

KVCC Church Council Meeting Minutes

May 21, 2024

Present: Debby Rice, Pastor John, Linda Bogardus, Susie Allen, Elizabeth Davidson Derr, Naj Wikoff, Katharine Preston, Fritz Sabbow, Annie Scavo, Charlotte Lichtenberg, Dre Robuck, Shawn Lamarche, Robert Rokos, Howard Husslein, , and Deborah Mitchell.

Debby opened the meeting at 5:00 PM. This meeting was held via Zoom.

Opening Prayer: Pastor John led us in prayer.

Determination of Quorum: We had a quorum at today's meeting.

Approval of March KVCC Council Minutes: Elizabeth made a motion to accept the April KVCC Council Minutes. Fritz seconded the motion. A discussion was held, the motion passed.

- 1) Annette Merle Smith Fund (AMS): Debby reported on the next steps to communicate with the congregation the recommendations from the AMS recommendations and have a gathering after church services to go over those recommendations.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

PASTOR'S REPORT – MAY 21, 2024

Worship and Spiritual Development

- May 11 and May 20 – KVCC sponsored a Contemplative Photography class led by Ingrid Cyros.
- May 21 – World Meditation Day; KVCC offered walking and sitting meditation, and a silent lunch.
- June 2 – Music Sunday.
- June 20 - Will sponsor a sunrise viewing and cold plunge to observe the Summer Solstice. Then will invite members and friends to travel to Old Forge to see Robin Wall Kimmerer offer a talk at 6 PM.
- July 14 – Will be preaching at the Island Church. Guest worship leader TBD.
- August 18 – Will be guest preacher at All Souls Chapel. Martha Gallagher will be filling in for me.
- Working with Bill Serjak, Nancy Freeman, Lynn DeWalt, Rob Hastings and Liz Jaques to schedule our Summer Music Program.
- Friday morning prayer group meets weekly in the VSR, sharing prayers, concerns, and joys of the community.
- The Centering Prayer Group (CPG) meets mornings @ 7 AM via Zoom.

Worship Attendance

Sunday Morning Worship			
Date	Total In-Person	Online Sessions	Recording Views
1/7/24	23	24	11
1/14/24	33	24	9
1/21/24	35	24	9
1/28/24	39	19	12
2/4/24	41	22	13
2/11/24	43	16	11
2/18/24	50	21	7
2/25/24	56	14	16
3/3/24	45	16	13
3/10/24	29	19	16
3/17/24	45	18	24
3/24/24	44	24	15
3/31/24	62	17	13
4/7/24	30	17	17
4/14/24	53	11	15
4/21/24	44	14	24
4/28/24	43	13	6
5/5/24	38	10	12
5/12/24	47	13	3

Neighborhood House

- Leading weekly worship at the Neighborhood House. Worship includes: introductions, hymn singing, group reflection on sacred scripture, and prayer.
- Weekly attendance average: 7 people
- Members of the Neighborhood House have been attending Sunday morning worship at KVCC.

Open and Affirming

- Tri Lakes Pride is scheduled for Sunday, June 30 in Saranac Lake.
- North Country Pride is scheduled for Saturday, September 28 in Plattsburgh

Web Site

- Jimm Collin presented the draft website on Thursday, March 7
- Reviewed content requirements, and updates to site
- Waiting for these updates to be made and a new draft to be shared by Jimm.

Confirmed Memorial Services and Weddings

- Zielinsky/Szymkowiak wedding scheduled for Saturday, July 6.
- Graveside service for Gordon McAllen Baker at Norton Cemetery on Saturday, August 3, 2024 at 4:00 pm.

Pastoral Support

- Weekly office hours scheduled for Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1 – 3 PM. Other times by request.
- Provide ongoing pastoral support to the church community via Zoom, telephone, in-person meetings, and email.

