

CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES AUGUST 20, 2013

In Attendance: Susan Powers, Jeanette Baker, Pastor Bob Sorozan, Janice Moore, Joyce Rioux, John Rioux, Bill Katt, Jackie Palance, Carla Heister, Matti Verzino, Heidi Flower, Tim Kraus. Excused: Bill Thibodeau, Christa Zaldivar, Chris Wilson, Carolyn Koboski, Gary Gladu, Beth Provost, Carol Rivard, Diane Ashworth.

Pastor Bob opened the meeting with prayer. The June minutes were accepted as read.

Education: Joyce Rioux gave us a handout that redefines our church's Education program and outlines focus points and future happenings. Education is not confined to Sunday School! It is a life-long learning that begins in the nursery and continues through teen, young adult and older members, with opportunities for study and learning at all age levels. These opportunities include such things as a Summer Reading Program, a "No Technology" night with trivia, board games, scavenger hunt, etc., Safe Sanctuaries at all age levels, and much more!

Rally Day is set for Sept. 8th, with a Pot Luck luncheon following the 10 am service. All committees should be represented in Sessions Hall after the service so folks can see what we are all about.

Finance: John Rioux presented information about a new program that will allow pledge contributions to be received by automatic withdrawal from a person's checking account every month. By a show of hands, several people were interested in this program. A second step can also be instituted where contributions can be accepted through our website by credit card. More information to follow. Bills and salaries are currently paid up. We are treading water but are OK for now.

Habitat for Humanity – Susan Powers attended the information meeting regarding this group. They are coming to Bristol to build several houses near Lillian Road, and hope to break ground in September. The group is looking for financial support from area churches and organizations, and a large pool of volunteers (up to 15 each day of production) to help the general contractor with building work, and to provide lunch and snacks to the on-site workers each day. We would like to have a "Team Prospect" group of volunteers for this. Pastor Sorozan will also ask the BAAM members (Bristol Area Assoc. of Ministers) to allow the offering taken at the Ecumenical Thanksgiving Eve service to be donated to this endeavor. There will be an information session at the Bristol Library on Sept. 21st for possible tenants for these homes.

Lait Convocation for our district is scheduled for Saturday October 19th at a cost of \$40 per person. There is a conflict for many of us as this is also the date for our Country Cupboard Fair. We are hoping that we can be represented at this event.

Middle Ages Group – The group reports that the annual Victorian Tea is scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 14th. The dates for the Renaissance Dinner for next year are May 10 and May 17th. ; next year's Victorian Tea will be Dec. 13, 2014. They plan to do more restorative work on the Chapel side entrance and hallway area.

Pastor Bob – our church meets all the requirements needed to be a Polling Place on Election Day. The downstairs dining room will be used for this and they will need 3 days access – set-up, voting, and tear-down. This is a service to our community, it is a good central location, and if needed, they will bring in extra handicapped parking signs for this event. There were no objections to this.

Our Charge Conference is scheduled for January 5th, Sunday, at 3 p.m. Susan Powers will let everyone know when the reports have to be in for the annual booklet.

Bob will be inviting all churches in the area to a meeting to coordinate a Disaster Relief Program for the community.

Staff-Parish Carla Heister reported that a need was brought to her to expand the hours that the Nursery is staffed on Sunday mornings, to accommodate choir rehearsal and adult studies held before services. We will increase the time to cover 8:45 a.m. thru 11:30 a.m. at an additional cost of \$22.40 per week. The nursery staff has been contacted and is in agreement with the extended hours. Funding for this could come from several sources, such as Robert's Fund, donations, etc. Council approves this change, and the new hours should be in place by Sept. 8th.

What's Happening? Our application for a Yale Intern was sent in, but we did not receive an intern this year. The person in charge will be visiting us later in the Fall. Since the cost of this was budgeted into this year's funds, we can use this money to offset the cost of the extended Nursery hours.

Pastor Bob is also looking into the possibility of having an intern from Hartford Seminary, instead of Yale.

N.C.D. Tim Krauss has spoken with and emailed Ann Pearson at the Conference Office. The requested materials have not yet arrived. Tim will follow up on this.

Assistant Music Director – this position may be part of the Intern program. Staff – parish will talk with Heidi Flower as to needs assessment.

Stephen Ministry – Diane Ashworth has a list of 10 interested people for the Stephen Ministry training program. She is enthusiastic to get this started.

Alternative Worship on 5th Sundays – this has yet to be discussed in Worship Committee. It will be brought to the September worship meeting. Possible ideas include having the “downstairs church” folks join and participate in one of our services; holding a Taize service in the evening, trying different styles of worship, etc. More information to follow after the next worship meeting.

Phone chain – we will start with an article in the Tower regarding contacting church members in the event of disaster or weather that would necessitate cancelling services, or letting folks know that we are open during a disaster. Our church can be a warming station, serve soup and beverages, and allow people to recharge phones and laptops.

Group Activities – there is a long list of family-focused activities that have been done here, and were well-received, and some new ideas as well. Stay tuned for more information as we enter the church school year!

What's Next? What do we want to work toward? What do we want to see that is not here now?

Possible Summer Lunch Program, similar to the one at Asbury Methodist.

Work toward having less reliance on volunteers, more paid staff.

Gift Card Fund-Raisers? Tabled to Finance for further information.

Fund a Mission Trip or support a missionary – UMCOR has a project list available.

UMC Market – on-line shopping at several types of stores, the church receives a percentage of sales. The percentage differs with the store.

More support for our Children and Youth programs.

Susan Powers reports that Carolyn Koboski has stepped down as ‘member-at-large’ due to her husband's health.

Next meeting is set for October 15, 2013

Tim Krauss offered the closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted

Janice Moore, recording secretary