

MINUTES
Church Council Meeting
May 19, 2010

The regular meeting of Church Council of First United Methodist Church, Williamstown, West Virginia, was called to order on Wednesday, May 19, 2010, at 6:30 p.m., and opened with Pastor Steve Gedon asking what makes the church different from any other organization that we are a part of and, after various comments, he read from “Shaped by the Bible,” followed by prayer.

In attendance were Brian Boley, Lay Leader; Cyndy Goldsworthy, Communications and Prayer Teams Chairperson; Kriss Bodnar, Program Ministries Team Chairperson; Steve Bodnar, Trustees Team Chairperson; Dee McCallister, UMW President and Lay Member to the Annual Conference; Matt Young, Member-at-Large, Jim Hostottle, Member-at-Large; Pam Middleton, Member-at-Large; Jon Dehmlow, Finance Team Chairperson; Steve Gedon, Pastor, and Betty Ball, Church Council Secretary.

The minutes of Church Council Meeting of April 21, 2010, had previously been submitted to those concerned. Motion was made and seconded to approve those minutes as submitted. Motion passed.

Trustees - Steve Bodnar reported that they are trying to get the roof patched but there is still a leak in the upstairs hallway. They are waiting for word from Willett-Hauser on repair of the stained glass window, as well as getting prices for replacing carpet in the upstairs hallway, youth room and parts of the parsonage, regular maintenance repairs and mowing the lawn.

Finance - Jon Dehmlow reported they have been busy, have held three meetings since the last Council meeting. One was to have two representatives from the UMC Foundation speak to the team. They talked about the mission of the foundation, different accounts that we have, our current balance, and what we could access accounts for. They also talked about the church’s role in trying to add to the accounts or get people to become legacy givers to the account on behalf of the church. There is over \$200,000 in the account now and a couple of general endowment accounts. One is just to get income and one to tap into the principal. It was good to have them speak and get their thoughts on the stewardship campaign. We would like to have them here for our campaign in the fall. They prepare brochures and can have them to us in a week. They will come to speak to us about planned giving and giving legacy gifts in wills. Discussion was held on the status of the giving for this year. Finance has changed some things around, e.g., budgeted a second amount of Program Ministry funds into the budget for 2010. We have had some up and down weeks. We have enough for operating expenses but we are not sure how that will turn out. We have operational expenses covered but over and above that we haven’t had that much giving this year. Finance thinks we are a very reactionary church when it comes to money, very sensitive when it comes to “who gives what.” Jon Dehmlow thinks we need to be more targeted in our approach and that might really

provoke some people. The history of this church is that we don't know who gives what; Finance Team members don't know, the Pastor doesn't know and that isn't good. The individual giving in the church averages \$2 per week. We need to encourage giving not to condemn people but to challenge them. We cannot rely on a small amount of people in the church to keep up this church. Ideas are needed on how to encourage people, how this would take place, who would go out to talk to folks. We have the responsibility to care for the finances and future of the church and need to have the tools to do the job and not just have people to speak about stewardship and hope for the best results. We have used pledge cards in the past and that might be part of it. We are concerned about the long-term financial health of the church. We have younger families coming in and that is fine, but the giving from younger families coming in is not keeping up with the folks who are older. They also have done some work on different accounts to gain interest. They talked to the foundation folks on what we can do with investments and found they have different investment figures for different types of accounts, all pretty conservative, some more for growth and some for income. We have about \$25,000 from the different accounts we could use with just a phone call or a letter. We used \$7,000 of this for the stained glass window. Will need to figure out how that additional \$14,000 is going to be paid. Pam asked if that is pretty steady. Jon said he didn't know, just said for such and such in this account. With the other accounts, we have right around \$400,000. Scudder Fund was moved from an account that was paying just \$0.25 interest per year to ING with money market or CD rate and we are trying to be good stewards with our money. Jon said he loves the Team he has in place. Evan Bohnen is an enthusiastic, knowledgeable addition to the team. Jon mentioned that there were some errors in our accounting in the last several years. It was a bookkeeping error, a double entry of a deposit and was not discovered because we don't get bank statements, we just look at Quicken. We have Ed Engle to thank for finding the problem and getting it straightened out. Quicken book just does the math. Jon said we have a really strong Finance Team and they really know their stuff and admitted he has the least amount of finance strength of the group.