Tuesday Book Discussion Group

- Next book to be discussed will be *Being Here: Prayers for Curiosity, Justice and Love* by Padraig O'Tuama. The discussion began, via Zoom, on Tuesday, May 7.
- Average attendance is 11 people/session.
- Recording of the discussion made available to the congregation in the weekly church email.

Community Support

- Working with members of the congregation on identifying neighbors in need, and supporting them through pastoral support and financial grants.
- Member of Keene Diversity Advisory Committee. Meet monthly with the group.

New York Conference

- Currently serving a 3-year term on the UCC NY Board of Directors; term will end May 31, 2024.
- Board is scheduled to meet: 5/30.
- Planning to attend the Conference Annual Meeting, which is scheduled for May 30 – June 1 in Binghamton, NY. Shawn Lamarche and Annie Scavo will also be attending as our church's delegates.
- Agreed to serve on the Conference Nominating Committee for a three year term beginning on June 1.

North Country Association

- Member of the new Association's Committee on Ministry. Group meets first Tuesday of each month.

Training/Education

- The new North Country Association has mandated that ministers take 25 hours of Continuing Education per year.
- To date, 80% of CE requirement completed.
- **Completed Meditation Teacher Training – Tuesdays, January 30 – March 5**
- **Completed Culturally Response Ministry Training on March 9.**

Scheduled Vacation

- Will be away weekend of October 19. Guest worship leader TBD.

Other Items

- Prepare content for weekly emails to church community.
- Co-leading the Summer Speaker session with Susie Allen.
- Volunteered to be point person for collecting items for the 2024 White Elephant. Collection will be held twice weekly on Wednesdays and Fridays, and on an ad hoc basis as needed.

PÁDRAIG Ó TUAMA PLANNING TEAM REPORT MAY 2024

Team members: John Sampson, Susie Allen, Debby Rice, Martha Gallagher, Shawn Lamarche, Elizabeth Davidson, Lorraine Duvall, Naj Wikoff

We are currently at 54 registrations, with a goal of 100 for the event.

We have been awarded \$5000 from the Make a Difference! Genesis Fund from the UCC; and \$650 from Essex County Arts Council grant. Many thanks to Debby Rice for preparing and submitting these grant applications.

The discussion on Ó Tuama's book, *Being Here*, has begun. We welcomed two participants who are not currently affiliated with KVCC. Faith and Issues will begin their discussion of Ó Tuama's book, *In the Shelter*, on May 25. All are welcome to join in.

Publicity efforts continue, including presenting information at the ADK Center for Writing's Pride event on June 29 and at their poetry reading event on July 26. We will soon be hanging posters in the region and reaching out to social justice groups in the area, encouraging them to register and, possibly, partner with us in this event.

We have secured a location and a caterer for the luncheon after worship on August 11. We will be seeking volunteers for several aspects of the weekend events. Stay tuned for details.

GROUNDS REPORT MAY 2024

A small group of volunteers did weeding and general clean up at the Grounds Work Day on May 9th. In advance of the Work Day, Paul removed branches that had come down during the winter and cut back overgrown lilacs in the Memorial Garden. He also put a donated birdbath in the Manse garden and set the bench into place in the Memorial Garden.

After hearing some controversy in the media about No Mow May, we have decided to discontinue this practice. Noted ecologist and entomologist, Doug Tallamy, described the problem in a Wall Street Journal article. "Dr. Tallamy sees little logic in letting lawns grow longer for a few weeks. If people simply let their grass grow for a month and then revert to a clipped green monoculture, they are teasing pollinators with short-term snacks followed by starvation, he said." Another argument against the practice is that allowing the grass to grow unchecked for weeks can lead to increased weed growth. Weeds then compete with the grass for nutrients, sunlight, and water. Other critics of the No Mow May movement, advocate instead for providing more permanent habitats for pollinators by replacing lawns with native plants. We have done that!

