

St. John's Congregational Council Special Meeting

May 12, 2025 Room 102

Members present: Aaron Clark, David Clark, Cindy Gonsowski, Abby Johnston, Rachel Katterhenrich, Doug Knisely, Kathy Myers, Bonnie Swanson, Amy Wanner, Paul Wittenberg,

Members Absent: Pastor Seth Jersild, Pastor Patti Morlock, Phil Pennington, Gary Smith

Dan Yeater asked for a special meeting on behalf of the renovation team to inform council that the team has selected McKnight to be the contractor on the project and request a special meeting of the congregation to approve the project and associated costs. He explained that generous donations have been given specifically for this purpose and the renovation will help the church be in a good position as far as the physical building, to continue for many years. An overview of the major aspects of the project was presented to council and is also being presented to members of the congregation at informational meetings. Dan answered various questions from council members.

President Aaron Clark made a motion to approve spending of up to \$1,750,000 for renovations and for a special congregational meeting to be held on June 1. Bonnie Swanson seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned.

St. John's Congregational Council Meeting

May 19, 2025 Room 103/104

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

Members Absent: Phil Pennington, Gary Smith (resigned)

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

Call meeting to order: President Aaron Clark called the Council Meeting to order at 6:35.

Announcements: Aaron informed council that Gary Smith has resigned from his position due to personal concerns. His term lasts until January 2026 and the constitution states that council may appoint a replacement to fulfill the rest of the term (discussed more later)

Devotion: Vice President David Clark led a devotion from Proverbs 3. We discussed the value of seeking God's wisdom, trusting in the Lord, and what this passage teaches about relationships with others.

Recognition of Approval of April minutes: Secretary Rachel Katterhenrich confirmed that the April minutes have been approved by a majority of council members.

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

- Construction team: the informational meetings about the renovation project have been small, but fruitful. Congregants have been supportive of the project.
- We give thanks and praise for the confirmands who have confirmed their faith in the Lord and have been received by this congregation.
- The prayer group recently had their last meeting. The group has been small but mighty.
- The Luke Bible study is continuing and has been good.
- Laurie and Diana will have their last official weekend as staff; the pastors will be doing a small farewell in each service and there will be a celebration on Sunday afternoon.
- A membership class will take place on June 1.

Associate Pastor's Report:

- The intern has found a house to rent. Her start date will be July 14.
- There is a question about current space and where to place offices. Sharing offices between staff has been a challenge in the past. Another concern is where to place the new technology equipment. Council had a lengthy discussion about possible solutions. The majority agreed by a show of hands that they are okay with Jason Bosse (Building and Grounds Manager) using a currently unused classroom on the third floor as a work space and for the technology updates to be installed there as well.
- In the midst of the previous discussion, it was also brought up that responsibilities of staff and their chain of command should be looked into further. Some staff are being given tasks from many directions and it would be helpful to clarify their roles.
- Pastor Patti met with some staff this week to revise the room reservations process, particularly for non-members. One proposal is to have groups pay a cleaning fee directly to a cleaner, rather than to the general fund. She asked Kathy to investigate tax liability issues around this. Room usage requests will be approved by Jason Bosse in the future.
- Pastor Patti has met with Pastor Don Allman and Pastor Jeff Morlock and set up a preaching schedule through December.
- Dave Shrum will have physical ESV Bibles available to be used in contemporary service.

Financial report: Treasurer Kathy Myers reports that the finance report has been sent to council members and filed.

- A newer organ blower has become available that would replace the current one which is over 40 years old. Aaron Clark motioned to approve spending up to \$2000 to purchase this organ blower. Paul Wittenberg seconded. The motion passed.

Membership Report: Pastor Seth reported that we have no members outgoing, but we have seven members joining. They are Theresa Colburn and Tonette Lang by affirmation of faith and Kimberly Beathard, Jacob Beathard, Daniel Beathard, Ron Conklin, and Judy Conklin by transfer. Rachel Katterhenrich made a motion to receive these new members. Amy Wanner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Technology Team Report: David Clark reported that the new equipment has arrived and they hope to begin installation soon.

Executive Team Report: no report

Unfinished business:

Call Team Formation: Aaron asked council to continue to be in prayer about this team and members who would serve well on the team, which will have 6 voting members. We had previously discussed having a congregational workshop led by the NALC PCAT team – this would be initiated by the call team after its formation.

The executive team will have an exit interview with Pastor Seth before his retirement date using materials provided by the NALC.

New Business:

Council vacancy: As Gary Smith has resigned, there is a vacancy on the council for the remainder of his term (until January 2026). Per our constitution, it is not required for the vacancy to be filled but a successor may be elected by the council. The general consensus in our discussion was that it will be better to fill the vacancy. We will pray about the selection of that person and vote on it in the next meeting.

Mission Board report: The mission board met in April after many years hiatus to revise their mission statement and policies. The resulting document will be sent to council members and is available to all congregants upon request.

The mission board has made a request to send a donation to the mission groups we have been working with in lieu of the service trips which are not able to go this year. They propose to send \$5000 to the mission group in Mexico and \$5000 to the mission group in Alaska. \$2500 of each of these will come from their specific mission funds and \$2500 from the general mission fund. Abby Johnston motioned to approve sending these donations. Pastor Patti seconded the motion. The motion passed.

We also discussed whether it is best to continue to fund the mission-specific funds in the same way. This process could probably be revised to fund specific trips and/or those

who are fundraising should be able to choose where the funds are applied. This can be discussed more at a later date.

Eagle Scout request: Michael Baldree is working on his Eagle Scout project and has requested permission to build a blessing box. The hope is that it could be placed at a convenient location on the church property to be a blessing to those in the community. A blessing box is a constructed box that can hold non-perishable items which can be freely taken by community members in need. Michael will oversee maintenance of the box and ensure that it remains stocked. Congregants can also contribute items. At the moment, Michael is just requesting approval to start constructing the box off-site, location can be decided later. Amy Wanner motioned to approve building the blessing box. Kathy Myers seconded the motion. The motion passed. Pastor Seth will sign the appropriate paperwork.

Grant applications: A council member(Kathy?) asked the grant subteam whether any applications have been received for the grant, but it was reported that none have been received yet.

Delegates to the convocations: Rachel Katterhenrich asked whether delegates to the convocation generally have an opportunity to report back to the council or congregation. Pastor Patti said this has generally been done through a report in the Eagle. The team can discuss how they'd like to do that. Rachel reported that our Southeast Ohio mission district elected a new dean and co-dean at the recent convocation – Pastor Kurt Luebke and Pastor Matt Cox.

Congregational concerns:

- A concern was brought to David Clark about the speakers in the overflow not working. This seems to have happened when the drop mics were installed. David is looking into possible solutions.

Prayer requests: Members shared life updates and personal prayer requests.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40pm following the Lord's Prayer together.

ACTION ITEMS:

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

All members – attend special meeting on June 1

All members – pray about the call team and the council vacancy position

Kathy – investigate tax liability issues

Next meeting: Monday, June 16, 2025 at 6:30 pm in room 103/104