

Church Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, March 16, 2010

Present: Paul Durland, Rev. Will, Jane Rioux, Jenny Lynch, Margaret Forbush, Jim Forbush, Susan McLaren, Phil Guymont, Linda Gouveia, Karen McArthur, Wendy Reardon, Daphne Siegal

Jim Forbush gave the opening devotional for the meeting.

Minutes of February's meeting were approved unanimously.

Agenda Items

Communication Ministry's draft plan

Jim Forbush provided copies of a written summary of questionnaire feedback and a draft action plan and reviewed this with the group. Overall the respondents felt they were well-informed (77%) and that our various media were easy to use and content was about right (90%+). The four key recommendations were:

1. Fix easy items immediately – these have already been done and include making the Blog easier to read, eliminating stand alone Scripture passages in *Spire*, and improving the church website.
2. Encourage those who want a hard copy of *Spire* to get on the church mailing list.
3. Print more results of ministry and mission accomplishments in the *Spire* and Sunday bulletin. This will include a “Good News” column that shares summary results, in addition to narrative stories by the ministries. The Blog will remain calendar focused.
4. Share more personal information among the congregation. Ideas included providing a brief bio on coffee servers in the bulletin each week; have a “Get to Know” column in *Spire* that could feature a person or family; involve more individuals in the worship service, giving witness.

The group voted to accept Jim's recommendations.

Ministry Organization Feedback

Margaret Forbush referred to document that was presented at the last annual meeting about the (then) new ministry structure, how it should work, responsibilities of ministry members and leaders, terms of service, recruitment, etc. She suggested that we revisit some of these ideas and assess how they are working now, after a year. Margaret also reported on some of the concerns that were raised when this topic was discussed at the last Outreach Ministry meeting. The Council had a wide-ranging discussion of these issues and different viewpoints were heard. Some of the issues raised were: how to do ministry recruitment and succession planning, especially for leadership positions, without a Nominating Committee; there is currently no comprehensive list of ministry members available; there is a need to balance continuity with turnover both in the Council and on the ministries; how to involve more people in church activities and committees.

Action Items: Paul asked all ministry chairs to provide him a list of ministry members and their roles and an indication of who would continue on their ministry for next year if possible. Paul also requested that Church Council members let him know if they intend to keep their current roles next year (or not).

Putting Contracts on Same Timeline Paul raised this request on behalf of Kathy Pappas who requested a uniform date for employee reviews. Rev. Will suggested the best approach would be to put contracts for Al, Linda and Bill on a calendar year cycle but that the others (Children's Circle, Wendy, Daphne and Claire) should all be on a school year cycle since their work is tied to the school calendar. It was agreed to recommend this approach to Kathy.

Membership List

Jane Rioux reported that the Membership Team met recently and may want to create student member and non-resident member categories instead of "inactive member", which sounds too negative. They will work with Rev. Will on the membership list over the next couple months. The Membership Team is focused on welcoming new members and getting them more involved in the Church.

Monthly Ministry General Group Meeting Feedback

This topic was discussed once again, but no consensus was reached. Some Council members feel it's important to have a monthly group meeting prior to the individual meetings on the second Tuesday of the month, while others feel it's redundant and not helpful. Several ministries don't meet on Tuesday anyway. Although no general agreement was reached on this subject, the Council voted in favor of having a group ministry meeting on April 13 to get everyone together again to share information before the end of the church year.

Formation of a Music Committee

Name Tags

Paul reminded everyone to wear nametags on Sunday. Jim suggested that ministry chairs be indicated on name tags.

Ministry Reports

Fellowship Ministry

- The recent "Dine Around" was a big success – they are considering doing another one this year.
- A PawSox outing is planned for Friday, June 4 (note: this date has since been changed). Ticket sales are underway and will continue to March 28. Ticket sales have already exceeded the 25 minimum requirement.
- It was noted that Fellowship supports having the group meeting on second Tuesdays and is concerned about the lack of a Nominating Committee.

Caregiving Ministry

The Membership Team met on March 7, 2010. The members of the group prefer to have their meetings on Sunday mornings. Attending Tuesday evening meetings is difficult for their schedules.

There was positive feedback from New Member Sunday Fellowship Coffee on February 28. A special thank you goes out to all the newer members who spoke in church that day about what church membership means to them. Thank you to Richard Rende, David Ferreira, Margaret and Jim Forbush, and Rev. Will!

