

Executive Council Minutes December 1, 2008

Present: Rev. Susan Henderson, Nae Pearson, Trish Esposito, Dave Ackerman, Aldene Ault, Tom Gustafson, Marilyn Hall, Linda Hodson, Andy Holmes, Pete Hotchkiss, Richard Jaeggi, Pete Macleod, Dave Main, Greg Muncill, Kate Rogers, Jackie Walters, Anne Weissenborn, Leslie Weyn.

Moderator Trish Esposito called the meeting to order at approximately 7:35.

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the Council's November 3, 2008 meeting be accepted, as corrected. The motion passed without objection.

Nominating

Trish Esposito presented the report of the Nominating Committee recommending that Ruth Prindle be elected to serve on the Transition Committee. It was moved and seconded that Ruth Prindle be approved to serve on the Transition Committee. The motion passed without objection.

Celebration of Ministry

Rev. Susan Henderson reported that CCC will celebrate its birthday and its history of ministry on December 7, 2008. Rev. Henderson said that we, as a congregation, are continuing to deal with our CCC history, and some work remains to be done.

Interim Staffing Plan

Rev. Susan Henderson reported that most of the positions identified in CCC's Intermediate Interim Staffing Plan have been filled. Nae Pearson will take on an additional ten hours per week to develop opportunities for children, youth, and intergenerational participation in music. Sarah Anders will add two to three hours per week for worship support. Sarah's additional hours are not directly related to Senior Adult Ministries. The following individuals will serve in stipend positions: Anne Nicotera planning for Camp; Kristen Brown coordinating the Youth programs; Jan Forbes working with Church School; and Anne Weissenborn coordinating Social Witness activities and initiatives. Each of the stipend positions will be compensated at \$20 per hour without benefits. Rev. Henderson also reported that Kristen Curlee, a seminary student at Lancaster Seminary, will join CCC to lead faith formation for Church School and Youth and the teachers, leaders, and families of our children and youth. Trish Esposito added that Kristen Curlee will also have some preaching duties. Trish also said that Kristen met with Rev. Susan Henderson, Jan Forbes, and Kristen Brown. The meetings went well, Trish said.

Pastor-Parish Relations Committee

Trish Esposito invited discussion of the presentation by Dick Sparrow on November 15. The feedback from those who attended was very positive. Trish asked whether the Council was

ready to move forward with implementing a Pastor-Parish Relations Committee, perhaps on a one-year trial basis. Jackie Walters advised against implementing the Committee on a trial basis, because this might send the unintended message that the church is not committed to the concept. Tom Gustafson raised the issue of whether the Committee, if established, should relate solely to called staff, or whether senior professional staff, such as the Director of Music and Church Administrator, should also be included. Dave Ackerman **moved that the Moderator be authorized to appoint a small subcommittee to study the formation of a Pastor-Parish Relations Committee as a standing committee of CCC and report back to the Council in January, or not later than February, 2009.** Jackie Walters seconded the motion, which passed without objection. Aldene Ault, Dave Main, and Leslie Weyn volunteered to serve on the study subcommittee.

Financial Update and Budget Visioning

Tom Gustafson reported that at the most recent meeting of the Board of Trustees there was discussion of concerns regarding downward trends in the revenue side of CCC's budget. Pledge fulfillment is running at about 88%, Tom reported. Dave Main said that only two pledges have been officially reduced. Tom Gustafson said that he does not see any immediate cause for alarm. The Board for Stewardship has sent letters to the congregation reminding members of the need to keep pledges current. Tom said that the revenue from building use is also down by \$40,000 to \$50,000. Tom reported that he participated in a UCC web-inar regarding church finances. In the current economic conditions, some churches have found it necessary to make cuts to mission and even to cut staff pay. Tom proposed that CCC undertake a budget visioning process during the first calendar quarter of 2009. The budget visioning process should be coordinated with the discernment process for CCC's future staffing plan, Tom suggested. Marilyn Hall said that the Board for Stewardship plans to offer many opportunities for education, and it should be possible to do education on stewardship and the budget process together. Jackie Walters said that education is needed to explain the non-negotiable dollars in the unified budget, such as the building costs and staff salaries. Tom Gustafson agreed that program expenses represent really a very small percentage of the budget, the largest part of which is driven by debt service, building operations, and staffing. Trish Esposito recalled that the Board of Trustees produced pie charts as part of the budget process for the current church year that were very helpful. Dave Ackerman said that CCC's budget process works amazingly well, and Trustees work hard to have an open process and to get feedback from the congregation. Marilyn Hall suggested that the budget education should articulate how the budget interacts with the strategic goals. Richard Jaeggi said that we should remind the congregation what the strategic goals are. Dave Ackerman said that, while he would not support undertaking a new goal-setting process, he felt it was a mistake not to have a congregational vote on the strategic goals. Dave said he does endorse the idea of having the Boards of Trustees and Stewardship undertake educational activities. Pete Macleod suggested that the Boards develop some measurements, so that they can report on what the church spent, and what it got for the expenditures. Marilyn Hall asked whether the educational opportunities should be part of worship or outside worship. Dave Main said both would be appropriate. Pete Hotchkiss was concerned that any visioning process not raise expectations too much, because it is discouraging when the church is unable to fund initiatives identified during visioning. Nae Pearson recounted a fundraising story from a church he previously served. Nae said that the choir at that church sponsored a yard sale that was successful not only in raising

