

Church Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 19, 2010

Present: Deb Durland, Paul Durland, Rev. Will, Gail Litchfield, Rich Rende, Dick Purdy, Susan McLaren, Jane Rioux, Margaret Forbush, Jenny Lynch, Jim Forbush, Dave Fentress, Linda Gouveia, Karen McArthur, Cecelia Roberts

*Deb Durland opened the meeting with a devotional prayer. Rich Rende to give February meeting's opening prayer.

*Minutes of January's meeting were approved unanimously by the Council.

New Business

Deb Durland passed around the Coffee Hour sign up book to fill in the open dates. She asks that each Ministry take responsibility for one Sunday.

A letter of request came from the Women's Guild asking for approval on an upcoming event. They have requested May 1st for their spring rummage sale. The church calendar was reviewed and the date is available. Their request was approved. The second request came from Animal Advocates requesting use of the lower social hall on Saturday, May 8th for a craft sale. The request was reviewed with the church calendar and approved by the Council as requested.

Stewardship Results

Rev. Will reports that the stewardship drive overall has been very successful. A second letter and a third letter (3A and 3B depending on your giving status) have also been sent out. Some time in the future a fourth card will be sent out to a prepared list of church members asking them to state their membership status/intention. Rev Will has been talking with Jane about researching membership list to weed out those young adults not living at home but still listed at their parents address. The Council supports his efforts of membership refinement.

Quarterly Meeting Format

Paul has asked that the Church Council sit all together in the front of the room, representing the leadership of the church. The meeting will take place in the Lower Social Hall with a brief coffee time and a chance for people to buy soup and bread to support the Mission Trip. Kevern will talk briefly about the by-law review regarding the reorganization process. Karen will present the updates on the budget. Phil raised a question regarding the potential increased shortfall if pledges and collections fall short.

Church Work Day

Susan McLaren presented the Outreach Ministry's discussion on a spring church-wide work day. The idea of doing a day around the church was discussed and determined not to be a priority at this time. It was decided that April 10th will be the day at a place yet to be determined by Outreach. Several sites have been visited for consideration. The

church workday will be put on the fall schedule. Potential for saving the church money by doing this project.

Jim Forbush presented his Communications Ministry survey and each Council member was asked to complete one. This will be presented at the Quarterly Meeting for each person attending to complete one as well. Information will be reviewed and recommendations will be made by this group on how to proceed with the various modes of communication within the church.

Reverend Will reported that the Pastoral Advisory Committee has been restarted with 5 members. Also, if any ministry wants him to attend their meeting, they should invite him to it. Also, an Exit Strategy for Ministries needs to be created and added to the agenda for future meetings.

Ministry Minutes

Worship Ministry

Worship Ministry Notes from Meeting on January 4, 2010

We signed up for Sanctuary responsibilities for February. I incorrectly stated that the deacon on duty is responsible for lining up someone to read scripture each Sunday. When I checked the notes from an earlier meeting, I found that we had established that the Ministry in charge for a particular month is responsible for getting greeters/offering collectors and readers and getting their names to Linda Keith for the Bulletin. Sorry for any confusion on this.

Linda reminded everyone that we will be taking down the Advent decorations this Saturday, January 9. Please be there by 9AM. It won't take us long if everyone participates.

We reviewed the Christmas Eve services. It was felt that the 11PM service could be shortened by beginning the prelude prior to the start of the service, singing fewer verses of the hymns, and a more concise homily. It was also stated that this service was not the one to introduce a new hymn to the congregation. We also discussed returning to our tradition of ending the service with singing *Silent Night* and extinguishing our candles as we departed. Larry liked the idea of leaving the sanctuary with candles lit and congregating outside to sing *Silent Night*. There are concerns about fire safety and the logistics of doing this. As we prepare for this service next year, we want to keep in mind the desire to have the worship experience feel sacred and serene. Rev. Will would like us to consider and talk to others about the possibility of moving the 11PM service to 10PM. Many of us felt that it had its appeal as we were exhausted by the lateness of the hour. We could bring it up at the annual meeting for a non-binding vote to gauge the response.

Rev. Will will get the Prayer Request Cards printed up to begin use in a couple of weeks. He will make an announcement about them and begin using them the following week. The cards will be made available in the Narthex so people can fill them out before they sit down, and in the pews for those who want to fill them out after they have settled in.

The deacon on duty will collect the cards during the Exchanging of the Peace to give to Rev. Will.

Rev. Will mentioned that there will be a baptism on Sunday, Jan 24 (Cyndi is the deacon in charge).

Rev. Will asked each of us to visit another church to observe their service. It is hoped that this experience will enlarge our experiences of services and perhaps inspire new ideas about how we worship. Karen McArthur has invited anyone interested in joining her at the Congregational Church in Cambridge. Any one interested in this can let Linda Gouveia know and she will talk to Karen about a possible date.

Our next meeting will be Monday, February 1 at 7PM in the church library. Bill Shattuck will lead the discussion of chapter 6 in *The Heart of Christianity*.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda R. Gouveia

Ministry of Spiritual Formation

Caregiving Ministry

Caregiving Ministry

The Membership Team met on Sunday morning, January 10, to plan a Fellowship Coffee on February 28 after church in the lower social hall for new members joining this day and for recent new members. It is an opportunity to celebrate these members and an opportunity to learn what our newer members are doing in the church and for all of us to get to know each other a little better. The Caregiving Ministry will host this coffee.

