

Church Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, November 17, 2009

Present: Linda Gouveia, Deb Durland, Karen McArthur, Jane Rioux, Paul Durland, Kathy Pappas, Rev. Will, Dick Purdy, Jim Forbush, Margaret Forbush, Phil Guymont, Jenny Lynch, Rich Rende, David Fentress, Susan McLaren, Cecelia Roberts

Jane Rioux shared a thoughtful prayer of thanksgiving to open our meeting at 7:05 pm.

Cecelia was given the floor briefly to request minutes or synopsis of the meetings of each ministry to assist in completing the monthly minutes in a more timely fashion.

Fair Trade Coffee

Linda and Cecelia have been working on bringing Fair Trade coffee to our church. Cecelia updated the council on the work they have done. She distributed a brochure from the UCC/Equal Exchange Justice Ministry for the group to read. A proposal had been developed and submitted to Outreach for start up funds to purchase coffee/tea supplies for coffee hour and other supplies to sell as gift baskets at the Santa's Workshop to raise funds for self-sufficiency. The motion was tabled at this time and can/will be reviewed later by Outreach. Linda and Cecelia will continue to create a proposal to present to the full Council and educate the congregation on the benefits of supporting this endeavor.

New Business

1. Suggestions from the choir: Paul had received letters from Choir members expressing their concerns on how the quarterly meeting was held. They felt like they are not "full" members of the church because of their physical location in the sanctuary and should have been invited down to participate. The meeting also began while they were still singing and choir members felt disrespected. A note has been sent to apologize for the oversight. They also expressed a desire to be a separate committee rather than be under the Worship Ministry. This will be discussed further with ministry members.
2. Children's Circle Nursery: Jenny shared her feelings on how well she feels the new ministry format is being received in the Nursery school. There have been several issues come up where she/they have utilized Council members to advise and support them and it has worked tremendously well. The school also intends to hire a "Director Certified" substitute which will fulfill the requirements of this position within the organization. Although she will be an employee, she will receive her compensation in tuition costs. **A motion was made to support the hiring of this individual under the hiring procedures outlined in the Staff Relations policies. Motion unanimously approved.** The nursery school is also keeping up to date on H1N1 policies and procedures as they come up. Jenny identified a maintenance issue for Buildings and Grounds and offered a professional welder (parent in the program) to address the issue beyond the current resolution.
3. Improving communication: See Communications minutes below. The bigger issue is really decreased church attendance and also relates to attendance at fellowship events. Can we find out how other churches are fairing?

4. Reorganization Feedback: Each ministry was asked to discuss this at their last meeting. There was a wide range of comments from “too loose” to working well. “Buildings” feels more empowered to get things done without endless discussion. Fellowship feels it’s too unclear, all seemed to like the “no nominating” procedure. The ability to move “in and out” of committee might lend itself to inconsistency and felt there should be a commitment to the ministry. For Finance, Karen felt it was productive to have it separated out. Jim identified that Stewardship is a missing component in the scope of ministry. Not planning for the financial future of the church could be detrimental. Susan raised the issue of the monthly Tuesday meetings where all ministries got together. Is there redundancy in this process? Most ministry groups meet on different nights. Fellowship felt this was a positive and brought a sense of cohesiveness to the church. Karen had raised the issue of turnover on the Council with the one year commitment. The congregation had voted to suspend the by-laws until a re-vote in January to address the issue. **A motion was made to “continue suspension of by-law in its current form”. It was unanimously approved.** Another motion was made to “discontinue the group meetings on the second Tuesday of the month. The vote was 3 abstentions, 2 no, and the remainder yes. After additional discussion, the group decided to bring the idea back to each ministry to review the alternative of Sunday am meetings before worship or after worship. 2 separate ideas were brought up – 1.monthly ministry meetings vs. sharing/updating congregation at large during a coffee hour. Both will be discussed further.
5. Music: Will is choosing 2 out of the 3 hymns for worship. Bill is choosing the 3rd. A Capella is only 1 of the options for choir singing. The attendance issues are also a major concern for him and he encourages the council to call someone who you haven’t seen in church in a while. More discussion to follow.

