

CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES

Tuesday, April 30, 2013

In Attendance: Susan Powers, Janice Moore, Bob Sorozan, Bill Thibodeau, Joyce Rioux, John Rioux, Carol Rivard, Heidi Flower, Mattie Verzino, Beth Provost, Carla Heister, Jeanette Baker, Jackie Palance, Terry Parker, Christa Zaldivar, Tim Krauss. Excused: Jill Wilson, Carolyn Koboski, Diane Ashworth.

Opening Devotions: Led by Carla Heister, on Luke 11 – “Happy are those who hear the word of God and obey.”

The Minutes for February were accepted.

Education: Christa reports that the first “Storytime” gathering went very well – 8 children attended and shared a story, song and prayer time in the Children’s Library area during Fellowship Hour. This will continue on the last Sunday of May and June; then stop for the summer and begin again in September. Summer Sunday school will start the Sunday after Memorial Day and continue through July – it will be a “one-room” program with rotating teachers/helpers. Volunteers are still needed and must be “Safe Sanctuary” certified for this and for VBS.

Bill Thibodeau suggested that the Bradley Air Museum would be a good family trip. He will look into the details.

Music: Heidi Flower reports that the Tag Sale to benefit the organ fund is scheduled for Saturday, June 1st, with a rain date of June 15th. The Men’s Group will be asked to do hot dogs and burgers again. We would like to host the Barnstormers group again in 2014. The available date for this is the weekend of April 25 – 27, and includes their participation in our Sunday morning service. This was approved by consensus vote. It was noted that this may conflict with the usual dates for the Renaissance dinners. Luisa Gladu will be contacted regarding this.

Staff-Parish – Carla Heister reports that Becca Krauss has been hired for the Nursery to replace Alexandra Paulette, who is leaving the post.

Pastor Bob Sorozan – reports that our statistics for 2012 were turned in on time – these figures will affect the amount of apportionments we pay in 2014. He handed out the Statistics sheet for the Connecticut District. It was suggested that the Sunday School attendance be included with the other figures in the bulletin each week. The Committee on Lay Leadership (Nominations) will be meeting in June, to work on next years’ information; we hope to have an early date for Charge Conference. Annual Conference is June 5 – 8 at Hofstra University; special offering will be for “No More Malaria”. Pastor Bob notes that this is the first time he has brought and used his laptop during a council meeting, as he gave us a preview of “Chuck Knows Church” regarding offerings, which will be shown to the congregation on ‘Cinco de Mayo’ Sunday, May 5th.

Building Maintenance – Carol Rivard reports that Ray Barker has been taking care of the parsonage lawn, and Chris Wilson does the church lawns. This may be hired out if necessary.

It has been noted that several times, the side door by the Nursery room has been found unlocked – this is a fire door only and should be locked at all times. It is not sure who is unlocking the door. It was decided that a sign should be placed on the door, and the allen wrench removed so that the door cannot be unlocked.

A local security firm came in to give a quote on Motion Sensors for the office area - trustees will make a decision once they receive the cost estimation.

Stephen’s Ministry – Diane Ashworth reports, by e-mail, that 12 people have already signed up for the program, and others will be sent letters and invited to participate, as well. The next step is to meet with all interested people and set up the training classes.

Jeanette Baker – attended the District Conference in Newtown with Sue Powers. Pastor Mel Kawakami gave a very moving speech regarding the connectionalism between churches/people/community that was so evident to him and everyone in the Sandy Hook community during the days following the school tragedy there.

Kitchen Fund – this fund was established by the Church Council in 2000. Sue Powers is chair, Ray Barker is treasurer. Any group using the kitchen or kitchenette for fund-raising opportunities for the church is required to donate 5% of the funds raised to this committee to help keep these areas stocked with the essentials (coffee, tea, paper goods, sugar, stirrers, cleaning supplies, etc). This was expanded in 2003 to include the money collected during Fellowship Hour after expenses were met. This is working quite well. Bill T. noted that it might be a good idea to have a “GI cleaning” of these areas twice a year – Sue is working on a cleaning schedule for this.

N.C.D. – Natural Church Development – Tim Krauss reports that this program was very good when we first did it here at Prospect, but it did not move along as well as we had hoped. The data from this was very helpful to Pastor Bob when he first arrived here. There is a lot of value in this program and Tim suggests that we do another survey. The basis of NCD is to determine where the focus of our ministry should be – where the weaknesses are – finding the ‘minimum factor’ and making that the most important focus of ministry. We can get materials through the conference Office. Tim is not sure of there is a fee involved in this but will contact Ann Pearson at NYAC for information. Consensus from Council was given. This will be done soon as Pastor Bob is suggesting a late-summer planning retreat, possibly in August.

Scouting Program – there is still money being held from Troop #2 when it folded. Gerry Lee, our Scouting liason, has suggested it be used to fund the religious award program – the God and Country Award – this would be both a ministry and an educational opportunity for the church to its youth. This suggestion will be sent to Education and Finance for a decision.

Finance – Tim Krauss reporting – “We have no money. The end.”

There is a negative balance of \$13,215 which includes the unpaid oil bill from this winter, of \$7979.

On a more positive note, Finance has found a \$1500 payroll tax credit available from Annual Conference – it is a credit on taxes paid to pastor’s health insurance programs. We may be able to claim it for last year as well. Pledges received for the first quarter of this year are at 65%.

Our problem is income – not expenses – we are actually under budget so far for the year, except for the oil bill. We have to get better at reaching out to the congregation with information. One suggestion is to have a stewardship moment once a month, to emphasize the spiritual aspect of supporting our church, not the financial aspect. These moments will focus on individual witness about this church’s impact on our lives, where we see God in this, and what is God saying to us?

Perhaps a statement in the bulletin showing the deficit amount. There is also a question as to whether the Library Fund is restricted or not. This is being investigated.

We must be open to new opportunities to use our building for other groups. There is a new NA group coming in on Thurs. evenings.

Closing Notes – Pastor Bob brought to our attention the news that former District Superintendent Rev. Richard Smeltzer has just passed away.

Our “Homework Assignment” is to consider ‘What is God saying to us now?’

Pastor Bob closed with prayer at 9:11 p.m. Next meeting is scheduled for June 18th.

Respectfully submitted

Janice Moore, Recording Secretary