

## Final

### Executive Council Minutes from Meeting of November 2, 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), Pete Hotchkiss (Social Witness), Greg Muncill (Financial Secretary), Marsha Spieth (At Large), Jackie Walters (Communications Officer), Carolyn West-Gipson (Church Life), Cyndy Wright-Johnson (Moderator-Elect).

Moderator-elect Cyndy Wright-Johnson convened the meeting at about 7:40. The agenda was accepted. Minutes for the meeting of October 5 were approved with a minor correction.

Cyndy informed the Council about a **recent incident** involving a person who had worshiped at the church several times in the past few weeks and who left several angry messages on voice mail, complaining about inadequate response to the person's request for financial assistance. Staff determined that the incident presented no immediate security risk, but the incident revealed that we have no policy established in this area.

Cyndy noted that Montgomery County has two sets of specially-trained intervention teams that respond to situations with minimum fanfare, and Pete Hotchkiss spoke about the need for us to be able to marshal knowledge about the availability of social services in the community.

In connection with this incident, members inquired regarding plans for a camera system to enhance facility security. Tom Ault reported that the Board of Trustees has had this project in the works for some time and in fact is now looking at bids. He noted that the board of the child care center has asked for heightened security.

Susan Henderson and Nae Pearson are working on **training** for staff, ushers, and sextons on how to handle possible incidents. Jackie Walters expressed concern about possible delays in developing and scheduling training. Trish Esposito volunteered to help work on this activity.

As a second level of concern, the recorded comments were racist and homophobic. Accordingly, the question arose of whether some statement should be developed and issued about the unacceptability of such comments in the life of the church. After some discussion, members concluded there was no need to inform the congregation more broadly, and the idea of a statement was tabled for the time being.

**On staffing,** Cyndy reported that Susan Henderson is in conversation with two candidates regarding the CE administrative position. She is drafting a position description that she will bring to the Personnel Committee shortly. In the meantime, Kristen Brown has been asked to stay on through the balance of the fiscal year.

Cyndy reported on the activities of the subcommittee on **special fund-raising requests**. They now have fairly complete lists from the Board of Social Witness and the Board for Christian Education, and they have identified recurring items. The subcommittee is recommending approval of requests from the Board of Social Witness centering on the holidays. First, a request to raise funds for the Shaw Community Ministry at Thanksgiving to help provide baskets. At the same time, the Board would like endorsement of the Cub Scout activity to gather canned goods door-to-door in the neighborhood. At Christmas, funds will be raised for Christmas baskets for a UCC church in Zimbabwe. There will also be an opportunity to sponsor/buy Christmas gifts for

children at the Shaw Community Ministry and to contribute to the mitten tree for Broadacres Elementary.

Two projects will help support a July trip by middle school and high school youth to West Virginia to work with Habitat for Humanity on a “green” house: the annual cotillion in February and a pancake supper in Lent. The funds will be used for scholarships and to cover expenses of adult chaperones. A Christmastime sale of SERRV International fair trade gift items will raise funds for “bricks and mortar” supplies for the West Virginia project.

Cyndy spoke about the desirability of streamlining the approval process by creating a form that could gather relevant information and cut down on e-mail traffic.

The Council then discussed follow-up to the “**Transitioning Well**” issues from the retreat. Cyndy displayed the slides used at the retreat, and members contributed to editing them for accuracy. Discussion centered on several action items.

- A suggestion to order name tags identifying board members, similar to those now used by Ushers and Sextons, requires further research and was deferred for now.
- A motion was made and seconded: That the Executive Council requests that the Interim Senior Minister direct staff to research and recommend to the Board of Trustees acquisition of new church management software. The motion passed unanimously.
- Boards and committees are encouraged to submit items describing their activities for inclusion on the website. A members-only section is still under development.
- Kristen Curlee will work with Trish on developing safe-church policy for use of Facebook and other “social media” in ways that might identify church members or their children.
- Further meetings will consider issues surrounding church organization.
- The adult ministerial position still requires some further discussion to ensure all understand that this is a minister for adults position that includes a senior adult ministry. Cyndy will confer with Tim White and Susan regarding the need to review the scope of duties quickly and to discuss with the leadership of the senior adult group. The question arose of whether we need a small group to shepherd this hire through, involving the Personnel Committee, the Board of Trustees, and others. Members conveyed a sense of urgency, since we hope to fill this job by the start of the new year.
- On the matter of communicating the congregation’s expectations to the new senior minister and new staff, no specific action was taken, but the Council recognized the need for attention to the issue and the desirability of a meeting with Tim & Cyndy and the entire staff; continued conversations with Susan; and helping the congregation to continue to learn about the role of Personnel Committee (with a specific contact person for each staff member) and the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee.
- Cyndy noted that **updating boards and committees** on each others’ activities was valuable, but that the Executive Council frequently did not have sufficient time on its agenda to permit as much of this as might be desirable. The possibility of starting the meeting off

with a “round robin” update met with some resistance, in particular because the old Executive Committee was recalled as concentrating on information exchange, not on overall church leadership; the Council concluded it wanted to concentrate only on the most important updates. Cyndy proposed the possibility of creating a form to gather and transmit updates in case we do not have enough time to do so verbally in the meeting. Cyndy will discuss this issue further with Tim.

- The idea of an Executive Council covenant for 2009-10 will be the subject of a focused discussion at the December meeting. We may ask a small group to draft or seek a special meeting of the Council for the purpose.

Cyndy adjourned the meeting at about 9:45.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Gustafson,  
Church Clerk

*Approved by the Executive Council December 7, 2009*