Task List:

Do more weeding - ongoing through September

Take down a broken branch from the large maple outside the church office - June

Monitor the weak maple on the corner of Rte. 73 and Market Street - June

Extend the stone pathway in the pollinator garden to the sidewalks – June

Plant more daffodils in the pollinator garden. – September

KEENE FOOD MISSION REPORT FOR MAY 2024

On Thursday, 5/7/24, Pastor John, Nancy McArthur and Deborah Mitchell met at the manse to discuss topics such as fundraising for the Keene Food Mission, having a presence at the Keene Farmer's Market to increase awareness and donations, and sponsoring a fun run in the fall. Nancy followed up with Cindy Ayers who is helping us with our outreach and fundraising activities. Nancy has been in contact with Joe Pete, and we have a tentative date scheduled for a fun run on Saturday, October 26. We hope to use the Hulls Falls Road for this fun run and will base our operations at Marcy Field. We're working out details about getting access

Respectfully submitted, Deborah Mitchell

BUILDINGS REPORT May 2024

Table 1

Task/Project	Description	Date Rec'd.	Est. Comp. Date	Cost Est.	Assignee
VSR Chair repair (8)	Joints loose	9/28/23			Naj offered to repair
Church Windows	Dirty	9/28/23			
Manse Tenant	Dryer vent cleaning	5/1/2024	June 2024		Howard
Church Lg. Bath	Light out	4/24	4/24/2024	~\$8.00	Howard
Stairs/Ramp/Railings	Scrape/Brush/Repaint/Repair as needed	5/1/2024	July 2024	~\$500	Volunteers
Church Entry	Coat rack paint	pre 08/30/2023	Spring 2022	+/- \$45	Volunteer
Church/VSR	Ceiling plaster work	pre 08/30/2023		<\$1000	Contractor
Church/Manse Siding	Clean	pre 08/30/2023	Spring 2022	<\$1000	Cont. / Volun.
VSR	Chimney tuckpointing	pre 08/30/2023			Contractor
Church Basement	Perimeter foam	pre 08/30/2023	Spring 2024	~ \$5000	Placid Foam?
Church Basement	Dehumidifier	pre 08/30/2023	2022	~ \$2000	
Church Grounds	Wrought Iron Refinishing	pre 08/30/2023	Spring 2024	~ \$200	Volunteers
Church	Shutter repair/repaint	pre 08/30/2023			Volunteers
Church / Manse Grounds	Walkway repair	pre 08/30/2023	Spring 2025		Contractor
VSR	Flickering lights	pre 08/30/2023			Howard
Church Grounds	Accessible Parking paving	10/15/2023	Spring 2024	~ \$12k +\$650	Contractor
Church / Manse Grounds	Green Consumables	09/15/2023	Spring 2024	?	Involved parties
Church	Inspection compliance	11/15/2023	Spring 2024	~ \$6k	Cont. / Volun.
VSR	Side door latch fussy	09/24/2023	Spring 2024		Howard
VSR	Gas log knob hard to reach with new screen	10/27/2023	Spring 2024		Howard
Church Basement	Furnace inspection req. per insurer	11/15/2023			Contractor
Church	Exit signs req. per insurer	11/15/2023	Spring 2024		
Church	Kitchen ext. door rehung per insurer	11/15/2023	Spring 2024		

Task/Project	Status
VSR Chair repair (8)	3 done
Church Windows	Pending
Manse Tenant	Pending
Church Lg. Bath	Done
Stairs/Ramp/ Railings	Pending
Church Entry	Pending
Church/VSR	
Church/Manse Siding	
VSR	
Church Basement	Not cost effective
Church Basement	Not cost effective
Church Grounds	
Church	Under Consideration
Church / Manse Grounds	
VSR	Under Investigation
Church Grounds	Finished 11/13/2023 Sign in place. Striping is done.
Church / Manse Grounds	Green products being phased in
Church	Closers, hardware, signs, handles and lighting materials received. Door closers started.
VSR	Part of the Panic hardware solution.
VSR	Will investigate repositioning log set and grate.
Church Basement	
Church	Photo-luminescent signs waiting for installation
Church	Unnecessary. Will not be an official exit.

