

**Holy Covenant MCC Minutes  
Annual Congregational Meeting  
November 20, 2022**

**Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 pm by Rev. Martha Daniels.

**Opening Prayer:** Barbara Adams Latsaras

**Certification of Quorum:**

The Clerk, Barbara Adams Latsaras established that a quorum (5 were needed) was present with 9 members in attendance out of 23 total Members.

**Minutes:**

Motion to adopt the Minutes from the November 14th, 2021 Congregational Meeting by Roxann Victory, seconded by Holly Blonde with changes of who was elected changed in the 2021 minutes. Unanimously approved.

**Board Reports:**

a) Moderator's Report (Rev. Martha Daniels)

- Rev. Martha gave a synopsis of her report to the congregation and talked of community outreach, pastoral care to those who request it and her pastoral care of two inmates in Cook County Jail that she does on her own time and expenses yet represents Holy Covenant.
- We baptized four people (two adults, two children), received 2 new members and officiated two weddings.
- Rev. Nilsa Irizarry has been our guest preacher on several occasions, as has Jim Ulisse.
- Ash Wednesday, Easter, Trans Day of Remembrance, Mother's and Father's /Day, Pentecost, MCC Anniversary, Stonewall Sunday and All Saints Day was observed during the church year. The labyrinth was open on Good Friday to walk and was attended by some congregants.
- Book study was done and more have been planned. It is a one-time class, with a book or movie chosen for discussion.
- Share Food, Share Love is still active with our church in which I have started volunteering again and we have other members of the church who are regular volunteers at the food pantry.
- Rev. Daniels is still a member of the Revitalization program & continues to attend any meetings with UFMCC, SAGE and Thrive with Pride Café's
- She facilitates a Facebook group for MCC clergy
- Rev. Martha does outreach to the community through membership and attendance at the monthly lunch for progressive clergy in the LaGrange area. Community outreach includes two groups that are specifically geared to the LGBTQ+ community which is SAGE on Friday afternoons and Thrive With Pride, a program of AgeOptions for seniors.
- I attended MCC General Conference which was entirely virtual. Presentations were prerecorded and are available for six months to view.

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The business portion was held separately and was well organized. Several governing board members were elected, as well as new Elders.

- Rev. Daniels work on the Louisville Institute grant continues “Building Rainbow Bridges: Spiritual Advocacy for LGBTQ+ People on the Inside.” She is creating a structure for MCC’s own spiritual advocacy ministry.
- Pastoral Care Ministry became a ministry of communication during the pandemic. We are now transitioning back into a more forms of pastoral care with visitation, calls when someone misses several worship services, health issues and other visits. Our prayer ministry is expanding to our online services where we receive requests for prayers via online chat.
- Rev. Daniels works with Thriving in Ministry program of MCC, which is intended to support clergy and ministerial leaders by encouraging selfcare and healthy practices, whatever that may be which includes retreats which she went in in October.
- In mid-October, several open and affirming churches, including Holy Covenant, had homophobic signs placed on their doors. They contained the usual rhetoric, as well a couple of the “clobber passages.” The local police departments and the FBI were brought in, and they have identified the perpetrators. We will be installing a camera at the front door.

b) Clerk's Report (Barbara Adams Latsaras):

Barbara Adams Latsaras informed the congregation that we have 23 adults and two children as Members.

c) Treasurer's Report (Joanie Baird):

i) Financial Report

Joanie presented the financial picture for the church for the last year.

- Giving was \$8,000 more than 2020 and expenses went down compared to 2020.
- Pastor's salary was dropped to 80% and will last until June 30, 2023 which is the end of her contract.
- Comparing the budget through 9/22 we were better. Income on a \$26,000 budget about \$15,000. Utilities went up approximately \$1,000 which we attributed to the usage of the church, water (we received a new meter) and other functions.
- As of October, we had \$1,200 in the bank and \$850 in expenses. This does not include Rev. Daniels salary pay which is \$2,500. We owe \$1,800 to the designated fund.
- July income was up in \$1,000 and was as low \$2,000 with an \$8,000 in the negative for the last 9 months.
- Designated accounts show PPP active but it has been forgiven, and we have \$2,500 in our sign account. Waiting to get a good quote probably in the Spring.
- Question – How to mitigate the financials for more money. Congregants have been paying some items as their giving for the church.