The Membership Team will host a coffee on Confirmation Sunday, May 16. A couple of our youth will be asked to speak that day on what church membership means to them.

The Membership Team looks forward to helping Rev. Will review the membership list of the youth.

The Prayer Shawl Ministry will have a dedication of shawls on April 25. A few of the members are also knitting children's sweaters to send on the Mission Trip.

The Lay Shepherds are asking for help to supply rides for members of the church family during the week and on Sundays.

Finance Ministry

They want to promote online giving by members of the church. Currently only 6-8 people give online. Finance can provide updates on what each ministry has spent year-to-date on request.

Communications

The group discussed follow-up on the membership survey (see summary in minutes above). A video on Children's Circle is still planned but shooting has been temporarily delayed.

Children's Circle

A potluck dinner for parents is scheduled for March 23. Twenty two children are already enrolled for the next school year, and tuition is paid up in full. Parent conferences are currently underway. A Spanish teacher is coming in weekly for the 3-day class. Wally (from the Red Sox) will be coming to visit the nursery school. Ads are currently running in local newspapers and ad boards are up to promote enrollment in the school. Field trips are planned to the planetarium and oceanarium.

Ministry of Spiritual Formation

- **Junior Youth Fellowship** -- Feedback on the Winter Retreat was very positive. The Congo Café is planned for April. The Youth group is contributing to the Outreach collection drive for the Boys and Girls Club.
- **Senior Youth Fellowship** -- The Souperbowl sleepover and worship service were great. Kids will help out at the finish line with the New Bedford Half Marathon. For the April 10 Outreach project at Boys and Girls Club, they hope to have about 10 kids volunteering. Senior Youth are also helping out by collecting and donating sports equipment.

- **Sunday School** – Lots of activities are planned for Holy Week including a Palm Sunday parade, special program on Good Friday, and Easter egg hunt, etc. They will be setting up the greenhouse soon and growing only things from biblical times, including fig trees and grapes. Sunday School will donate plants to Sharing the Harvest again this year. The Congo Café will be April 11 from 6-8 pm. Will be doing a special collection of items to donate for the Mission trip and also making care packages.

Worship Ministry

During Holy Week, devotions will be at noon instead of early morning as in previous years. These will be led by the Worship Team. The Maundy Thursday service will be at 7pm. The Worship Ministry will be discussing how to provide coverage for Rev. Will when he's on vacation for 4 Sundays in summer and also 2 Sundays for the mission trip. The Smith Mills pastor recently retired, and sharing services with them won't be an option this summer.

Treasurer's Report

None

Building and Grounds Ministry

No report

Outreach Ministry

The last group meeting was March 9.

- Updates: Souperbowl Sunday collected over \$800 in cash offerings and over \$500 of food. A church blood drive is planned for May 23 to coincide with Children's Sunday. At the June 8 meeting, Outreach will review nominations for funding. The plan is to make funding decisions primarily in June and December.
- Community Service Day at Boys & Girls Club on April 10 -- A status update was provided and tasks were assigned. A collection drive is underway at church with lots of support from the Sunday School and Youth Fellowships.
- Ministry Organization – Discussed feedback on how the new structure is working. Suggestions included: emphasize that ministry membership is no longer a 3-year commitment; find ways to get more church members involved, perhaps on a project basis instead of requiring a commitment to ongoing ministry membership.
- Rev. Will met with Outreach to introduce the idea starting a coffeehouse at the church to be organized and run by youth. (See below). Outreach enthusiastically supported this concept.

Report from Rev. Will

- Discussed plans to start a coffeehouse at our church based on a highly successful, youth-oriented model in Attleboro. This coffeehouse is organized and run by high school kids, meets monthly on a Saturday night, attracts an audience of 100+, charges \$5 for admission, and \$1 for a bottomless cup of coffee. It offers a very supportive environment for kids and has raised over \$30,000 in the past 6

years. The kids determine where to donate the money. Our coffeehouse will use Fair Trade coffee and provide money to buy supplies for Sunday coffee hour, too.

- The new dishwasher has been installed in the kitchen.
- It's annual report time. Linda needs reports from Ministry chairs by April 9.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan McLaren