money, but in bringing new members to the choir and to the church. Nae said that there may well be members and friends of CCC who have a passion for fundraising, and we should be open to this. Tom Gustafson summed up that the Boards of Trustees and Stewardship will work together to create educational opportunities for the congregation on the budget and stewardship process.

Mission Statement

Trish Esposito raised the question of whether CCC should reevaluate its Mission Statement as part of the ongoing evaluation process of the CCC Covenant. Trish said that the Board of Deacons has established a Covenant Subcommittee that has gathered input from the congregation on the current Covenant. The process is going forward, with the subcommittee leaning toward rewriting the Covenant, Trish said. Trish added that the Mission Statement had not been voted on by the congregation. There was discussion of the Mission Statement, with no clear consensus regarding next steps. Tom Gustafson suggested researching the mission statements of other UCC churches as a first step. Trish asked that further discussion be held for a future meeting.

Staff Updates

Music—Nae Pearson reported that preparations are moving forward for Christmas. Nae also said that there is increased energy around children and youth and their participation in worship at CCC.

Other Updates

Board for Social Witness—Richard Jaeggi reported that the Board is writing a letter requesting that Fair Trade Coffee Sales take place in the foyer, rather than in the social hall.

Board for Outreach and Engagement—Pete Macleod reported that O&E is promoting CCC's Advent activities. The Board is also continuing to work on updating the church's brochures, Pete said.

Board for Church Life—Linda Hodson said that the Board is considering not having a coffee hour between the 9:00 and 11:00 Christmas services on December 21. Linda said that not having coffee hour seemed to help the parking lots turn over more quickly last year. There was consensus that it made sense to eliminate the coffee hour on that day.

Board of Deacons—Aldene Ault said that the Deacons recommend that Anne Marshall join the Board. There was discussion of whether the recommendation should come from the Nominating Committee. Pete Macleod **moved that the Council give approval for Anne Marshall to join the Board of Deacons, contingent upon a recommendation from the Nominating Committee.** After a second, the motion passed with one no vote and two abstentions.

Board for Stewardship—Marilyn Hall reported that Alan Hill has resigned from the Board. This leaves the Board very short-handed, Marilyn said. Trish Esposito reminded the Council of the need for all Boards to nominate a member to work with Stewardship.

Subcommittee on Fundraising—Dave Ackerman reported that the subcommittee, consisting of Dave, Tim White, Pete Hotchkiss, and Tom Gustafson, met and reviewed the guidelines for special fundraising. There is no concrete proposal regarding the auction proposed by the Debt Reduction Task Force, Dave said. In the past, the subcommittee has approved special fundraising for hurricane relief and to benefit Shaw Community Ministry, Dave added. Tom Gustafson pointed out that the idea of a yard sale as Nae Pearson described, could be implemented through the subcommittee.

Anti-Racism Initiatives—Trish Esposito reminded the Council that updates to the Anti-Racism Audit are due January 12, 2009. Updates should be returned to Jim Henkelman-Bahn or Delilah Marrow, Trish said. Trish also asked for feedback on the Sacred Conversation program that was held November 23, 2008. Richard Jaeggi said that it was important that such conversations continue, because this is not something you can do just once. Trish reported additionally that she sent a letter to Rev. Susan Henderson on behalf of the congregation expressing deep regret for the racist incident that occurred.

Staffing Plan Subcommittee—Trish Esposito reported that the subcommittee will meet on December 9, 2008.

Safe Church Policy—Trish Esposito reported that the current policy focuses primarily on sexual misconduct, rather than racism, homophobia, and the like. Therefore, Trish said, CCC will need to research UCC denominational and conference materials to see if there are policies that we can use as models. A subcommittee of Trish, Kate Rogers, and Pete Macleod will work on next steps.

Narcotics Anonymous Thanksgiving at CCC—Dave Ackerman reported that about 40-50 N.A. members were able to celebrate Thanksgiving at CCC, thanks to CCC volunteers who gave some of their Thanksgiving Day to staff the church. Dave said that the N.A. members, many of whom had nowhere else to go, were extremely appreciative of the opportunity to spend Thanksgiving in a safe space.

Nae Pearson closed the meeting with prayer.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:45.

Respectfully submitted,
Leslie Weyn
Church Clerk