

## EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MINUTES

**January 7, 2008**

*Present: Rev. Susan Henderson, Rev. Sandy Dodson, Nae Pearson, Gordon Forbes, Gregg Brown, Judy Cox, Sue Dollins, Trish Esposito, Jan Forbes, Tom Gustafson, Pete Hotchkiss, Cynthia Page, Dan Pence, Kate Rogers, Anne Weissenborn, Leslie Weyn.*  
*Guest: Cynthia Wright-Johnson.*

Moderator Gordon Forbes called the meeting to order at approximately 7:40 p.m. Rev. Susan Henderson opened the meeting with a time for sharing.

Jan Forbes moved that the minutes of the Council's December meeting be approved, as corrected. Sue Dollins seconded the motion, which passed without objection.

### **Reports—Boards, Committees**

*Treasurer's Report*—Dan Pence presented the report, which covers 26 weeks (half the year). Dan noted that in comparing the current year receipts and total income, there is a decrease of approximately \$20,000 in each category. This decrease is largely due to a loss (or decrease) of several large contributions, Dan said. Year-to-date expenses are running a little ahead of 50% because interest was paid on member loans in December. Dan also highlighted that pledge fulfillment is running at 111%, which represents a dramatic improvement over prior years. Gordon Forbes thanked Dan for a largely positive report.

*Trustees*—Tom Gustafson and Cindy Wright-Johnson presented a report recommending that the Executive Council form a Fire and Life Safety Planning Work Group. Cindy stated that CCC currently meets all regulatory requirements for fire and life-safety preparedness. Nevertheless, establishing the work group would be a pro-active step, Cindy said. The work group would oversee such activities as evacuation drills and could be a resource for advising CCC families on fire safety and disaster preparedness, among other issues. Tom Gustafson moved that **The Executive Council establish a Fire and Life Safety Work Group to work in partnership with CCC staff, Building and Grounds Committee, and lay leadership to review existing fire, medical emergency and disaster plans, policies and procedures and to make recommendations on steps needed to assure safety of those using the church buildings by July 2008.** Sue Dollins seconded the motion. There was discussion. Dan Pence asked whether any expenses would be associated with the work group. Cindy answered that costs, if any, would be minimal. Gordon Forbes asked about whether

members of the work group would require training. Cindy replied that training is available at no cost from the County. Pete Hotchkiss asked whether there were plans to install automatic electronic defibrillators (AEDs) at CCC. Cindy said that the Board of Trustees had considered installing AEDs, but had decided to recommend against doing so. Concerns with the devices included the expense and regulatory burden, Cindy said. She added that the work group could examine the question again. **The motion passed without objection.**

Tom Gustafson reported that the Board of Trustees was recommending that 10 percent of the proceeds from the sale of the Virgil Williams painting be designated for mission giving at the discretion of the Board for Social Witness. Tom wondered if this decision should be brought to the congregation at the annual meeting. Dan Pence said that he favored acting sooner than the annual meeting. Tom Gustafson moved **That the Executive Council present a motion to the congregation at a congregational meeting, to be scheduled as soon as practicable, that 10 percent of net proceeds of the sale of the Virgil Williams painting be dedicated to mission giving at the discretion of the Board for Social Witness.** After a second, there was discussion. Trish Esposito asked whether the Retreat House Committee and Retreat House Task Force had been included in the discussions about this proposal. Rev. Sandy Dodson said she was aware of at least one strong dissenter. Pete Hotchkiss asked whether the proposal to donate 10 percent of proceeds would become a policy that would apply to all receipts of the church—proceeds of a possible sale of the 9601 Colesville Rd. property, for example. Gordon Forbes asked whether the need for action on this proposal was urgent. Tom and Dan agreed that it was not terribly urgent, but that they would like to bring the issue before the congregation separate from the general yearly budgeting process. Cynthia Page pointed out that this discussion highlights the problems that can arise when CCC moves away from the unified budget. Kate Rogers noted that both the Retreat House and mission giving were given priority during the strategic planning process. Trish suggested that the proposal be brought to the Retreat House Committee meeting scheduled for January 21. Rev. Susan Henderson observed that the motion raises two separate questions: What do we, as a Church, do with a gift? and How do we spend it? Rev. Sandy Dodson recalled that another church she had served had a policy of 1 to 1 fundraising. That is, for every dollar raised to support a project of the church another dollar was raised for mission. **Voting on the motion was deferred pending discussion of Retreat House issues.**

*Retreat House Issues*—Rev. Sandy Dodson presented the report from the Retreat House Task Force, the main thrust of which is that the house cannot sleep more than 8 people, consistent with fire safety regulations. Sandy said that the information in the report raises ethical considerations. Specifically, now that we

know the regulations, is it possible to proceed with summer camp? Sandy continued that, if money were no object, the task force would envision building a new structure specifically designed as a retreat center. But, even that solution would not answer the short-term questions. Trish Esposito said that the situation with the Retreat House was reminiscent of the situation that confronted CCC during the Keystones Campaign, in that \$1 million was needed just to bring the building up to code. Gordon Forbes suggested partnering with other area UCC churches to raise money and to create a UCC camp on the property. Cynthia Page pointed out that partnering with other churches would present challenges, since CCC currently keeps the Retreat House fully booked without outside users. Cynthia also asked whether any consideration had been given to the idea of selling the property. Rev. Sandy Dodson said that option had not really been considered. Instead, there had been discussions of tearing down the existing house, Sandy said. Tom Gustafson moved **That the Retreat House Committee, in close collaboration with the Trustees and the Board for Christian Education react to the Report from the Retreat House Task Force and ascertain how operations of the Retreat House may proceed during 2008.** After a second, **the motion passed.** Sue Dollins moved **That the Retreat House Task Force be authorized to continue its work during 2008.** After a second, **the motion passed.** Cynthia Page expressed concern that the information be disseminated to the congregation. Gordon Forbes suggested that the issue be presented at a town meeting. Tom Gustafson suggested that the report be published in NewsNotes and on the website. Trish Esposito cautioned that the Council should proceed with planning for the summer at the same time that the report is being publicized. Rev. Susan Henderson recommended that Rev. Sandy Dodson be the contact point to give information and respond to questions. Sandy offered to e-mail by the end of the week with some preliminary plans for how to proceed.

*Board for Social Witness*—Anne Weissenborn reported that Rev. Sandy Sorensen, of the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries will preach this month. She was pleased to be invited, Anne said. Anne also gave an update on Physician Assistance in Dying. She said that the Board had not reached a consensus on the issue. The Board members did agree that there was a need to educate the congregation further on this issue. The Board is willing to lead discussion/education sessions on the issue. Anne reported that Bill Neal is amenable to the idea of proceeding with such sessions, but he felt it would be important to ensure that there is a strong moderator to lead the sessions.

*Nominating Committee*—Trish Esposito asked all Board Chairs to begin considering their rosters and their nominating needs for the coming church year at their January 28 meetings.

*Vicki Kemper Ecclesiastical Council and Ordination*—Rev. Susan Henderson announced that the Ecclesiastical Council for Vicki Kemper will be held January 11, 2008, at 3 p.m. Her ordination is planned for January 27, 2008.

*Council Retreat*—Gordon Forbes distributed the planned agenda for the retreat, which will be held on February 2, 2008, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Manor Care Bethesda.

### **Staff Reports**

Rev. Sandy Dodson thanked Nae Pearson for the wonderful music throughout the Advent and Christmas season.

Sandy closed the meeting with prayer, and the meeting adjourned at approximately 9:48.

Respectfully submitted,  
Leslie Weyn  
Church Clerk