

**Niantic Community Church 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes
29 January 2023**

1. Welcome and Call to Order (& Notice of Call)

Start time: 10:44: Quorum established. Meeting called to order by President Frank Chan. Niantic Community Church video shared with the congregation with an overview of 2022. Video access will be online.

2. Invocation and Notice of UMC Charge Conference

Frank Chan read the notice of call: Rev. Kaleigh Rasmussen shared a letter with greetings and offered a prayer from the District Superintendent from the United Methodist Conference.

Frank found errors in the report and will continue to fix them and a final copy will incorporate changes to become the official record copy.

3. In Memoriam

Video Memoriam for those who have passed away in 2022: Robert "Bob" Mikkelson, Frederick "Fred" Winters, Martin June, Marijane Lusk, Mary Wassung, and Lenore Campbell.

4. Approval of Minutes of the October 23rd 2022 Quarterly Congregational Meeting and the December 4th 2022 Special Congregational Meeting.

Motion to approve minutes from the Quarterly Congregational meeting from 10/23/22 made by Carol Donovan, Sue Smith seconded. Discussion: none, **voice vote: the yeas have it, motion carries.**

Motion to approve minutes from the Congregational meeting minutes from 12/4/22. Liz Buhler made motion and Terri McTigue seconded. Discussions: none, **voice vote: the yeas have it, motion carries.**

5. Clerk's Report

Mary Childs reported the total additions: 6, total removals: 10, total membership as of 12/31/2022: 542

6. Ministry Team Reports

Frank Chan offered a brief description of the structure of the Governing Board.

Administration: Judy DeVey: Safe Conduct: Pam McCauley, background checks, policy changes, and new record keeping system, Nominating: Gail San Juan: All positions filled except the financial committee, need a leader for the team meetings, need help on Safe Church with Craig Woody, Personnel: Judy DeVey: everyone should have a copy of the personnel manual, especially those who lead committees, Team has just completed the staff evaluation forms with the goal to hand them out on 2/20 with a return date in March.

Approved at the Quarterly Congregational Meeting on April 23rd, 2023

Operations: Terri McTigue: In Feb, Carolyn Lombardo will agree to take over for Ellen Abutin. Theresa Cleary has worked on communications, Music Worship Arts: Nan Rigdon, Children's Center: Linda Helvig: fully accredited. Director Sarah Schutz has submitted her resignation and will leave in about 7 weeks. Worship Team: Sept outdoor worship was a huge success. Looking forward to planning and participating in a ministry team fair in February. No questions.

Justice Education and Fellowship: Kathy Leindecker: Ministry team leader is a new role, it has been a difficult year, (slide showing the highlights from the year) reflection on goals to learn God's words and build faith, Sunday School, Justice was busy thanks to OAR, land acknowledgement, made connections with our town and community, Art for Racial Justice, Pride celebration at Ocean Beach, scholarship fund, Ron Johnson has helped rebrand outreach to Faith in Action with many efforts being shared with our congregation, Coffee connection has averaged 40 pounds of coffee donated per month to the homeless shelter, alternative market returned, youth activities, Faith Forum continues to build on the goals regarding justice and serving our community thanks to Paul Helvig, Braiding Sweet grass book club working to be stewards of the Earth, fostering fellowship parish life: food, coffee, fun and fellowship nights (watch for more to be scheduled), in low times, reflection on highlights helps. Difficult blow to lose CEYM. The Church celebrated Julia's release last week. Decision to seek two lay persons was just voted on in December. Marsha Swan and Christie Pyatt will step in as interims to get us to the remainder of the year. Donations offered to the Justice Benches fund, this group hopes to continue a period of discernment where we can ultimately make these benches a reality. Need everyone's support to have a full staff of teachers as well as joining in fun events: Talk to Kathy, Marsha, and/or Christie.

Financial Resources: Carol Donovan: thanks to the Church's donations, pledges, careful budgeting by teams, this group works to manage the financial profile of our Church, count on bookkeeper and the financial secretary, employee retention grant and ARPA grant, Carol and Kathy Kern are stepping down (Kathy filled the bookkeeper position), stewardship began in August, Thank you to Phil, Ellen, Carolyn, Ted, Thank you to Stewardship Team. 114 total pledges, and gratitude extended. Frank Chan offered a thank you to Carol for 15 years of chairing this committee from our community.