Ministry Minutes

Ministry of Spiritual Formation

SUNDAY SCHOOL UPDATE

We had 65 children (ages 3 through 18) participate in the 200 pie challenge, and concluded our pie sale. We are now beginning preparations for Advent and the Christmas pageant! This year there will be 2 mini pageants: 1 for preschoolers through grade 3, and 1 for 4th graders and up (this way everyone will have an age appropriate way of participating if they wish to do so). The 1st mini pageant will be a "scripture lesson" given by the children, the 2nd will be Christmas story retold by the older youth.

We have had 6 new students join SS between Oct and Nov., referred by word-of-mouth!
We have had a consistent 75% + attendance so far this SS year.

JUNIOR YOUTH FELLOWSHIP UPDATE

We will be re-emphasizing the goals/mission of the group and looking at re-defining how the group will be conducted in year's to come. Community service projects are underway with the group having decorated Christmas stockings for the Women's Guild effort towards Holiday Hope.

SENIOR YOUTH FELLOWSHIP UPDATE

The senior youth fellowship will be going to see RENT on November 22nd at the PPAC. We have a group of 25 kids going along with chaperones and we will be taking a bus. The group was very excited about the possibility of seeing RENT when we talked about it earlier in the year so we are all looking forward to it.

In December, on Sunday the 6th, the senior youth group will be baking Christmas cookies and then delivering to and visiting with some of our elderly church members. One of our parents, Pam Bermudez, will be coordinating the baking for us. We bake and deliver the cookies each year and the visits are very much appreciated by the recipients. The youth also look forward to this each year and really do a nice job taking the time to visit and chat. It is a great way for the high school youth to connect with some of our church members that they would not see otherwise and to actually spend some time sitting down with them- a gift of cookies and time.

Caregiving Ministry

November 17, 2009

The Lay Shepherds continue to have meaningful monthly visits with church family. Please contact me if you know of someone who needs visits. As of last Tuesday, Al DeMello was coming along, and he felt that he did not need the weekly visits. On Wednesday, he was taken into the hospital with other medical issues. He will be in the hospital for a week I visited him Sunday, and he is most appreciative of the church's support. Our prayers and cards would be very much loved.

The Prayer Shawl Ministry has a new member. Presently there are sixteen members. Two shawls have been donated this month.

The Membership Team will not be pursuing a college freshmen reunion this Christmas as previously discussed. For now, we will keep in touch by email. Our focus will be on recent and prospective new members. I did attend the new member meeting Sunday evening with Will. One couple attended.

Jane Rioux

Outreach Ministry

Attendees at last meeting were Julie Sencabaugh, Margaret Forbush, Susan McClaren, Jeannie Gulbranson, Doris Sepuka, Julie Rhind, Anne Sedgewick.

The focus of the November meeting was identifying organizations to whom we will donate the congregation's pledged offerings. We researched each of about 20 local, national and international organizations, including all those nominated by members of the congregation. For each, we reviewed a number of criteria in order to ascertain the compatibility of their mission with ours, their effectiveness, financial health, etc. The key question we ask in each case is, "Do we think giving to this organization reflects the will of the congregation?" In November we reviewed local organizations, and in December we will review the international ones.

Our group reviewed the status of several projects. Turkey Sales have concluded with sales of \$940, slightly less than last year. Proceeds will go to Market Ministries for food assistance. The Holiday Hope campaign has commenced. We have committed to provide Christmas for 15 families and 30 individuals. Christmas gifts, with personalized stockings crafted by church youth, are to be delivered on December 8th and 9th. Plans are underway to launch the annual coat drive.

The Blood Drive date has been moved to May 23rd to coincide with Children's Sunday.

We voted to spend pledge a portion of the pledge income as follows:

Nativity Prep -- \$2000

Our Sisters School -- \$1000 (with matching program = \$2000)

PACE -- \$1000

Boys & Girls Club (America Reads Program) -- \$1000

The Hunger Commission -- \$2000

Dartmouth Council on Aging -- \$1000

Community Boating Ctr. -- \$350

Salvation Army -- \$1000

Congo Mission Trip -- \$500

Communications Ministry **Minutes of November 9 Meeting**

Congregational Church of South Dartmouth

Attending: Jim Forbush, David Ferreira, Brian Mikkelson

1. Minutes of prior meeting were re viewed and approved.
2. David provided a draft of a news release describing the Church Youth pie making effort for Thanksgiving. The release was approved as written with the addition of the descriptor 'of New Bedford' applied to Market Ministries. David described his next steps as showing a final copy to Wendy Reardon and obtaining a picture of the young people making pies to accompany the copy. David's hope was to get it published the week of November 16 in the Chronicle and the Standard Times.
3. Brian provided an update on the Children's Circle Nursery video project. Brian has new editing equipment which reduces his throughput time and allows for more definitive scheduling. Brian had a draft of a script in hand from Scarlett which needs major modification. Brian provided his edit of Scarlett's work—a major improvement, but still needing some work. Jim volunteered his and his wife, Margaret's services for further editing. Brian also confirmed a video 'shooting' timetable from late January through mid February.