The State of the Church address was scheduled for July 4th and Jon planned for an updated message about budgeted operational expenses. Since several people indicated they would not be in town on July 4th, it was planned to have this address on another Sunday. Matt asked how much giving is down. Brian asked if each giving unit would give an additional \$5 a month would that make a difference. John said it would and answered Matt by saying we are currently \$800 a week less than we need. Steve Gedon said we have to be creative. We had an aggressive budget. We need to celebrate everything we are doing, raise the one or two percent we need. Our lights will still be turned on, as will the AC, we'll have bulletins and other items we need. We won't do the things that we dream, things within our grasp but if we could get \$5 from each person it would be what we need. The Finance Team is on top of it. They are looking at on-line giving for people who are away during the winter or summer, as well as automatic withdrawals. Kriss said there are lots of people who don't write checks, a generational

thing. Steve Gedon said this gives people options. Dee said the back page of the United Methodist paper notes that giving is worship. There are different themes in this paper each month and they should be put up for everyone to see.

Steve Gedon informed Council that Chairperson Chip Pickering is in France on a motorcycle tour of the Alps.

Staff Parish - This Team is working on one part of the Pastor's evaluation and Steve Gedon is working on his part of the evaluation. They were meeting Thursday, May 20, but Chairperson Cindy Pyles is having surgery that day.

Ministry Teams - Kriss Bodnar has been hearing about the childrens' ministry teams (see attached report from Childrens Team Chairperson Kianna Anderson) and the next big event is VBS. The youth this Sunday have a celebration for graduates and luncheon after the service and are planning a Creation trip in June. The next thing is a mission trip from St. James July 11 through the 17th. We will be serving their evening meal and will be asking folks to help with that. We need as many people as possible to mingle to get to know them. If folks can't help during the day, they can come in the evening, so put that week on the calendar. There was feedback from the Lenten events, positive about the Seder meal and positive of doing the Festival of Booths in the fall. The play directed by Tonya Bohnen was very positive and she is thinking of another with women in the cast. Kriss said baptism is a sacrament but it doesn't need to be so somber. We had a baptism at our Confirmation Service and we should have been applauding and stomping our feet for that. She welcomes any comments or thoughts. Dee said we used to have balloons on the pews.

Dee said there is one of our youth who wants to go to the United Methodist Summer Youth Celebration instead of Creation and needs help. She found out about this summer program at the most recent Spiritual Growth Retreat. If a youth goes to four United Methodist Women events in one year, they will have half of their tuition paid for West Virginia Wesleyan College. The youth in question is finishing her freshman year. The celebration is an evangelistic event. Creation is designed for kids who are on the margin to making a decision for Christ. The Summer Youth Celebration at Wesleyan College is designed for kids who are already there. It takes place the same time as Creation.

Steve Gedon said the St. James major project will be at the Eve Shelter in Marietta, and they will work on a couple of local projects. He asked if there is anything else we need to talk about. Dee said the organ is making some funny sounds. Steve Bodnar said someone will be here June 9th at 11:30 to look at the organ.

Steve Gedon said in our perspective, where do we think the church should go. A couple of weeks ago, the son of our next door neighbor Crystal, called and said she was not feeling well. After that, his wife called and wanted to pay for our mowing the grass.

We

declined payment but she made a contribution to the church. In the process, we learned that they have moved Crystal in with them, are cleaning out the house and getting it ready for sale. Steve Gedon asked, as leaders, what are our thoughts, considering we are land-locked and this house is next door. Jon Dehmlow, having some participation with the family, excused himself from any discussion of this property. Discussion was on the fact that it is 1800 to 1900 square feet, has a three stall detached garage facing the alley, and the house could be used for additional Sunday School rooms as well as having an excellent play area for children. There were speculative thoughts but this is all moot as the house has not been put up for sale and price is unknown.

Annual Conference will be June 9th through 13th. Dee said Bill Wilson talked about finance a lot at the Pre-Conference Workshop on Sunday, May 16th. She said Conference is asking for donations of flood buckets, shovels, rakes, and hoes needed for cleanup from the floods in southern West Virginia. Bring items to the church and she will see they get to the proper destination.

Meeting adjourned on motion at 7:40 p.m. and closed with prayer by Pastor Steve Gedon.

Next scheduled meeting of Church Council is June 16, 2010 at 6:30 p.m.

Betty Ball, Church Council Secretary

Attachment:

Childrens Team report (1 page)