

Final

Executive Council Minutes from Meeting of October 5, 2009

Members Present: Aldene Ault (Deacons), Tom Ault (Trustees and Search Committee), Trish Esposito (Past Moderator), Tom Gustafson (Clerk), Richard Jaeggi (Social Witness), Marilyn Hall (Stewardship), Pete Macleod (Outreach & Engagement), Greg Muncill (Financial Secretary), Dan Pence (Treasurer), Marsha Spieth (At Large), Jackie Walters (Communications Officer), Carolyn West-Gipson (Church Life), Tim White (Moderator), Cyndy Wright-Johnson (Moderator-Elect).

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

Moderator Tim White convened the meeting at about 7:35. The agenda was accepted.

Tim raised the question of **attendance at Sunday worship** for consideration. He noted that over the past several Sundays attendance had been lower than usual for this time of year. He shared the impression that some familiar faces have been missing from the pews, though new faces are to be seen as well. An extensive discussion ensued, touching on the competing effects of good weather, changes in the worship service, and other factors. Cyndy Wright-Johnson urged members to take note of who we are not seeing in worship and to encourage them to attend. She suggested that members of the Council share this thought with their board members. Trish Esposito noted that church school teachers have been actively communicating by email with the families of their students to let them know what is coming and to encourage attendance.

Richard Jaeggi presented a plan entitled “**Together We Grow: Living into Our Mission Covenants.**” This plan was developed by the Board to Social Witness to focus attention on CCC’s three mission covenants: Open and Affirming, Just Peace, and Anti-Racism. The Board has coordinated with the staff, and during this year the third Sunday in every month will be a social witness Sunday, with a sermon focusing on a theme relevant to the covenants. The Board will help provide the framework, but it urges other elements of the church to bring energy to and help create events on those Sundays. The Board would like to see involved any aspects of church life that would fit with and could reinforce this thrust and is looking for ideas about how to bring and keep the covenants and their meanings for us in the popular consciousness. An extensive discussion followed about possible directions, including how to coordinate timing with the annual Stewardship campaign, dissemination of information through the website and the Sunday bulletins, and interaction with particular groups in the church. Jackie Walters suggested that the effort should phase in, and that this should be the year to raise awareness. Richard responded that the stages envisioned were consciousness, energy, and action.

A motion was made and seconded: That the Executive Council affirms the direction of the “Together We Grow” plan and strongly supports efforts for its implementation. The motion passed unanimously.

Minutes for the meeting of September 14, 2009, were approved with minor corrections.

Treasurer: Dan Pence again noted his interest in receiving any comments on how the annual report of the Treasurer might be improved.

Aldene Ault, on behalf of the Board of Deacons, presented a prioritized list of recommend areas for **memorial gifts**. This list is to guide the Board of Trustees as it considers possible expenditures of undesignated memorial funds. A motion was made and seconded that the recommendations be approved. A suggestion was made that publicity be given to memorial funds and what they are used for. The motion passed unanimously.

Trish Esposito then spoke to a set of advisory **recommendations**, dated September 12 and previously circulated to the Council by Tim White, **from the Transition Committee**. In summary, these recommendations are:

- Enter into a dialog with Susan Henderson about her departure timeline.
- Hire a staff person in the approved Ministry/Ministry for Adults position no later than January 2010 to ensure continuity of pastoral care when Susan departs.
- Engage in interim work on organizational structure and issues of power and authority in order to clarify roles and responsibilities.
- Identify various scenarios and action plans for ministerial leadership starting next Spring.
- Expand communication efforts regarding the search process.
- Hold a meeting of the appropriate leaders, with the Reverend Henderson, to discuss these recommendations.

A motion was made and seconded: That the Executive Council endorse the recommendations of the Transition Committee as a set of directions for further steps in transition. The Council discussed various concrete steps that might help implement the recommendations. The motion was approved unanimously.

Jackie Walters, Communications Officer, projected the web-based **church calendar** and briefed the Council on its features. We are moving to use this calendar much more extensively. We will be moving away from presenting detail on upcoming events in the Sunday bulletin. The goal is to have the new arrangements fully operational by January. Jackie thanked Barry Johnson, in particular, for his extensive work on this project.

Carolyn West-Gipson, for the Board of Church Life, reported on plans for a **new church directory**. She and David Main met with representatives of Olan Mills, a church directory publisher we have worked with in the past. She passed around various models, and the Council favored a simple, spiral-bound version. Dates have been planned for the photography: February 25 and 26 from 3:30 to 9:30; Saturday, February 27, from 10 to 3:00; and March 9 and 10 from 3:30 to 9:30. The intent is to be ready to go to press when the new Senior Minister comes on board.

The Council considered Olan Mills' offer of creating an on-line directory for us to supplement the print version. The directory would be password protected, but only one password would be used for the entire congregation. The Council, moved by privacy and safe-church concerns, decided not to accept this offer.

The **Retreat House Task Force** is ready to present plans for renovation for consideration by the congregation. A meeting for information and feedback will be held on November 8th.

Marilyn Hall, co-chair of the **Board of Stewardship**, reported that the Board had identified a new member, Ken Rehfuss. A motion was made, seconded, and approved to elect Ken Rehfuss to the Board of Stewardship.

Tom Ault, representing the **Board of Trustees**, reported that Martha Krieger has agreed to serve as chair, in cooperation with a leadership team of other Board members. Tom will continue to represent the Board at the Executive Council; Jim O'Steen will spearhead preparation of the budget.

The Board has received an offer from the YMCA for purchase of the property at **9601 Colesville Road**. The Board found the offer unacceptable for two reasons. First, the Y was not willing to provide an easement that would assure that we would have full access to parking in perpetuity. Second, the offer price was well below the market value of the property and not at a level the Board could consider recommending to the Congregation. We have responded to this effect and await the Y's further response.

Susan Henderson closed the meeting with a reflection on the upcoming closing of the interim period, noting that we will have to say goodbye and that it is important to do so honestly. In the meantime, the most important way to demonstrate our commitment is to keep showing up.

Following a prayer led by Susan, the meeting adjourned at about 10:00.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Gustafson,
Church Clerk

Approved by the Executive Committee, November 2, 2009