KVCC'S MISSION AND SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE

Keene Central School Green Team

Pam Gothner provided a map and an update on each of our pollinator plants, along with Bee Balm, which Naj took to the school. They were gratefully received, and suggested in September, they bring the students over to see our garden and talk with Pam. They also plan to use Pam’s map as a model for creating one for their garden. They plan to expand their garden starting next Friday and the Bee Balm will be used as part of that expansion. I said if they wanted to expand their garden with some new plants, we probably could help out. Amy Nelson will take over as the faculty advisor to the Green Team.

AFRI

On May 9, John Sampson, Debby Rice, Katharine Preston, Laurin McArthur, and Fritz Sabbow discussed the AFRI request. The discussion highlights are:

- Given what KVCC has learned through the Welcome Corps experience, that much more work is needed with immigrants and refugees than what AFRI is doing now...
- SL/LP makes more sense as geographic center
- Needed is multiple churches and agencies working together.
- AFRI’s efforts at hosting social gatherings could be part of that – OR – the whole could still be called AFRI.
- As far as we know, there is no one at KVCC willing to lead this effort – and that is what is needed if this “jump” to the greater effort is to happen under our auspices.

The group also discussed how we expect immigration to this area to increase considerably (climate chaos will be involved). NOTE: Adirondack Explorer and NCPR seem to recognize this: funding journalist (full time) to cover. Maybe his (or her?) arrival can be a catalyst for more discussion. to the property between Marcy Field and Hulls Falls Road.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

May 2024

Balances as of 5/14/24

Main	\$ 110,681.69
PDF	\$ 2,610.13
Petty Cash	\$ 1,980.13
Event	\$ 4,965.32
Food Mission	\$ 14,689.32
AMS (Vanguard)	\$ 88,540.42
Schwab Endowment	\$1,460,081.71 as of 4/30/24

Nancy McArthur will be away from May 19 until June 3, and Elizabeth Davidson will act as Treasurer in her absence signing checks and approving expenses.

Other Developments:

- New bookkeeper, Cena Abramo of On Point Bookkeeping, begins work as of May 20, 2024. Transition conversations with Rick Beam completed, and final pay will be processed by that firm on May 15, 2024. Fritz Sabbow and Nancy partnering to support the transition.
- Investment manager will be reevaluated commencing in June with view to possibly replacement. As Larry Shipps drives our investment evaluation, he will lead this process.
- Credit cards have arrived for John Sampson, Liz Jaques and Nancy (as Treasurer).
- Next Finance Meeting will be held on June 14, 2024.

Fundraising Plans for Food Mission:

Cindy Ayres, Nancy McArthur, and Deb Mitchell have been developing fundraising plans for the Food Mission. These include a presence at the Farmers Market several times this summer as well as a 5K event in October.

Dates of Farmers Market Stand: June 16, July 2 and 16, August 11, 18, 25, September 1 and 8

Stand features: Banner for Food Mission, Donations and Balsam Pillows for larger gifts, Instructions for applying for SNAP and other benefits (WIC, Medicaid)

Date of 5K Fun Run/Walk: October 26 (being confirmed). Working with Vinny McClelland to develop plans. Joe Pete Wilson supporting also.

Concept: Termed The Haunted Hustle would feature Halloween theme include costumes, kids run, and timed 5k Run and Walk. Both a fundraiser and a community event, we are approaching Keene Youth Commission and St. Bernards to partner.

Sponsors: The Mountaineer has agreed to be a sponsor and we will approach area businesses to donate as well.

Both of these initiatives need volunteers, so please contact Cindy, Debbie or Nancy if you can help!

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

There is no new information as the Worship Committee has not met since our last Council meeting.

