

DEACONS MEETING MINUTES

3/5/2026

PRESENT: By ZOOM > David Jones: Facilitator, Bruce Bennett, Wendy Pree, Caroline Mack, Alice Barrett, Kare Marshall, Margaret Boone, Leslie Fraser, Berkeley McChesney, Judy Haupt: Scribe and Guest> Charlotte Wright from the UCC Southern NE Conference, our Bridge Associate Minister.

OPENING PRAYER: Charlotte Wright

REVIEW MINUTES of 2/5/2026: Will be reviewed at next meeting.

PRAYER CARDS: Berkeley doing and our sincere condolences for Caroline Mack's cousin Jamie's passing.

BRIDGE MINISTRY: Charlotte walked us through the process and stressed that we are in Phase 1 period and not to look beyond. 3 parts: 1) Celebrate where we have been in the last few years. 2) What kind of ministry do we want now? She describes Pulpit Supply, a Bridge present between David's departure, a possible Interim: requiring a brief Church Profile that would go out nationally and would serve @ 2years; working on a plan in the 1st year and preparing for a settled pastor in the 2nd year, a "Designated Term Minister" for 3-5 years, usually selected by a Church with significant issues that need resolving before moving on to a settled pastor. (She thinks our Church will not need this option as we appear to be healthy) or a shared minister with another Church. This selection should be done in the next 6 months or by the end of the summer. 3) Redo our Bylaws(not in our bylaws as to who does this) which for us would be incorporated with info for the Transformation Team as would the writing of the Profile. She clarified the differences between an Interim who is assigned by the Conference and agreed upon with a contract with our Church and reneled every year and a Settled Pastor – again responding to a much more detailed Profile, advertised nationally and feels "called" to our Church. The Congregation must agree to the Search and Call selection.

DAVID'S UPDATE: 1) Reshaping the Parental Leave > No duties in April, but may be available for limited participation in May/ June with either occasional preaching (14 hours per sermon) or attending Committee meetings but not all in the same week. ? some office hours. An exit interview must be scheduled. He will think about the timing for a final sermon and a celebratory farewell. His availability needs to be made clear to the Congregation.

2) Meg's and Margery's reviews are done. Meg will get an extra Sunday off to accommodate her school's responsibilities until she moves off campus into a house in Greenfield. She would like someone else to be responsible for organizing the tuning of the new piano. Perhaps Virginia could take this on. Margery's contract remains unaltered. She has changed her membership from one organization to another, so the dues will remain about the same. Both contracts need to be signed and filed by ** David.

3) TT: "Conversation Café", the final presentation and discussion is scheduled for March 15 which will be incorporated in our Church Profile.

4) Lent: April 2, Maundy Thursday > 5:30 potluck with service @ 7pm. Bonnie Coleman's singing is pending. Still need readers. **David to select.

5) Anti Apartheid Pledge: Nancy Marshall, Sherrill Hogan and Leslie will lead 3 educational discussion groups in April with the goal of affirming our pledge at our May's Congregational Meeting.

6) Oscar's Baptism: Hoping that Bert can baptize, Bruce can sing and Leslie to do the Litany. Date pending on Bert's schedule.

7) New Members: 4 in the wings. Open for more if there is interest. For now, **David will come up with a simple process conducted in 2 meetings at the church. But we need to work on a formal process for the future. **Scribe to remember this chore.

8) Congregational Meeting – March 8. Make congregation aware that we are coming up on a 3 month parental leave starting in April, that his availability will be partial for May and June with April off altogether. Deacons and Elders to share their emotions of grief to guide the Attendees in sharing their own feelings. Maybe have Alice start with Jeannine miming emotions. Review "Respectful Communication Guidelines" with a handout for those participating. ? source. Reassure that the Deacons are working on plans going forward and will update the Congregation on a regular basis. Maybe explain some of the Phase 1 process and that we have guidance from the UCC Ass.

PASTORAL COVERAGE: April covered mostly. Maybe a Kathy Bullock service at the end of April. Worship Team consisting of Leslie and a catching up Alice have shared the spread sheet for available dates for Pulpit Supply. Bert and Leslie available for emergency Coverage. May and June wide open. It is hoped that at future meetings, lay folks from the Congregation will step up to offer sermons.

DEACON COVERAGE: March 29, Caroline will assist Judy with giving out Palms at both doors. April coverage will be decided at our next March meeting on the 19th.

In the interest of time, the remainder of the Agenda will be covered on the 19th.

** Indicated an action plan

CLOSING PRAYER: Kare

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED: Judy Haupt, Scribe

NEXT MEETING: March 19th @ 7PM, probably Hybrid.