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- There was general discussion about the bills and paying what is due and what has the Board done throughout the year to cut down on the bills. Martha's grant helps to bring her some income since we cut it down to 80%.
- We had fundraising for 2022, with two garage sales and a dance.
- We raised money via a Go Fund Me to help pay for the new air conditioning unit which was put in earlier in the Spring of 2022.

ii) Presentation of the 2023 Budget (Joanie Baird)

iii) Budget Approval

- Joanie talked about the differences between the two budgets.
- Raised the expected income by \$16,000. It is a realistic amount in Joanie's opinion.
- There were not questions asked about the 2023 Budget.

Motion to accept the 2023 Budget by Andrew Hillum, seconded by Mary Ann Latsaras. Unanimously approved.

**Interim Lay Delegate's Report (Jim Ulisse):**

- Jim attended the virtual MCC General Conference
- Commission on Rites and Sacraments is still in process and will continue to work until the next General Conference
- The second Commission on Assessments was put on hold
- Elections were held after business meeting at Conference, and it continued until all voices were heard.

**Ministry and Program Reports:**

**Buildings and Grounds Report (Mary Ann Latsaras):**

- We are still dealing with insurance adjusters on the roof and siding. It has been almost a year since we put in a claim on the roof and siding.
- An attempt was made to put more gravel in the parking lot, but the town rejected us and said we need to put in a cement or asphalt parking lot per new codes.
- There has been a lack of participation after numerous appeals to the congregation for help to maintain our new gardens that were restored in Spring of 2021. We are asking for assistance moving forward into 2023 for help in cleaning and maintaining the gardens.
- There was a question on grass cutting for 2023. One person, Joanie Baird has been doing the majority of the grass cutting with help from Barbara, Kathy F. and Bob A. during the summer. One person, Eric Pinto, should he move back to the Chicago area in the Spring, volunteered to do the grass cutting for the summer.

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2) Social Media Report (Barbara Adams Latsaras):

- Website changes done as needed throughout the year
- Posting on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook
- Sends out a weekly Constant Contact newsletter to let the congregation and friends know what is happening at the church.
- Giving Tuesday was successful in 2021 for the church.
- Rev. Daniels thanked Barbara for all the work she has done in the Social Media area and keeping us in the light.

3) Social Action Ministry Report (Rev. Martha Daniels):

- Received 1,000 socks, 250 t-shirts and 250 underwear from Bombas and have started handing them out to worthy causes.
- Share Food, Share Love Food Pantry is still attended by people from the church
- Attended Plainfield Pride in October for no-charge. We had a table there which was attended by Holly Blonde, Sue Calahan, Joanie Baird and Rev. Daniels.

4) Pastoral Care Ministry Report (Rev. Martha Daniels):

- Have communicated within the church, in newsletters, website that Rev. Martha is available for home or hospital visits and for giving communion.
- Holly Blonde is now handling the sending out of cards and phone calls to those that have not attended. Holly indicated she need dates from the Board.

Motion to approve the Ministry Reports by Roxann Victory and seconded by Barbara Adams Latsaras. Unanimously approved.

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**Elections:**

**A) Lay Delegate:**

Jim Ulisse was elected the Lay Delegate.

**B) Election of Board Members:**

Barbara Adams Latsaras and Roxann Victory were elected to 2-year terms on the Board. There is a 1-year opening on the Board still available.

**C) Motion to Destroy the Ballots:**

Motion to destroy the ballots by Barbara Adams Latsaras and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Joanie Baird. All approved

**Adjournment:**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:07 pm by Mary Ann Latsaras, seconded by Roxann Victory. Unanimously approved.

**Closing Prayer:** Rev. Martha Daniels