

Executive Committee Meeting Notes

January 20, 2009

Attendees: Kevern Joyce, Paul Durland, Will Sencabaugh, Wendy Reardon, Jim Forbush, Pam Joyce, Debbie Durland, Phil Guymont, Sonja White, Jeff Stone, Daphne Siegal, Lee Murray

Will opened the meeting by lighting a candle and reading passages from Matthew. He mentioned the word connections. He spoke about people in the church being used to doing things a certain way and that it is hard for us to break free of that; hard for us to “step out of the boat.” He hopes that those connections don’t hold us back and that we can let ourselves go forward. We should think of ways that we can create connections; make connections; the connections that already exist between the committees that we already have. Tonight’s meeting is about connecting all the committees and all the work that we do. Then Will led us in a prayer.

Congregational Meeting: The meeting will be this Sunday (January 25th) right after the service in the Sanctuary. You won’t lose as many people that way. There are not too many agenda items.

Stewardship: Jim Forbush reported on the pledging. To date there are a total of 142 pledges. Of those, 86 are new, increased or returning (returning means they didn’t pledge last year but in the prior year or two). Our goal was 100. Of the people who pledged, there were 15 decreases -- that is a small number given the economy. Thirty of 2008 pledges have not heard from. For the operating budget pledged \$181,635 compared to last year \$179,162. Last year there was a shortfall of about \$10,000. For missions last year was \$30,097 and this year \$25,609 so we are down a little less than 4 ½ thousand. We have a swing where we are up 2500 in general and down 4500 in mission. So net we are down \$2000. It is possible that we will get another couple to 5 thousand in. He feels that for a budget for operating he would be comfortable with 18,000-186,000. I think that they had projected 190,000. In these economic times to actually have increased is phenomenal. Kevin thanked Jim for a good job presenting it and bringing it forward and a lot of individual initiative that made the difference. Will also thanked him for his hard effort and work.

Trustees: Phil talked about the budget. In 2008 the projected deficit was \$23,900 and it looks like it will be about \$23,100—so basically the same. The 2009 budget numbers that were voted on at the October meeting projected a deficit of \$23,000 and we are still there. The final figures for 2008 income revenue came in \$2,000 less than the \$330,000 anticipated. Pledges and non-pledge contributions were short about \$10,000 but we received more money from the Stetson Trust than budgeted and those numbers offset. So we came in almost right on. The reason our deficit was \$23,000 instead of \$41,000 is that expenses were lower for the year. Worship and devotional were down almost \$4,000 and pastoral was down almost \$13,000 because we had budgeted for a full year at what we pay an interim. Since the last quarter we had a permanent minister, it saved us a lot of that \$13,000 (not all of it). Parsonage expenses were a couple thousand less; RE a little bit less in spite of a lot more kids; administration \$3,000 less; church operations were up by \$600. Everyone did a good job at managing their budgets. In all, expenses were about \$18,000 less than budgeted, which is why our deficit is about \$18,000 less. In 2009 we are looking for the same budget.

It was stated that the \$23,000 deficit was in addition to the normal \$50,000 projected from the endowment so that we are actually taking out \$73,000 from the endowment. The return on the investment fund last year – income and interest was \$50,000. It also lost \$350,000 in the market so that the return might not be as great next year. We also budget \$10,000 for capital expenses and that would be an additional withdrawal – so it could be \$83,000. At this time the endowment figure is approximately \$750,000.

Nursery School -- The group put together to study options was not able to get together yet and therefore will not have a report for the congregational meeting. There will be a report at the May meeting.

The nursery school has 3 more students so things are slightly better. By the end of the month they will start to get an idea about enrollment for next year. There was a lot of discussion about whether they would be able or not to restructure the programs for next year, because the committee had not met and they were already taking enrollments for the upcoming year and what we should do if the numbers were not good. Is the nursery school the right program for the church to support? Will said that he had spoken to them and they already have 20 in one group and 14 in the other. They are planning an open house on February 9th. So this coming year looks like they are going to make it and it probably will not be a major issue for the church.

At the meeting Sunday, Kevern will ask for updates from the committees and Will plans to talk about direction, organization and are we focusing on the right things; are we doing as well as we can. Can we alter our course, organization structurally to do that?

Kevin passed out a policy manual draft – which comes from a large stack of information that Herb Howe had pulled together. Kevern scanned the ones that pertained to what we were doing now. -- he left out things that had to do with human resources, job descriptions, etc. This is for your review. It does include things that don't warrant a by law change but are guidelines to the church and it will be easier and clearer to access in this form. There was discussion of how and what subjects and items were to be included. Should it be published? It is a start!

It was asked if the personnel committee done anything? Kevern found job descriptions for everyone but the minister in the papers he had gone through. He will follow-up to be sure that they do what they volunteered to do.

