**Orinda Community Church**

**Minutes of Church Council  
Wednesday, March 22, 2023**

**Council Attendance:** Anne Barr, Bill Abriel, Lani Shepp, Kathleen Wiegand, Bob Winbigler, Gail Mead, Mitch Breitwieser

**Clergy Attending:** Elizabeth Robinson

**Attendees:** Tom Norris, Nancy Thursby, Fred Matteson

**Minutes:** The 2/23/23 minutes were approved by email on 2/28/23

**Pastor’s Report:** Rev. Elizabeth Robinson indicated the multi-congregational confirmation retreat held last weekend was successful in many ways. She’s working on a youth service trip but finding it very labor-intensive getting responses from the families. The youth just aren’t that available. OCC finished the Lilly grant process to help fund Elizabeth’s sabbatical in 2024 and several people have asked if she’s leaving the church. She’s not and is just taking the sabbatical she’s due every five years. Holy week is very busy with a Palm Sunday service and labyrinth, a Seder dinner, a Tenebrae poetry reading, a multi-church Good Friday service and an Easter service. Elizabeth wants to take a special offering for the Black Wealth Builders Fund. Additionally, she would like to see how the church can support those impacted by the Pajaro levee break flooding. Per Anne Barr, our church is more active lately with more and more people engaged.

**Treasurer’s Report:** Lani Shepp reported Winter Nights went well. We started with 24 people but two families dropped out. She just moved some of our church funds from Bank of the Republic to Bank of the West so we are now completely covered by FDIC insurance in both banks.

**Staffing – Care Taker:** Anne Barr mentioned Anna Gregory has tried to mediate emergencies at the church, like the sewer backup during Winter Nights, and works above and beyond what the office manager is expected to do. She’s not a caretaker/janitor and shouldn’t be getting calls at home. We clearly don’t have an emergency response for significant property issues. We need to provide Anna with a list of pre-approved vendors to call for emergency services. We also need a caretaker to cover janitorial work (starting ASAP) as well as campus security (lockup) once the hillside project starts. We have funding for a caretaker. B&G under Tom Norris’ leadership will put together a list of vendors for Anna to call for emergency services. The sub-committee of Anne Barr, Bill Abriel, and Bob Winbigler will work on hiring a caretaker who will then take over handling campus emergencies.

**Vice Moderator’s Report:** Per Bill Abriel, he continues to work on governance, a nominations committee, and term limits. Next 80 meeting notes are now being sent to the Council.

**Moderator’s Report:** Anne Barr reported the new TOPS ten-year lease was signed this week. TOPS notified us yesterday of a back gate and backside retaining wall issue. Their exit gate is inoperable due to soil slippage and needs a short term fix until the hillside project changes that whole area. Elizabeth Robinson mentioned the TOPS Director told her the new public Pre-K program is opening up and is having a marked effect on pre-school enrollment. Pre-schools are having to increase their offerings for younger children. Anne was contacted by John Wyro about contractors who will start coming to OCC to do site work for the hillside project. Anne suggested creating a distribution list (Council, B&G, Elizabeth and Anna Gregory) so we know who’s scheduled to be onsite at OCC and parking in our lot.

**At-Large Member Reports:**

Building and Grounds: Bill Abriel provided info from the 3/18/23 B&G meeting. There are three priority projects: sewer drain check and repair; dryer failure; and expanding solar. TOPS will replace the dryer soon and help pay for it. On the horizon there are four items: multiple small jobs; HVAC evaluation; asbestos removal or mitigation; and seismic upgrade.

Anne Barr reviewed the solar panel discussion from the 3/2/23 Next 80 meeting. The Next 80 group voted to purchase the currently installed solar panels when their lease is up in November 2023. In recognition of new rules by PG&E, Next 80 discussed installing more panels to beat the deadline approaching in April. They decided not to do this at this time; they will wait until our real need becomes apparent in a few years and will then work to install sufficient panels so minimal use of the power grid will be necessary. Per Tom Norris and Fred Matteson, the Clean Air Board has decided gas furnaces and water heaters are sun-setting. One option of lowering our PG&E bill is to go with solar panels and possibly a heat pump. Do we go with the panels we have or do we put in more panels and a heat pump as well? The urgency is we have to have a signed contract by 4/13/23 or we are no longer grand-fathered in. The Council moved and approved allowing Tom Norris to move forward on obtaining a solar proposal with terms and Council will reconvene to determine whether or not to sign the proposal. Tom will update Anne on his progress by Monday, 3/27.

Mercy and Justice: Gail Mead reported M&J will meet next Monday regarding Earth Day and working with the Friends of Orinda Creek. Nancy Thursby reported she is previewing a movie about fossil fuel and will advise Anna Gregory to put it on the calendar to be shown the last two Sundays in April. M&J is discussing support for bills on climate change and a back bay trip for youth. Gail reported she is still trying to get power down to the bottom of the hill for our new church sign.

Lifelong Learning & Spirituality: Per Mitch Breitwieser, LL&S may schedule another second hour with Lucina Lopez to hear more about her work. She’s a remarkable person.

**Other Business:** Anne Barr mentioned she is working on a bylaws change to include publicizing Council meetings. She wants Council meetings to go on the church calendar. The Zoom link for the meetings would be shown via eblasts. Anne is traveling in April so Bill Abriel will moderate the 4/26/23 Council meeting.

**ACTIONS:**

B&G-provide Anna with a list of pre-approved vendors for emergencies

Anne, Bill, and Bob-do job description and hire a caretaker

Bill-moderate the 4/26/23 Council meeting for Anne

Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 26, 2023; 7:00 pm

Kathleen Wiegand, Clerk