There was a discussion of having a table downstairs after church with team members to give out information about the church, such as the pamphlet on the different ministries. This might be helpful for those thinking about joining the church.

The Prayer Shawl Ministry will have a blessing of the shawls in April. Some of the shawls will go with our students on the Mission Trip in June.

The Lay Shepherds are visiting two more church members.

Under the Prayer Chain Team, Marcia Hathaway wrote beautiful prayers throughout the advent season. Sign up to read her inspirational prayers.

Outreach Ministry

Updates

The Christmas Eve offering totaled \$1521.00 and was donated to Market Ministries. It was the highest Christmas Eve offering in several years.

The Coat Drive, which concludes at the end of January, is a success; two deliveries have already been made to the Dartmouth Public Schools.

The Food Pantry Donation program kicked off the year with the new focus on one special "food of the month." For example, January is peanut butter month.

The Spring Service Project site survey has been conducted and we have identified potential sites. We are going to suspend planning until it is determined whether or not the Executive Council is going to sponsor an in-house project for the church this spring. It is the opinion of the Outreach Ministry that the congregation would not be able to put a 100% effort against both projects within a limited time span. Outreach would reschedule the project in the fall.

Nomination Funding will now take place on a semi-annual basis, in June and November, instead of once per year, as we have done in the past. We will communicate this change to the congregation so they have the opportunity to submit nominations earlier in the year.

Souper Bowl food donations will be tallied after the service by the Outreach Ministry members. We would like to donate the food to the Council on Aging if they have the space to accept it, with the Salvation Army as a backup. The monetary offering will go to Market Ministries.

One Great Hour of Sharing offering is March 14th.

Communications Ministry

Communication Ministry Meeting, January 13, 2010 Congregational Church of South Dartmouth

Attending: Brian Mikkelson, David Ferreira, Jim Forbush

1. Minutes from November 2009 Meeting were distributed and approved
2. David did verify that he had the right contact information for the religion pages of the Standard Times.
3. A brief discussion was held as to whether an effort should be made to disseminate our PR articles to broader UCC organizations. The group felt that our communication ministry charge was to improve communications to our current and future parishioners rather than the larger UCC bodies. Hence, PR efforts to the UCC were dropped to the bottom of our priority list.
4. Jim let the group know about the MA Conference 'wiki' effort—with a site address and a brief idea about its use and value. This was just an FYI, no follow up necessary.
5. The Children's Circle video script final draft was circulated. It has been approved by the CCN Ministry head and by Scarlet. Brian will provide recording times for the three

prospective readers - Margaret Forbush, Jenny Lynch and Scarlet. Brian will do the recording, and put together a scene list to begin shooting.

6. Jim handed out his prospective church media questionnaire. The two objectives were 1) to gain an understanding of how people get their church news and how they feel about it and 2) to determine whether we should return to mailing a paper copy of the monthly Spire. It was determined that the questionnaire length was fine, the topics important and reasonably well addressed. A few small changes were made to some wording. It was agreed to proceed by presenting the objectives to Church Council, having the Council take the questionnaire and provide feedback. After any necessary adjustments are made, the group agreed to the strategy of handing out the questionnaire at Sunday Service. Jim will coordinate with the Worship Ministry on this. Questionnaires would be returned to the church office to the mailbox of the Communications Ministry.

7. A brief discussion was held as to the next good PR opportunity for the Church. Souper Bowl Sunday was the recommended event. David will work out a plan to get a write up and photos to send to the local media. David also volunteered to contact Wendy for Youth Project ideas and Cecelia for Mission Trip events for future PR articles.

8. The next Meeting was scheduled for Tuesday February 2 at 7:00 pm.

Staff Relations Ministry

No report for January

Fellowship Ministry

Deb Durland reported that the next Dine Around is scheduled for Saturday, March 13th. The Chowder Supper is scheduled for Ash Wednesday, February 17th.

Buildings and Grounds Ministry

There was no formal meeting this month. Dick reported that there is a “wish” for a shed for the garden equipment. One project noted for this spring is repainting the entry hall at the side entrance. They will try and get it done over the spring school vacation week. Discussed a new communications vendor which could save the church as much as \$100/month.

Children’s Circle Ministry

Jenny Lynch reported that there is an open house happening at the nursery school for interested families for the fall. A policy handbook on parental visitation is being created. Tuition payments on line need to have a stop date. An Art Show fund raiser with the art created by the children of the Nursery School is scheduled for the spring. All artwork will be matted and presented in a positive way. Some housekeeping issues were identified – cleaning becoming a problem. Al will be back in 2 weeks with a slow integration back to regular hours. The board is holding the full day program for one more year; the five day program will be deferred until next year.

Spiritual Formation

Ministry team does not meet formally every month. Regular meetings will resume in the spring as activities increase.

Finance Ministry

No formal report this month.

Treasurer's Report

Phil Guymont reported that the Investment Committee has been working with the new investment advisors, Schwab and Windward. The transfer of funds has been completed to the new manager.

**Respectfully submitted,
Cecelia Roberts
Church Clerk**