



## St. John United Methodist Church Prospect, KY Administrative Council

Meeting Minutes - August 9, 2024

**In attendance:** Pastor Iosmar Alvarez, Chris Smith, Kellie Harrison, Carmen Cantrell, Beth Scherer, Jack Meisburg, Louis Fowler, Dan Breu, Michael Belt, Scott Bartelt, Kyle Ray, Diane Belt, Mary Louise Amrein, Natalie Burden, Jeremy Rodgers, Beverly Smith, Steven Lundy, Cheryl McClain, Kristi Dorsey, Betsy Keefe, Jeff Mayott. Visitors: Joyce Fletcher, Wes Worley, Henry Maley.

This was an open meeting and we had about 25 of our members observing.

### 1. Love

**Opening Prayer:** Louis led us in our opening prayer.

**Devotional:** Kellie shared passages from 2 Chronicles 36, John 17, Ephesians 4, and 2 Corinthians 13.

### 2. Learn

**Men's Ministry:** Jeremy shared that the men of St. John meet the last Thursday of each month. Their programs focus on St. John values. On Thursday, August 29th, there will be a Christ centered, men only worship service.

**Women's Ministry:** Beverly noted that her team has grown since "Say Yes Sunday". Four women under 45 have joined her planning committee. On Thursday, September 19th, Ashlee Adkins will speak on "Staying Mentally and Spiritually Fit as a Christian."

**After School Program:** Cheryl stated that one of the goals of the After School program is to provide a safe and loving place for children. She reported that the After School /Summer Camp was at capacity with 75 children enrolled. The After School program is also at capacity this fall. Classes include creative movement and healthy kids. A behavior management class teaches how to resolve conflict and other helpful strategies. Cursive writing is also available. A chapel service is held each week. The St. John After School receives children from Goshen and Harmony elementary schools.

**Preschool Program:** Kristi announced that the first day of Preschool is August 26th. This year the Preschool has a full staff. All teachers in the 4 year old classes have an elementary education degree. Some of the classes offered are: creation lab, stories and more led by a retired librarian, and music led by Sharon Sohn. A class in creative movement is led by T. J. Sanders, a Junior Kindergarten teacher at St. John for 25 years. This class is also offered in the After School program.

### 3. Lead

**Minutes:** Scott made a motion to approve the minutes for July 11, 2024. Betsy seconded the motion.

The minutes were approved.

**Update on the New Kentucky Conference Bishop and District Superintendent:** Iosmar stated that our conference is in a restructuring mode. He announced the appointment of David Graves as our new bishop. He will begin serving on September 1, 2024. Iosmar stated that Bishop Graves is noted for his leadership and organizational skills. An onboarding time is planned for Bishop Graves in September. Kevin Burney is our new District Superintendent, and will also serve as an assistant to the bishop.

**Finance Team:** Dan reported that there is usually a lull in giving during the summer months. We are now at \$110,000.00 behind in giving. Last year's report shows \$50,000.00 behind at this time. Current expenses include repairs to the air-conditioning units and a roof leak at a cost of \$8,000.00-\$10,000.00. We are projected to be behind approximately \$200,000.00 based on past financial history/trends. Total reserves for the church, preschool, and after school totals \$1,100,000.00. The suggestions/possibilities presented at the last Finance meeting included: better communication with the congregation, trim expenses, and possible ways to address concerns about donations going to the UMC apportionments.

**Trustee Team:** The Trustee Team presented a motion for use of church property. Discussion included the issue of description of church representatives (sections IIC and IIIB). The motion to approve the use of church property document passed (12 votes yes, and 5 votes no).

Iosmar noted that he does not have a vote on Administrative Council motions. See Policy Attached:

**Exploration Committee:** Jack and Michael are serving as co-chairs of this committee. Jack shared the names of other committee members. He reported that the purpose of this committee is information gathering only. Committee members will gather information from churches who have already disaffiliated, and from churches who are considering it.

**Membership Update:** Steven shared that there has been a good response to the membership update campaign. He will work with the Administrative Council and the church staff to contact members who have not yet responded. This update on membership will be repeated yearly. The end date for this membership campaign will be reported in the Friday email.

**Closing Prayer:** Betsy led us in our closing prayer.

## Policy Statement Regarding Saint John Mission as a Traditional UMC

Saint John UMC is a member of the Kentucky Annual Conference. As such, it is in full harmony with the doctrine and polity of the United Methodist Church. All references herein to "**Church**" refer to Saint John United Methodist Church, unless expressly or by context, a different application is intended. The **Church** is a community of faith that exercises and expresses the Christian beliefs of the United Methodist Church. These beliefs and corresponding values are described in the Book of Discipline, which the UMC General Conference revises every quadrennium.

### I. Key Characteristics of St John's Community and Mission

#### A. Beliefs and Values

**Our vision is to make a difference by Following Christ, Offering hope, Serving Others and Loving everyone.**

**Church Values: Christ-Centered, Discipleship-Driven, MissionMinded, Community- Oriented, Bible-Based, Family-Focused**

#### B. Representatives and Other Participants

The **Church** community is represented by all of the **Church's** officers, directors, employees, licensed workers, and volunteer leaders (Sunday school teachers, small group leaders, or anyone who is member of a congregation who has been chosen to lead by their peers or the congregation's leadership), each of whom serves the Church's mission and is an integral part of the community (each such person is described for purposes of this Policy Statement only as a "**Church Representative**"). The other community participants, including the United Methodist local church members contribute to the Church's Christian community. Still, they do not represent the Church unless they are also employees or leaders or have been designated as a **Church Representative** by the local church Nomination Committee, the Staff Parish Relations Committee, the Senior Pastor, or the Church Staff.

