund; Bruce Douglas, Member-At-Large; Karen Kleiber, Member-At-Large; Mary Summers, Member-At-Large; Jennifer Mack, Comptroller; Cindy Fithian, BOSJ; Judy Moats, BOSJ; Kathy McCrea, Personnel; Barbara Shepherd, Communications; David Lindsey, Senior Pastor; Alexis Kassim, Associate Pastor; Kathy Heyman, Church Clerk/Recorder

Executive Session was held prior to the Church Council Meeting. This session was closed to LRUCC staff members.

Church Council meeting reconvened at 8:00pm. Pastor David opened the meeting in prayer.

Nancy Hall Presented the Agenda. No changes or additions were made to the agenda as presented.

Approval of Minutes

Corrections to the November 13, 2019 minutes were sent out prior to the meeting via email. The changes will be made to the final November 13, 2019 minutes. With the corrections noted, the minutes were finalized and approved.

Pastor's Time

Pastor David reported on the Advent services held so far and the upcoming schedule. Bereavement Tea and Blue Christmas service will be held on December 14.

Pastor David told the Council that LRUCC has received 6 new members in 2019. Currently 3 people are considering joining the church. Including 2019, 54 new members have been received in the past 6 years. He also told Council to put this number into perspective, 25% of the congregations in the entire United Church of Christ have a total of 54 members or less.

Pastor David reported he had a meeting with Personnel Committee to discuss updating the current personnel policies. On-going discussions and updates will be made to the policies. He is also continuing to work with Nominations and Appointments Committee on the revamped volunteer recruitment process.

Realm sessions are being held after Sunday services. So far turn out has been low but will continue holding the sessions to introduce the database program to the leadership and full congregation.

Pastor David reported to Council that the Spiritual Autobiography class has wrapped up all sessions. The class will be planning a follow up session and party.

Pastor David has had pastoral care visits with the Hartzler's, George Matthews and Connie Fullerton.

Pastor Alexis thanked everyone for their assistance with making this year's White Gift service and mission such a success. She also echoed that several folks who attend the church are struggling right now during the holiday season and prayers are appreciated.

Pastor Alexis reported that the Congregation Action Network, of which LRUCC is a member, recently honored the 1-year anniversary of Rosa Gutierrez and her 3 children living in sanctuary at Cedar Lane Unitarian church in Bethesda. BOSJ continues to encourage folks to get actively involved in our advocacy and organizing work. One such opportunity is coming up in Jan/Feb 2020 during the VA General Assembly. There will be a few opportunities for folks to travel to Richmond with other local congregations to advocate for bills related to social justice concerns. If you're interested in participating, let Pastor Alexis know. A training session for those travelling to Richmond will be held on Sunday, January 12th at 3:00 PM - 4:30 PM at the Muslim American Society, 6408 Edsall Rd, Alexandria, VA 22312.

Financial Update

Treasurer's Report

John Mingus gave the report for Carolyn Yocom who was ill and not able to attend the meeting. A financial overview and report was distributed to Council. Discussion was held on the deficit which in part is due to a change in payroll processing and employee health benefit payments.

Stewardship

Adam Honeysett gave an update on the stewardship campaign. Calls are being made to members that have not given a pledge yet for 2020. The campaign is at a 76% goal. If the same number of pledges are received this year as in 2019, the campaign will reach a 98% goal. The church lost approximately \$32,000 in pledged income from 2019 as a result of passings and movings. Discussion was held on the impact Realm database will have in assisting members to view personal financial information. Adam also reported that Bruce Summers has volunteered to take over as the Stewardship Chair in 2020.

Trustees

Andrew Hunter reported the Trustees have been reviewing the paid time off policies for staff. He asked the Council for their input on a current request by a staff member to be paid for vacation time. It was suggested to review the policy and precedent set forth last year.

Boards, Ministries and Committee

Music Committee

Amanda reported that Room 7 renovations are near completion. Employee evaluations for Craig and Ashton are being reviewed. Many thanks to Ashton for all her hard work on the Children's Christmas program which will be held on Sunday, December 15.

Board of Social Justice (BOSJ)

Judy Moats reported a film event will be held on January 26. BOSJ is sponsoring the event to be held at the Cinema Arts Theater with the showing of the film, Just Mercy. The event is free. BOSJ is also working on a mentoring program. Mary Beth Ciarcia is coordinating the program in partnership with Timber Lane Elementary School. On Sunday, December 22 the Chosen Family Christmas Event and Dinner will be held in the Jubilee Room after worship service. All are welcome to join. Judy also reported BOSJ will be recruiting volunteers willing to serve meals at various locations for the Hypothermia shelters for the months of February and March.

New Business

Pastor David told the Council that Rob Peters will be back at LRUCC on Sunday January 12. He will be preaching during worship and have a breakout session after service to talk in more depth about his recent memoir. Rob and his wife Ginny were longtime members of Little River and retired to Frederick, MD.

Unfinished Business

Nominations and Appointments

Tom Ross distributed to the Council for their review a list of current vacancies for the various Boards and Committees. He told the Council that on Sunday, January 5, N&A will have a meeting to review the slate of nominations and go through a selection process to fill the vacancies. A ballot of all nominations will be prepared after this meeting to be presented at the Annual Meeting on February 2. There was discussion on the requirements in the by-laws in election of chairs and eligibility of members and non-members to serve on boards and committees.

First Friday

Chris Weakley told the Council First Friday was held on December 6. Approximately 50 children attended and it was a very successful event. Next FF will be held in February. There are still discussions on the budget for this program in 2020. It was discussed that the program may submit an endowment proposal.

Realm Roll-Out

Pastor David reviewed with Council the plan for the Realm Roll-Out with the leadership and congregation. Training and overview of the database program are being held after worship services in the choir room. In discussion, it was decided a better description of the database program be put in the church bulletin. Also, training and demonstration of Realm will be held for the leadership after the January 5 N&A meeting.

Special Presentation

Governance Structure Plans and Implementation

Due to the Executive Session being held tonight, a motion was made by John Mingus and seconded by Mary Summers, the Governance Restructuring discussion be tabled until the January 8 Council meeting. The motion carried.

Closing Prayer

Pastor Alexis closed the meeting with a prayer from the *Ignite the Light* Devotional Series for Advent & Epiphany:

Good and gracious God, thank you for the many ways you reveal yourself to us – in the kindness of a grandmother, the generosity of a neighbor, the comfort of a friend. Give us eyes

to see the goodness of your light in the faces of our immigrant neighbors. Give us ears to hear the good news of your word made flesh in those seeking safety at our borders. Give us courage to stand with asylum seekers now threatened by our own government, and with all in need, as we welcome your incarnate love made flesh. Amen.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Additional Note to the Minutes:

The below Endowment Fund Committee report was submitted by Brian Payne via email after the Council meeting was held:

To date, the Endowment Committee has received three proposals in the category of innovative ministries and capital projects, for which \$5400 are available for 2020. Two of these are deemed qualified: purchase of communications hardware, and purchase of new kitchen stove. Any other proposals should be submitted by the end of the year by email to Joe Christiansen.

Next Church Council meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 8, 2020