

St. John's Congregational Council Meeting

April 21, 2025 Room 103/104

Members present: Aaron Clark, David Clark, Cindy Gonsowski, Abby Johnston, Rachel Katterhenrich, Kathy Myers, Gary Smith, Amy Wanner, Paul Wittenberg, Pastor Seth Jersild, Pastor Patti Morlock

Members absent: Doug Knisely (received note that he needs our prayers as he is in the hospital), Phil Pennington, Bonnie Swanson

Opening prayer: Pastor Seth Jersild started our time together with prayer.

Call meeting to order: President Aaron Clark called the Council Meeting to order at 7:03pm.

Additional agenda items: Review the Grant Application, update on the interim plan for the youth department

Recognition of Approval of minutes: Secretary Rachel Katterhenrich confirmed that the minutes from the March 2025 meeting have been approved by a majority of council.

Senior Pastor's Report: Pastor Seth reported on the following items:

- Membership update: Pastor Seth reported that 5 confirmands have been added to our membership. Their names are Colton Thompson, Jack Mawhor, Riley Millet, Ben Previts, and Matthew Castle. Pastor Seth Jersild made a motion to receive these new members. Amy Wanner seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- Eight young people received their first communion recently (two others also were in the class but weren't able to attend service that day)
- A new members class will take place on June 1 at noon and the new members will be received in service the following week.
- The Wednesday prayer group will have its last meeting on May 14.
- Pastor Seth continues to lead a Bible study on the book of Luke on Saturdays.
- The Promise Keepers group is looking for new leadership after Pastor Seth's retirement.
- The construction team is considering the two bids that have been made to serve as general contractor for our construction needs. They have bids from McKnight and Weaver. They plan to meet this week. Dan Yeater will also give an update at the quarterly meeting next week.

Associate Pastor's Report: Pastor Patti reported on the following:

- The pastoral intern, Billie, will start on July 14. Her husband may be delayed in joining her here as he is job hunting. They will begin to look into housing options soon. The intern committee has been finalized and will include Sherry Nighbert as

chair, along with Holly Starr, Karrie Clark, Neva Warren, Nick Grossman, and Pastor Tom Phillips with Pastor Don Allman as an alternate if needed.

- The Women's Bible study group will resume on May 1 and continue for 18 weeks.
- Pastor Patti will meet with Pastor Don and Pastor Jeff this week to organize a preaching schedule for the summer, after Pastor Seth's retirement. Rachel asked whether it's a possibility for lay leaders in the church to preach as well and Patti said that that could be considered and logistics of that were discussed briefly.

Financial report: Treasurer Kathy Myers noted that the financial report has been submitted and there were no questions. She also brought up the following items:

- Grove City ordered that certain work be done on the church's water system, so Jason Bosse arranged for the emergency work to be done. \$7,232.78 was spent from the Building & Maintenance account. Aaron Clark motioned to approve the spending. Gary Smith seconded. The motion passed.
- Megan Grossman has requested funding of \$1,000 for the retirement celebration of Laurie and Diana. Aaron made a motion to spend this amount from the Endowment/Youth/Available Income account. Pastor Patti seconded. Discussion followed. The motion passed.
- A donation was made in 2023 specifically for music upgrades. Mark Meuser is seeking approval for the amount of \$3,813 from that donation for the repair of faulty parts of the organ in the sanctuary. Aaron Clark made a motion to approve this spending. David Clark seconded. The motion passed.

Executive Team Report: President Aaron Clark reported on the following:

- An email was sent to council members to begin praying for the pastoral call team and compile names of possible members to serve on that team. However, that process is being put on hold while we have more conversations about the vision of the church and follow up with contacts within the NALC.
- Council meetings may shift to doing more of the routine business via email so that more of the in-person meeting time can be used for discussion.

Unfinished business: none.

New Business:

- a. Technology Update – David Clark explained that he has created a sharepoint website for council members to use to share information easily with one another. It will not be required for council business, but is meant as a tool to facilitate communication and to be an easy access point for documents and important links. The link to the site has already been shared with council members. David also shared that the equipment for the networking updates will be ordered soon and

Jason is planning to move much of the networking equipment as well as his own office to the third floor.

- b.** Visioning discussion – Aaron prepared a worksheet of questions to guide us through a discussion on the vision we have for St. John’s identity and where we would like to be headed in coming years. This conversation could also be a guide to the call team as we look to hire a new pastor after Pastor Seth’s retirement. Pastor Patti asked whether the work of the long-range ministry planning team will also be considered. Discussion followed about how to incorporate the work that has already been done. Pastor Patti also brought up the resources of the NALC, including a team that will come to the church to lead a workshop to help the congregation as a whole to evaluate our current position and form a vision for our future. Aaron Clark will contact this team.
- c.** Grant Application Review – Amy Wanner and Abby Johnston met with Karen Bentley and Beth Katterhenrich as a subcommittee to put together a draft of a grant application to distribute funds as a grant to another church from the accessibility project account, as previously discussed. They presented the draft to council and the final draft will be distributed first to other NALC churches at the Ohio Mission Region convocation on May 2-3. The subcommittee will review applications as they come in and present a proposal to council. Pastor Patti asked if the team will also follow up with the recipient(s) of the grant, and they confirmed they plan to do so.
- d.** Youth Interim plan update – Amy Wanner shared that 4 interim youth staff will fill the positions in the youth department while we continue to await full-time staff. The interim staff are:
Christina Allman, starting June 1st, will be the Interim Director for Grades K - 6/Families and she will be also the Administrative Point Person for the youth department. She will work an average of 30 hours a week.

Donna Westerfeld, starting May 1st, will be the Interim Director for Grades 7 - 8 and Assistant for Grades 5 - 6. She will work an average of 10 hours a week during the school year and 15 hours a week during the summer.

Gini Rogers, who started back in 2023, will continue to be the Interim Director for Grades 9 - 12. She works an average of 10 hours a week during the school year and 20 hours a week during the summer.

Megan Grossman has recently increased her hours at her current position, Director of Lay Ministries, to coordinate all the service projects led by our youth (this change will be permanent, not interim).

Amy also clarified that the search for full-time staff is paused for the moment as we work through our church vision and transitions. Diana and Laurie have made a thorough review of youth ministries to make sure essential ministry needs are met. We are reminded to encourage additional adult volunteers to be involved, as that will be very important to keep these ministries active.

Congregational concerns:

- Aaron Clark brought up the timing of our council meetings – sometimes they go quite late. Discussion followed and it was agreed to set our next meeting for 6:30pm and see if that will continue to work for everyone.
- Pastor Patti was messaged by Julie VonLohr about a pressing need for prayer, as their granddaughter Abby has been diagnosed with retinoblastoma and will need to begin treatment soon.

What's Going on in Your Life Sharing and Prayer requests: Members shared personal updates and prayer requests.

Members prayed together the Lord's prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 8:57pm.

ACTION ITEMS:

(All council members) Review the minutes and respond to Secretary Rachel Katterhenrich within 48 hours with approval/additions/corrections

(President Aaron Clark) Contact NALC PCAT team.

Next meeting: Monday, May 19, 2025 at **[new time] 6:30 pm** in room 103/104