FLOWER COMMITTEE

The Flower Committee continues to decorate our altar with seasonal flowers.

KVCC PERSONNEL GROUP MAY 2024 COUNCIL REPORT

Members: Nancy McArthur, Fritz Sabbow, Debby Rice

KVCC Performance Evaluation: Process and Status Update

All Church Roles are nuanced and complex, involving not only structure and responsibilities but multiple interfaces with individual congregants, groups and the community at large. A performance evaluation is a process used to assess an employee's job performance. It is typically conducted every two years, and it involves the Personnel Group representative providing feedback on the employee's performance. The employee may also be asked to provide a self-assessment. The goal of a performance evaluation is to identify the employee's strengths and opportunities for improvement, develop a plan to address their performance, and confirm goals to be pursued.

The performance evaluation process typically involves the following:

1. KVCC Personnel Group prepares a list of criteria that will be used to evaluate the employee's performance. Employee input and agreement is key. This is a collaborative approach.
2. The employee completes a self-assessment, rating their own performance on the criteria listed by the Personnel Group.
3. The employee provides a list of 3 names for persons who know their performance. The Personnel group adds up to 3 names for a total of 6 persons.
4. Input from the 6 names is summarized by the Personnel Group.
5. The employee and Personnel Group rep (and/or or John Sampson) meet to discuss the employee's performance.
6. The Personnel Group rep (and/or John Sampson) provides feedback to the employee on their performance.
7. The employee and personnel Group rep (and//or or John Sampson) develop a plan to improve the employee's performance, as needed, and identify goals.

EMPLOYEE	Personnel Group Contact	Status (May 2024)	Next
David Craig	Fritz Sabbow	Job Description drafted	Gather performance input and summarize for feedback
Liz Jaques	Debby Rice	Job Description drafted	Gather performance input and summarize for feedback
Lynn Dewalt	Nancy McArthur	working to schedule job description	Meet with Lynn to draft job description
Rob Hastings	Nancy McArthur	Job Description drafted	Gather performance input and summarize for feedback
John Sampson	Fritz and Debby	Job Description exists	Meet to discuss any updates to the description

Other Business:

BAZAAR 2024:

The 2024 Church Bazaar will be held on Friday, August 2 and Saturday, Aug 3.

A call for donations for the White Elephant Sale and Jewelry Sale will go out Thursday May 16th in the church newsletter.

Subsequent posts will be made on NextDoor, Jay News, and Facebook

Dre will work with Pam to make a publicity calendar to advertise the event.

Linda LaBarge and Robert Rokos will work together to provide the food fundraiser aspect of the event. Robert will also be the finance point person for the bazaar. Nancy McArthur will lead quilts but would like to pass the role to someone else next year. We would love to find that person this year so that they can work with Nancy.

We have no one to lead Jewelry this year. Lisa and Charlotte are unavailable. Dre will set up a phone call with Barbara Merle -Smith to get details about what resources she used to price the jewelry in years past. Dre will get the ball rolling, but we will need leadership over this section. Merle is planning to lead the baked -goods sale. She doesn't get into town until late July so finding a co-lead to recruit bakers is important. I have not heard whether Cindy Ayers is available.

We are waiting to hear back from Susy and her team (Erin and Melissa) on their availability to run the white elephant sale.

We have decided to shelve the church tent concept as people seem to have had little interest in learning more about the church during the bazaars. Although they did enjoy the tattoos.

We are considering a native plant sale. Dre will talk with Pam when she returns to the valley.

We are also considering a children's activity (petting zoo, dunk tank, open to suggestions).

We need to purchase at least one, maybe 2 new pop-up tents. Dre will have more info on this at the meeting along with the cost. Tents are a critical piece of infrastructure for Sun and Rain. There is no viable rain plan for this event.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, June 25, 2024 at Debby Rice's home (pot luck).

Deborah made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:59 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Mitchell, Clerk