4. Jim brought a mockup of the New Member packet for review. The 'Invitation to Participate' was acclaimed. The Congregational Church History needed to be modified to include the new Allen organ, Bose Sound System and new Elevator in the 'Modern Era' section. Jim agreed to make the modifications and to work with Linda Keith to have the entire packet ready for Will's New Member candidate meeting on November 15.

5. Jim also brought the group up to date about the efforts to review the church's internal communications. With the completion of the New Member packet, Jim was ready to begin this next project. For the next meeting, Jim agreed to provide a task schedule as well as a draft questionnaire to determine how the church media, The Spire, the Blog, the Worship Bulletin and the Website are currently being used by the congregation.

6. Given the complex December schedules of the team members, it was determined to hold our next meeting on Tuesday, December 1 at 7:00 in the church library.

Staff Relations Ministry

No official meeting for the month of November but Kathy Pappas will resume updating employee contracts.

Worship Ministry

Worship Ministry Meeting Notes

November 2, 2009

Present: Larry, Tena, Linda, Peter, Cyndi, Rose, Jeanne, Bill, Paula, Rev. Will

We all signed up for "deacon" responsibilities for the Sundays in November, December, and Christmas Eve. **Linda will remind Wendy to ask children to greet at the 5:00 service, but we still need one or two "deacons" to be in charge at that service. Also, we still need someone to sign up for the 8AM service on January 3.** The sign up sheets will be sent in an attachment. **The Worship Ministry is responsible for getting greeters/readers for the month of December, so don't forget to invite people to participate and give their names to Linda Keith.**

Advent:

- We will meet in the sanctuary at **9AM on November 28** to decorate the sanctuary for Advent. Rev. Will will talk to Al about the whereabouts of the advent decorations.
- Linda will bring wreaths to decorate the four outside doors and will talk to Nancy Dewolfe about how the flower fund is funded to see if there is money available for floral purchases such as the Christmas wreaths. Also, Linda will talk to Jane Rioux about the crèche.
- Cyndi and Tena will work together to invite members of the congregation to participate in lighting the advent candle during advent. Please give the names to Linda Keith so that she can include them in the bulletin.
- December 6 is Communion Sunday. Tena will assist Rev. Will at the 8:00 service; Bill, Tena and Jeannie will serve at the 10:00 service. Linda will take care of getting the bread and the juice.

Cyndi reported that the template for the Joys and Concerns card is completed. Rev. Will asked if we could postpone implementing this for a few weeks as he is concerned with overwhelming the congregation with too many changes at once.

We discussed at length the details of the service, specifically the prelude, the announcements, and latecomers. We agreed that the announcements need to be kept brief, avoid redundancy and perhaps have them at 9:55 before the service begins with the prelude at 10:00. Again as Rev. Will did not want to make too many changes to the service at once, we agreed to leave the announcements where they are in the service, begin the service with the invitation to quiet our minds in preparation for the service while the prelude is played (on the piano as much as possible!). In addressing the issue of latecomers to the service, we talked about closing the inner doors at 10:00 in hopes of creating the idea of sacred space beyond the doors and the importance of arriving before 10:00 in order to be able to settle in and not create a disturbance. We agreed to hold off on closing the doors, but that the “deacon” in charge would remain in the vestibule to greet any latecomers and gently guide them to go up to the balcony on the right or to a seat in the sanctuary. Hopefully we will be able to “train” people to arrive on time.

Fellowship Ministry

The first “Dine Around” had 27 people participate. There were 3 groups of 9 people around town. Several have asked to do it again so it will be scheduled some time in March. There is also a Cookie Exchange planned for December 13th. Anyone bringing cookies will get a receipt for and will be able to take home the same amount they brought in after worship that day. There is discussion on holding the Ash Wednesday chowder supper again this year.

Buildings and Grounds Ministry

Not much activity but a few things were done. The shed was painted in the parking lot.

Finance Ministry

No additional report at this time.