

Final

Executive Council Minutes from Meeting of December 7, 2009

Members Present: Dave Ackerman (At Large), Aldene Ault (Deacons), Tom Ault (Trustees and Search Committee), Trish Esposito (Past Moderator), Tom Gustafson (Clerk), Marilyn Hall (Stewardship), Sally Holmes (CE), Peter McLeod (Outreach & Engagement), Greg Muncill (Financial Secretary), Dan Pence (Treasurer), Marsha Spieth (At Large), Jackie Walters (Communications Officer), Tim White (Moderator).

Others present: The Reverend Susan Henderson (Interim Senior Minister), Anne Weissenborn (interim staff)

Moderator Tim White convened the meeting at 7:33 PM. The agenda was accepted. Minutes for the meeting of November 2 were approved with minor corrections.

Tim reported on a November 30 meeting on the **transition** involving the co-chairs of the Transition Committee (Sue Dollins and Bob Brown), the co-chairs of the Search Committee (Tom Ault and Merlene Bagley), Susan Henderson, Cyndy Wright-Johnson, and Tim. This group discussed the previous Transition Committee recommendations, as considered by the Executive Council at its retreat and the November 2 meeting.

The group considered the timing of transition from the current Interim Senior Minister to the new Senior Minister. The watchword for completion of the search was “when the time is right.” The search is a process of discernment, not a scheduled march. The intensity is picking up. The group concluded it would be desirable to have a “beat in time,” approximately a month, between the departure of the Interim Senior Minister and the arrival of the new minister. The Transition Committee will take charge of planning for thanking Susan for her service.

The group held up “four P’s” relating to the interval for advanced attention, including pulpit supply, programming, people, and continuity of pastoral care. Pulpit supply can be scheduled in advance once timing is clear; planning for programming continues to be strong; Tim and Cyndy will meet with staff to address administrative concerns; and a number of resources are expected to be available to assist with pastoral care.

Jackie Walters noted that we should share with the congregation the desirability of the interval between ministers.

The group also discussed plans for orientation of the new minister.

In response to a question about timing, Tom Ault reported that the search process was still on the schedule established a year ago. The Search Committee has been reviewing profiles and conducting phone interviews; it expects to start a second round of phone interviews shortly. Progress appears consistent with a call probably in the later part of April, with a probable start date for the new minister sometime between approximately July 1 to September 1.

Attention then turned to a “**Second Mile**” **appeal** to supplement the unified budget. Consultations have been ongoing, involving the Boards of Stewardship and Trustees, Jackie Walters, and others. The Trustees have been seeing lower pledge fulfillment and smaller loose plate collections than had been planned on in the budget. While pledge fulfillment has rebounded

somewhat, loose plate, which has been growing over the last five years, remains a source of concern. Rental income is also down, as non-profit groups are making less use of the facility.

Discussion had focused on whether an additional appeal would support or compromise the unified budget. The sense was that there were precedents for such appeals, and the call was very clearly for gifts to support the unified budget.

Key parts of the leadership had been appropriately involved in developing these plans, which required a short turnaround, but Tim wanted to be sure that the EC was aware of these developments. A letter seeking “second mile” contributions will be going out very soon.

An additional document entitled “Challenges in 2010” was prepared by Jackie and others as a possible accompaniment to the letter, but it was judged better to hold it to keep the mailing short. It will be available as a resource; EC members and others may want to refer to it in discussions with members.

Susan reported on several **transition-related action items** from the EC Retreat.

- Susan reported a candidate had been identified as an interim administrative support staffer for Christian education. The hiring action is pending action by the Board of Trustees.
- Progress is being made on planning to hire, on a stipendiary basis, an interim adult ministries person, according with the “Minister C” position in the hiring plan. Susan met with the Personnel Committee, Tim, and Cyndy to clarify the purpose and main roles of this position. The role is envisioned as having three foci: senior adults, adult education, and pastoral care. It will serve as part of the bridging to the new senior ministry. A job description is being drafted by Susan and the Personnel Committee, and the matter is on the way to the Board of Trustees. Several possible candidates were considered, and we are in conversation with one of them.
- Staff and volunteers are evaluating contenders for new church management software.

Discussion then turned to **organizational structure** of the church and how to plan for further activity. Concern centered partly on the congregation’s level of information about the boards and committees and their activities. Tim observed that nothing is necessarily wrong with the existing structure, but questions arise about whether we are coordinating and communicating as well as we could. Anne Weissenborn noted that consideration of coordination leads to questions of what authority each group has to decide on issues and activities and the extent to which that authority is in essence self-defined by the group in question. Susan urged us to look at these questions from the perspective of the “person in the pew” and to consider how to create documents that could be useful in outreach, explaining how CCC works. Trish noted that articulating how staff relate to the boards and committees could be helpful.

After some deliberation, the Council set up two parallel working groups to address aspects of the matter. One, consisting of Pete McLeod, Dave Ackerman, and Tom Gustafson, will define better what tasks are needed to address the concerns noted above. A report to the Executive Council will be expected in January or February.

Second, a small group will consider immediately needed changes to the Constitution and By-Laws of the church, including a clarification previously discussed relating to the possibility that

the congregation might want to fire a called minister. (The Constitution does not currently provide for this possibility.) The plan will be to develop a package of amendments and seek action on them before a new senior pastor appears. Dave Ackerman and Tom Gustafson will work on this project.

Tom Ault reported that **building security** will be a major agendum at the next Trustees meeting. Security cameras and training are both under consideration.

Tim raised the question of whether a **pre-board meeting** should be held this month. The conclusion was no.

The Council then turned to further discussion of the appropriate framework for **reporting on activities of boards and committees** in the context of EC meetings. The conclusion was that reporting should be confined to the most important issues, rather than adopting a round-robin format. Jackie Walters noted that among the items that it is important to report on are plans for activities that others might need to be aware of, such as the initiative regarding covenants originating with the Board of Social Witness.

Marilyn Hall, chair of the Board of **Stewardship**, with the approval of the Nominating Committee, brought forth the nomination of David Gayer to serve on the Board. His **election** was moved, seconded, and unanimously agreed to.

Aldene Ault, representing the Board of **Deacons**, reported that Sarah Anders has shared her call to ministry with the Deacons, as preparation for her seeking **“in care” status** from the Potomac Association. The Board voted to recommend her for this status.

After a prayer led by Susan Henderson, Tim adjourned the meeting at 9:34 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Gustafson,
Church Clerk

Approved by the Executive Council January 4, 2010