Property Management: Craig Woody: If you see something broken please let Craig know. Will need a roof replacement fund of about \$70,000-80,000. Thank you to the anonymous donors for the air conditioner and the refrigerator, Rich Thomson fixed the elevator, Dick Robinson fixed the dishwasher, among many other updates and upgrades this year. Leak in the roof above the CEYM office closet is temporarily repaired. Looking forward we will need to consider the increases in electricity: Please be vigilant and turn the lights out when you leave the Church. Portico will be fixed this spring, possibly enough money to fix the narthex area, storage room has been inventoried and culled, if you are going to store something, please see Craig, Security: check doors as you leave to ensure they are locked especially at night, especially on the double doors: both need to be secured. In the spring help will be needed for yard work.

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Legacy: Hal Robb: Thank you to many members who work on this team who are very dedicated, looking forward to this ministry team fair to share all that this team works on.

7. Presentation of 2022 Financial Reports

Liz Buhler shared details of the Annual Financial Report. Please see or email Ted Montgomery with questions regarding pledges. Year 2022: \$389,093 pledged and the actual amount received was \$407,952. Children Center's contribution was incorrect in the 2022 budget, Children's Center contributed \$12,000 instead of the NCC budgeted \$9,000. We have a year-end surplus of around \$114,000.

Liz Buhler made motion, Carol Donovan seconded the motion to accept the 2022 financial report.

Ron Johnson shared the Faith in Action denominational financial obligations. \$1,000 will be called Manners Memorial Fund for Justice Bench – a restricted fund.

Brooke Stutzman asked a question about the solar panels: do we have any way to quantify the benefit of the solar panels? Craig Woody responded that we have lost one panel, which has been replaced. Carol Donovan reported that we do not use the electricity from these panels, but we do get a lower rate because of the panels.

Voice vote to approve the Financial Report: Congregation (Including zoom) motion carries to accept the 2022 financial report. **voice vote: the yeas have it, motion carries.**

8. Presentation of Proposed 2023 Budget for Approval

Carol Donovan shared that we received 114 pledges for \$405,983 and \$61,700 in expected income from other sources: totaling \$467,683 in expected revenue in 2023.

The expected operating expenses for 2023 is \$501,950.89, short \$34,267.89. We have \$114,000 in reserve after accounted for uncleared expenses and a \$40,000 minimum reserve level. We propose to use \$34,267.89 from the reserve to balance the budget. We will also set aside \$30,000 from the reserve as initial fund for roof replacement in about 5 years, we will start a multi-year capital campaign to raise the full amount.

Carol Donovan made the motion to approve the 2023 budget, Kathy Leindecker seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Hal Robb shared that the reserve will be there to balance the budget, if we need to tap into it, but not until we do.

Ron Johnson shared that outreach fixed cost budget for Faith in Action was \$2,000 to reimburse the people who prepare food for DINE. We will need to consider how to support other outreach

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efforts with a limited budget. Faith in Action is planning five special offering opportunities during the course of the year, which will allow us to continue our outreach throughout the year.

Joanne Moore shared that Parish Life will not have enough money in budget for coffee for coffee hour. She indicated that about \$10,000 will be requested in 2023 for community ministry, it is not reflected in the budget. Carol Donovan responded that this request will be considered by the Governing Board in 2023.

Pam McCauley asked a question regarding how many pledged last year compared to this year, Frank Chan responded that the final number of pledges in 2022 was 118, this year we are currently at 114 but will probably get a few more.

Asked for **voice vote to accept the proposed 2023 budget: the yeas had it, no request for a count of yeas and nays vote, motion carries.**

Liz Buhler read the required statement per Code 107 of Internal Revenue code because NCC provides housing in addition to salary for clergy, the housing value is not required to be reported as income.

9. Presentation by Nominating Committee for Approval of Officers, Ministry Team Leaders, and Associate Team Leaders.

Nominations: Gail San Juan happy to report that many members are continuing to stay on: Frank Chan, Peg Herzberg, Liz Buhler, and Mary Childs for the Executive Board, as well as Team Leaders Judy DeVey, Terri McTigue, Kathy Leindecker, Hal Robb, and Craig Woody.

