

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MINUTES

December 3, 2007

Present: Rev. Susan Henderson, Rev. Sandy Dodson, Nae Pearson, Gordon Forbes, Judy Cox, Sue Dollins, Trish Esposito, Jan Forbes, Pete Hotchkiss, Dave Main, Cynthia Page, Doris Raber, Kate Rogers, Leslie Weyn, Leslie Wilson, Tim White.

Moderator Gordon Forbes called the meeting to order at approximately 7:33 p.m. Nae Pearson opened the meeting by leading the Council in singing O Come, O Come Emmanuel.

Jan Forbes moved that the minutes of the Council's November meeting be approved, as presented. Dave Main seconded the motion, which passed without objection.

Reports—Boards, Committees

Christmas Plans—On behalf of the Deacons, Dave Main reported on Christmas worship plans. He said that there will be two identical services on December 16 at 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. On that date, the Deacons will also distribute poinsettia plants. On December 23, worship will follow the usual schedule, i.e., 9:00 and 10:30 a.m. services. On December 30, there will be a single worship service at 10:30 a.m. Dave said that the Deacons were aware of discussions about using lit candles at the 9:00 p.m. Christmas Eve service. He asked for further feedback on the question, and that a decision would be made. Jan Forbes reported on behalf of the Board for Christian Education that Church School will not be held on December 16 or 30. Jan said that Rev. Sandy Dodson will lead the the family Christmas Eve service, which will involve a somewhat impromptu pageant and that costumes for the children will be available. Rev. Sandy Dodson added that children participating in the pageant will re-enact the manger scene, and that some will have spoken lines. Nae Pearson reported that the Chancel Choir has scheduled extra rehearsals to prepare for Benjamin Britten's *Ceremony of Carols*, which will be presented with a harpist on December 16. Nae said that CCC's intergenerational orchestra will participate in the family Christmas Eve service at 5:00 p.m. A 14-piece orchestra has been assembled for the 9:00 p.m. service, at which the music will be more solemn, Nae said.

Wedding Policy—Gordon Forbes distributed a draft of the new wedding policy. There was discussion of some aspects of the policy. The draft policy provides that alcohol—in the form of wine or champagne—may be served at receptions in the Social Hall, at the discretion of the Church Administrator. Tim White expressed

concern that CCC could risk liability related to serving alcohol. He also described an anecdotal experience in which an inebriated guest had threatened a church member. Rev. Susan Henderson said that she would be in favor of a policy prohibiting alcohol on CCC premises. Kate Rogers asked how often events at CCC have served alcohol. Sue Dollins said that such events are rare. Rev. Susan Henderson described another aspect of the policy, which provides that a CCC pastor is always an officiant at the service. Susan clarified that, in her view, the policy would permit an ordained family member of the bride or groom to participate in the service, but that a CCC pastor would always be present. Trish Esposito suggested, with regard to another issue, that the policy ought to define who is a “member” of CCC for purposes of the policy. **Tim White moved that the Moderator and staff continue with next steps in revising and implementing the policy.** Sue Dollins seconded. The motion was approved by consensus. Gordon Forbes asked the Trustees to make a recommendation with regard to the alcohol policy.

Trustees—Tim White reported on the status of the 9601 Colesville Rd. property. Tim said that the YMCA would like to buy the property. There is a letter of intent from the YMCA, which includes a fixed price and provides for CCC to retain parking rights in perpetuity. Tim said that the Trustees are interested in trying to retain one of the two lots that make up the property. The letter of intent is expiring, but the YMCA would like to continue discussions. Tim expects the attorney for the YMCA to contact him. Tim also reported that the Trustees have planned a retreat for December 8. At their retreat, the Trustees plan to focus on big-picture issues, including implementation of a multi-year budget process and strategies for debt retirement.

Planned Giving Committee—Pete Hotchkiss reported that the committee is working on policies and procedures. Gordon Forbes and Dave Main asked whether the policies and procedures document would be submitted to the Council for approval. Pete said that because the committee reports to Trustees, he did not believe that Council approval would be required. Instead, Pete said, the committee is required to report quarterly to the Trustees and annually to the Congregation. Tim White agreed.

