March 1, 2020 Special Council Meeting

   The meeting was called to order by Jim Brown, Moderator, immediately following worship on March 1, 2020. Those in attendance were Pastor Pam, Marge N., Denece L, Karen K., Debbie T., Renee G., Audrey C., Jay W., and Yvonne J.

   Pastor Pam led us in prayer that we would consider granting a special use request to the AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Team for three months, beginning in April 2020. It is a team based national and community service program for 18-24-year-olds. This request came to us through The Red Lodge Area Community Foundation.

   The NCCC team is seeking housing for approximately 12 volunteers, who would potentially be building four Habitat for Humanity homes in Red Lodge. They require kitchen and bathroom facilities and sleeping space. The grant has not yet been awarded for this work.

   Jim and Pastor Pam provided information regarding the NCCC. They are a self-insured federal agency whose volunteers are vetted at the same level as federal employees. They have been TB tested and must pass random drug testing. They also have fairly strict behavioral expectations, such as no alcohol or overnight guests at their housing site. The team will consist of men and women.

   Jay West spoke for the facilities management ministry, stating that they were checking with our insurance carrier to see if there were any issues to be considered in hosting these volunteers. Jay also spoke to the fact that our shower would need to be updated. Karen mentioned that portable showers could be an option.

   Several members spoke favorably of this request, pointing out that this would provide community engagement for youth, and that Red Lodge would be gaining four Habitat Homes. Denece stated that their daughters had both participated in similar programs, and that it was an overwhelmingly positive experience.   Audrey expressed concern about the length of the housing request.   The full Church Council will meet on Tuesday, March 3rd at 5:15 to make a decision regarding this issue.