The quarterly meeting for March is not usually held, next one in May, with elections. The new board takes over right after the elections. In discussions about restructuring the committees, is there a general idea of timing discussions and a plan? When to have a plan – no; but when to begin a broader discussion - yes. That starts tonight and on Sunday at the quarterly meeting. We could have a March meeting that is only focused on organization.

Will said that there will be an introduction to ideas. He wants every committee to think about what they are doing now and is there a better way to do it. Kevern said there are things that we have talked about doing better and just haven't done it. Hospitality is one. Some things we do well some things we don't. The idea that we can become a better church if we change some of the working structures has been brought up and lead to the current discussions. There was also discussion about the timing of when newly elected officers take over.

Official installation – The official installation will probably happen between May and September. The congregation comes together on and moves forward.

Deacons – Jeff reported that they participated in a retreat and talked about restructuring and what they do. Taking deacons in 2 groups — one focused on worship and one on hospitality and

bring the music committee and folding it into the worship side – bring music and deacons together. Hospitality – distinctly different from the worship. Hospitality – welcoming, greeters, coffee hour, membership. They will be meeting the first Tuesday of February. Giving comment of members as to who would like to be on which direction.

Ways and Means: Deb stated that February 7th would be the chocolate cook off at the Waterfront Grille, and March 6th would be Lees Dinner at the Dartmouth Grange. Both are fundraisers. No one volunteered to be chair of Ways and Means next year at the last meeting.

Nominating – Paul said that there were openings in trustees, ways and means has 2. they are looking for recommendations to replace Kevern. Outreach said that Martha Shoening has stepped down.

Outreach – Pam reported. At their last meeting there were 2 volunteers to chair the committee. Their spring project will be a blood drive at the church. St. Luke's Hospital van will come on a Sunday. They are working out the details. The date will be May 31st

They were asked to allocate the food & cash for Super Bowl Sunday. They decided that the food would be given to the Council on Aging food bank and the money would be divided between the COA and the Hunger Commission.

One Great Hour of Sharing will be March 22

The Coat drive in winding up this week.

RE: Cans – RE goes to the Sunday school mission fund

Wendy said that the New England Aquarium trip is February 28th and they have 46 people signed up. There is at least one parent for every child. They are sleeping in the jellyfish tank, they will do 2 different experiments, have story time with snacks and then will go to bed. They will have the whole aquarium to themselves.

The next is the Sleeping Bag project which is tying in to helping people and will give them to Sister Rose at Market Ministries. Kids will be making the bags. The adults, kids and teens to whom these will be given don't have their home or beds and the idea is that they will be able to take this bed with them wherever they go. Needed are blankets, sheets and neckties.

Roots and shoots is the Jane Goodall club that we formed. They paired us up with another school in Ugala, Africa, a primary school with kindergarten through 8th grade. Their focus for the year is Irrigation. We are doing gardening and they are raising chicks. They will communicate over the internet and send CD's back and forth. One of the things they will be talking about is what a day in the life of each group is like

Then they will jump right into the greenhouse.

Women's Guild: Sonja stated that the rummage sale would be May 2nd. She met with the Tri-delta group at the Smith Mills Church. They have a luncheon meeting once a month and they are doing all kinds of interesting community projects. We are hoping that our group can meet with theirs and we can coordinate and do some things together.

There is also a basket in the kitchen for donations of kitchen staples such as saran wrap, dish detergent. The White Circle has volunteered to clean the kitchen in February.

They are planning a program in March, and one in April

Youth Fellowship: They are planning the junior fellowship ski trip and retreat in February (6,7, & 8th) and Will is planning on joining the group. Forty-five kids are planning to attend. They plan to ski at Gunstock and stay at Brookwoods Conference Center.

Senior fellowship will help on Super Bowl Sunday. They are having a sleepover the night before with games and activities. Kids are hosting coffee hour and will participate in the service

Super Bowl Sunday, February 1st. Will said that at 8 a.m. service . there will be communion, but not at the 10 a.m. service. Communion will be moved to Feb 8th at the 10 a.m. Will has asked Bob Boynton to fill in at the 10 a.m. service that Sunday.

The Lenten Booklet is coming along.

Will and Julie will host an Open house on the 25th Everyone is welcome to stop in at the parsonage.

Will will be meeting with the Church and Ministry committee on January 27th to talk about an installation. June 7th was suggested as a good date.

June 14th is Bacalaurate Sunday.

June 21st is Will's birthday.

Men's discussion group – lent in late February.

Will thinks the word connections is important – connecting people with God, connecting people with each other, connecting this church with our community. This should be our goal. How we should restructure so that we are hitting all those connections.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.