Nominating--Trish Esposito presented the report of the Nominating Committee. She said that, because a member of the Board of Trustees had resigned, the Trustees will need to consider whether to fill the vacancy for 6 months or to wait until recruiting for the new church year begins. Other continuing vacancies include: four openings on Stewardship, one on Christian Education, two on Deacons, one on Social Witness, and one on Trustees. Trish reported that a candidate is considering the position of NewsNotes editor. If that candidate declines, however,

Trish said that we will have to consider how to deal with the newsletter. She said we may need to think outside the box. Rev. Susan Henderson asked how the position of NewsNotes editor intersected with the role of the webmaster. Dave Main said that, in some ways, the website and the on-line calendar mean that the newsletter is not needed, but he recognized that some members can't do without NewsNotes. Trish Esposito urged that those who rely on getting the newsletter by mail not be cut off. Judy Cox said that the webmaster is willing to offer training on using the internet to those interested. Rev. Susan Henderson suggested that Sarah Anders and the Senior Adult Ministry might play a role in assisting seniors to become more comfortable with technology. Susan suggested that the Communications Committee look at the issue broadly. Judy Cox said that she would report back at the next Council meeting.

Board for Social Witness—Leslie Wilson reported that, as in past years, January will be Social Witness month. The Board plans to highlight CCC's connection with Shepherd's Table. In addition, the Board will invite a speaker from the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries. The Board is also considering a “working worship” in which the Congregation would have the opportunity to connect with volunteer opportunities, for example. Rev. Susan Henderson said that staff would consult with the Board to coordinate planning for worship in January.

Council Retreat—Sue Dollins reminded the Council that the retreat will be held on February 2, 2008, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Manor Care Bethesda.

Board for Outreach and Engagement—Cynthia Page reported that Cory Gray has installed new spotlights for the outdoor sign. Rev. Susan Henderson expressed concern that the current sign doesn't communicate well to those outside the CCC community. She felt that the Board should consider this issue. Susan also asked how CCC helps the community to visualize Advent. She mentioned such observances as a creche. She suggested CCC give attention to this issue for the next Advent/Christmas season.

Staff Support Groups—Gordon Forbes reported that the Transition Committee is working with Rev. Susan Henderson in the capacity of a support committee. Rev. Sandy Dodson is working with her support committee. CCC still must establish a support committee for Nae Pearson.

Physician Assistance in Dying—Gordon Forbes reported that, after Bill Neal made his presentation on Physician Assistance in Dying at the Central Atlantic Conference Annual Meeting, the UCC General Synod passed a resolution in support of the issue that had been presented by the Oregon/Northern California Conferences. In Bill's view, the resolution passed at General Synod was weaker than the resolution

Bill favored. He would like to pursue the issue further by presenting his resolution at a Congregational meeting for endorsement by CCC. Gordon informed Bill that, in Gordon's view, CCC was not ready for a Congregational meeting on this issue. Gordon encouraged Bill to continue to work with the Board for Social Witness to educate the Congregation further. The Council discussed the issue, concluding that it was important for the Board to offer a forum for further discussion of the issue.

Senior Minister Search Committee—Gordon Forbes reported that the Committee is not ready to begin its work in a public way. Gordon said that the Committee could begin in January by orienting its members to their roles and starting to study the demographics of the community. Cynthia Page said that it would be fine for the committee to begin its work in February. Rev. Sandy Dodson agreed that proceeding slowly was the prudent course of action.

Safe Church Policy—Rev. Sandy Dodson reported that on March 8, 2008, from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m., there will be a Safe Church Workshop. The training will be open to all, but is particularly important for those at CCC who work with children, youth, and vulnerable adults.

Staff Reflections

Rev. Susan Henderson read from Romans, ch. 13, v. 11-14. She reflected on Advent as being a time of moving from dark to light. Each staff member offered some reflections on this theme.

Nae Pearson closed the meeting with chant, and the meeting adjourned at approximately 9:30.

Respectfully submitted,
Leslie Weyn
Church Clerk