Gail San Juan made motion to accept the slate of officers and team leaders, Carol Donovan seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Brook Stutzman: appreciates the difficult decisions needing to be made this coming year not everyone had access to the group discussion, how will we work to bring together and mend a rift that could end the Church, GB is signing on for difficult work, how can we move forward?

Frank Mirecki shared that we still need to address who we are as NCC, division within, more successful but not perfect, small group clandestine meetings who are in writing meant to be transparent: need more light and that while we cannot have extensive discussion now, we need discussions regarding Church profile and to move forward with a settled pastor, faith that we be willing to move forward, open to discussion to move forward not backward, beyond 2023.

Frank Chan responded to Brook Stutzman that there are many things we can do better, we have accepted to take on this commitment for another year. Trying to get minutes out as soon as possible and generate committee reports monthly. Members do not necessarily see these and that is something we need to correct: discussions with the Technology Team to improve

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this process to improve accessibility. Please call or make an appointment to discuss with us at any time. We will switch officers' hours to an appointment model which will increase flexibility to meet members where and when they need. The Governing Board has been transparent, and we will continue to make sure our proceedings are more accessible. Please let us know how we can improve. We will work to make Ministry Team reports should be easily accessed online. All motions and decisions during 2022 have been included in this year's annual report.

Ron Johnson: we need to support our youth ministries as they have expressed that they have felt isolated and invisible and we must give them our full support, keep them in your prayers and support their events.

Vote via a count of yeas and nays to accept the slate of officers and ministry team leaders: Counted by Craig Woody and John Parker: 65 yeas (in Church and on zoom), nays: zero, motion carries.

10. Other Business Items –

Frank Chan shared that attendance has increased in the fourth quarter of the year. Regarding the informal survey in looking to move the 9:00 service. Additional insight regarding this decision will mean we should take some time and ensure that all stakeholders' input has been received, pastoral care, music, worship, technology, Sunday school, faith forum, this decision needs more deliberation.

2023 Quarterly Congregational meetings will be on April 23, 2023, July 16th, 2023, and October 22, 2023.

11. Voices of the Congregation -

Linda Helvig: Needed to share the strong division in our Church is extremely difficult. New way of governing ourselves has left some members behind, we were all looking forward to working together and to be a better Church, in a meeting there was a question about the vision statement, there has not been an update regarding our vision statement and a whole new way of doing things, this conversation did not get finished and the conversation stopped without everyone being able to share their perspective. Moving too fast was a comment that was made, and yet the information was not shared to let members hear and process the why of this journey, and the struggles to make things better. When members left it was difficult to understand how someone would feel strong sadness and want to leave. In POD the members identified sadness and a feeling of not belonging. We came together to better understand, why was this happening, we did not mean to be secretive, it was an attempt to try to figure out how to belong. It seemed as if there was a lot of anger, misunderstanding, and lack of belonging. How to be a family again. Deep sadness and asking for forgiveness.

Carolyn Carter: I will chair OAR this year, forgiveness and accountability will help move us forward. Remember that while it may have started as a way to bring people together, it actually felt very different. Shared concerns to responsible staff and an interaction was disrespectful. Respect the democracy of this Church and respect the decisions that were made. Hope that

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moving forward we can all keep the goal in mind. The group was not kind and it was scary. Growth, healing, and moving forward.

Concluded voices of congregation at 12:46

12. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Edna Gilstead, seconded by Liz Buhler. **Voice vote: the yeas have it, motion carries.** Meeting adjourned at 12:46 pm

13. Closing Prayer

Pastor Eric Elnes shared that the Holy Spirit moves through us and brought him here. We will strongly move forward especially with what has surfaced, kids need help, more support and be around some issues, learn to be friends again, and reconnect, a beautiful way to step forward with the Holy Spirit.

14. Benediction - Rev. Eric Elnes and Music by Mary Mirecki

Sing first verse of "Blest be the Tie that Binds"

Blest be the tie that binds

our hearts in Christian love;

the fellowship of kindred minds

is like to that above.

Respectfully submitted by

Mary Childs

Niantic Community Church Clerk