#### C. Christian Exercise and Expression

1. *As a UMC Traditional Congregation.* **The Church believes that God desires people to live out their faith in a community with other believers and that, accordingly, the Church's Christian community is itself an exercise and expression of its Christian beliefs.** The **Church** believes that the local church is the visible organized expression of the Body of Christ and that the local church finds broader meaning and outreach in fulfilling its biblical responsibilities within the life and witness of the denomination. In addition, those who participate in the life of St John, including Church Representatives, are following the biblical command to live out their faith in community with other believers. Accordingly, the Church is itself an exercise and expression of the United Methodist's Christian beliefs, where, according to the General Conference 2024, every church has the freedom to be who they are regarding our stance on human sexuality.

2. *Through its Mission-Based Activities.* The **Church** believes that all **Church** activities, including the duties of every **Church** member and employee, should be rendered in service to God as a form of worship. Therefore, in every activity, the local **Church** as a community, exercises and expresses the **Church's** Christian beliefs.

### II. Christian Community Standards for Ministry Activities

#### A. General Standards

The **Church** shall engage in activities and use its facilities solely to exercise and express the Christian beliefs of the Church and to further the mission of the **Church**. In furtherance of this mission, the **Church** may provide services or goods to, and may allow use of its facilities by, other groups and persons who are not members of the **Church**. **However, no activity may be conducted, nor any use of Church facilities permitted, if the Church determines that such activity or use condones or expresses a message of support by the Church for any view contrary to the Christian beliefs of Saint John.**

#### B. Current Trends

In response to the outcomes of the 2024 General Conference and the shifting cultural and legal contexts, the Church is committed to upholding traditional beliefs. **As affirmed by the Administrative Council and with the support of the congregation, we confirm that our church facilities will not host same-sex marriages.** We strive to ensure that all activities and operations of the church are in line with the historical teachings of the Church of Christ.

#### C. Religious Activities

The **Church** engages solely in activities that further its Christian mission. All such activities can and should be vehicles for spiritual growth. Therefore, the **Church** considers all of its activities to be a form of religious worship.

The **Church** distinguishes between exclusive religious activities and integrated religious activities. Exclusive religious activities include devotional worship services, such as chapel services conducted by the Church, and distinctly theological or pastoral education.

Integrated religious activities include activities similar to those conducted by nonreligious organizations for the benefit of society. The **Church** conducts such activities in furtherance of and in accordance with its Christian beliefs and values.

The **Church** shall not agree to any limitations on its integrated religious activities, but it may agree not to conduct exclusively religious activities in certain facilities or programs.

#### D. Implementation

To the extent the pastor and the Trustees Committee determines it to be necessary or advisable to further the Church's mission or to cultivate the **Church's** Christian community, he or she may establish additional standards based on Holy Scripture and the St. John historical Christian beliefs, for the activities and programs conducted within the community or for **Church Representatives** or other community participants.

Determining whether any particular activity or use of **Church** facilities is permitted under this Policy requires spiritual discernment applied to each particular circumstance. It shall be made in the sole discretion of the Administrative Council. With respect to activities or uses by other groups or persons, the **Church** may consider without limitation both the content of the proposed activity or use and whether the group or the person is generally perceived by the public as advocating views contrary to the **Church**.

### III. Community Standards for Church Representatives

#### A. Roles and Expectations

In response to God's calling in their lives, **Church Representatives** exercise and express the historical beliefs of the **Church**, by working together to advance St John's mission. **Church Representatives** are responsible for defining, cultivating, leading, and/or representing the **Church's** Christian community as an expression and exercise of the Church's beliefs. Accordingly, each **Church Representative** shall be expected to (i) model the **Church's** biblical beliefs for others, (ii) perform all of his or her duties as a service to God, and (iii) comply with the following obligations:

1. *Christian Beliefs-* Each Church Representative shall affirm his or her agreement with the United Methodist Church's statement of faith and other Christian beliefs and shall not subscribe to or promote any religious beliefs inconsistent with these beliefs.

2. *Christian Conduct Standards-* Church Representatives shall at all times (both during working and nonworking hours) endeavor to conduct themselves in a manner that affirms Biblical standards of conduct in accordance with St John biblical beliefs.

3. *Distinctly Christian Activities-* Each **Church Representative** shall be ready, willing, and able to lead or contribute to distinctly Christian activities such as worship or prayer services.

#### B. Noncompliance by Church Representatives

If any **Church Representative** does not comply with the obligations set forth above, such representative shall have an obligation to disclose such noncompliance to the **Church**. The **Church** may determine whether such representative intends or is likely to continue in such noncompliance. If so, then the appropriate church leadership committee or council, including but not limited to the Nomination Committee, Staff Parish Relations, the Administrative Council, Pre-School and After School Leadership with the Senior Pastor's consultation, may dismiss such **Church Representative** from his or her position on the basis that such **Church Representative's** noncompliance is inconsistent with and undermines the expression and exercise of the Church Christian community, the policies of Saint John United Methodist Church and the UMC Book of Discipline. Such action shall be taken in accordance with any applicable procedures in the Uniform Policy on Discipline, Restoration and Appeal.