

## **Church Council Minutes Union Church, August 25, 2014**

Present: Jean Boyce (Clerk) Shirley Carlberg (Treasurer), Abby Embry (Intern), Joan English (recorder), Kent Gilbert (Pastor), Betty Hibler (CL&G), Doug Hindman (Vice Mod.), Bill Stolte (Properties), Barb Taylor (FD), Gail Wolford (Moderator)

NO quorum present, therefore no action could be taken – all agenda items for discussion only.

Doug and Nancy Hindman were wished a very happy 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary.

### **Devotion:**

Doug offered the devotional, after reflecting on the recent events in Ferguson, Missouri. He read from Dr. Martin Luther King's *Letter from Birmingham Jail*. Kent shared that prayer flags have been made and sent to nearby churches, to express our support and solidarity with them, including Margie Pride's church.

August minutes approved.

**Financials** Shirley reported that we are, currently, in great shape for 2014. We had a great month of July for several reasons – including a pledge paid in full for the year and a gift of stock, and just general generous giving! We have only about a dozen people giving through EasyTithe, hoping to increase that this fall, when Revs. Kent and Rachel do some stewardship education. It would help even out cash flow.

The four permanent funds have received their distributions from the Lambert Fund (they are Worship & Arts, Leadership Development, Properties' Special Projects and Mission Outreach).

Regarding the Stewardship theme video to be produced by Dave Harl – we received an in-kind donation of Dave's time, but need to pay \$2000, \$1000 now. Discussion of \$1000 coming from Community Life & Growth's account 5530 (presuming the recent banner purchases haven't depleted it) and the other \$1000 from Lambert Funds. Discussion only. Video is progressing – Dave Harl has sent the storyboard (rough plan) to Kent – he will go over it with Finance Board, and invites others to participate as well. Filming will begin about Sept. 7. The audience is our current members, more especially our newer members – goal is to provide impetus, inspiration and instruction on tithing. It will be included in the packets they receive at Newcomers' gatherings. The plan is for it to be ready about mid-October.

**Capital Campaign** – we have a line of credit of \$140,000 and are currently about \$10,000 in spending over that amount on new staff salaries and other Capital Campaign expenses. Shirley had promised to report on that issue, and the gap is slowly widening. We have the option of going to the bank and drawing out another \$10,000 to close that gap or, as Finance Board recommends, wait another month and revisit. We do have expectations of monies coming in for the Capital Campaign but the focus is currently on the sanctuary project, so we will wait and keep an eye on especially on that spending gap.

Suggestion made that Capital Campaign thank-yous/reminders be sent out with 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter giving statements (mid-Sept., Oct). Neither Jean Boyce nor John Culp – Capital Campaign leaders – know the dollar amounts people pledged.

**Nominations** – Dorie Hubbard is stepping down from Worship Board, Sue Peterson Blyth has agreed to serve. Steve Rhodes will be nominated as Honorary Lifetime Deacon and honored at the October 12 service. (again – discussion only, action not taken).

**Discussion of Church Organization** – Betty brought up the conversation/discernment process we underwent to form our Building the Vision document and how it has informed and inspired Union Church life since we adopted it, especially the “Big Church/Little Church” document (attached) John Krueger gave us, which lined out the qualities of a Pastor-led church growing into a Program-led church, which is our current situation. She proposed that we have a similar discussion as we live into the realities of becoming a program-led church, and the tensions and joys we are encountering. We need to think about how Boards interact with one another, and how Boards and Staff interact, and how that may change. Maybe an October work session/“check-in?” Perhaps Boards can be asked to discuss how things are going at their September meetings and think about the question “what's the new horizon?” Our two new staff members can be good resources – they can tell us what they need, what's working, what's not. How do we connect & increase the sense of participation?

Betty and Gail are willing to start the discussion. Perhaps they can generate questions to focus Boards' and Church Council's discussion. Abby offered resources from a class on church governance she took at seminary, Rachel is at a Leadership Initiative conference now.

**Policy on 10% of end-of-year surplus to Mission** This comes from the Finance Board. Our Budget Policy states yearly that, if there is a surplus after reserving some funds we must retain (ex.: staff's unused Medical Reimbursement dollars), 10% will be directed to Mission, in an attempt to raise the entire year's Mission giving toward 10% (it's currently approx. 8 1/2%). The balance goes into 6999, Unrestricted Carryover Funds, and its use is directed by Church Council.

As we project a budget shortfall in 2015, Finance Board wonders whether we should NOT assign 10% of our likely overage to Mission this year and, instead, retain it to counter some of that shortfall. They are not requesting a vote at this time, since we await Sustainability's input, we need to see what the 2015 budget looks like and it is too early to know if we will, in fact, have an overage for 2014. But – please keep in mind that it may come up for a vote.

Question raised – is this a policy exception or change? Response – one-time policy change is what's proposed at this time. Mission Board has been informed of this idea. There is also a proposed change in how they receive funds – instead of getting 8 1/2 % of a proposed budget, they will receive a distribution when money comes in. They are retaining Bazaar proceeds to use in January & February, 2015, since they may not get a disbursement that early in the year.

Speaking of the Bazaar – not so “mini” - about \$6000 will be realized, once expenses are paid and everyone “settles up.”

This year's Stewardship focus will be on tithing, and it will be easier to encourage all to tithe if we can point to the Mission tithe as our 10% commitment of funds as they come in.

Stewardship theme will be SALT – Serving and Loving Together - Kent and Rachel plan a sermon series, the video will be shown, and the theme will be integrated into every church gathering.

Brief discussion of Suellen Rowe's report – Carla is in touch, her dad is in a nursing home in Idaho now, she is in California, it's hoped that things will calm down for her. Kent will call her very soon.

Request to have discussion items, esp. those needing vote, with rationale and bullet-points, distributed in advance of Church Council meeting. Agreed that, when it is practicable, that will be done. Doug will ask that agenda items be sent to him by the Thursdays before Monday meetings.

## **Reports:**

**Worship Board** Abby reported that she has made stoles for the greeters so they can be easily identified. They are considering a Greeter Orientation.

Evening services have not drawn a very big crowd – about 40 the first Sunday, then 20 or so the next two. Gail expressed that the Chapel is an easier space to be congenial in, easier eye contact.

Kent has a list of 30, 35 people who identify as Newcomers, and will have a barbeque for them at his house September 6.

We will have a sanctuary and Thomas room dedication September 21.

**Communication Team** – Faith Development Board suggests that we need one, whether a Committee, staff member, College Labor position, combination thereof, or something else, to handle internal communication between Boards themselves and between Boards and Congregation.

**Rev. Rachel** – is at the first New Generation Leadership Initiative meeting, funded by the Lilly Foundation. 3 or 4 Sunday School teachers still needed.

**Rev. Kent** reported on 3 additional Lilly grants he is applying for on our behalf. Two are due Sept 1 – one in conjunction with Berea College, which he's working on with Gail Bowman, intended to give students (high school and college) service-learning & 36 preaching opportunities. He and Rachel would provide mentorship to two interns each.

The second would be to create a Festival of Young Preachers, in partnership with the Academy of Preachers, of which Wyndee Holbrook is VP. It would give people between 14 and 28 the opportunity to preach in a church setting.

Both of the above grants will have about 15% overhead built in.

The third is due Nov. 1 and will pay the stipend and other expenses for a 9-month seminary student to serve as intern here.

These opportunities came up suddenly – so watch for more info!

Next meeting September 22.

Respectfully submitted,  
Joan English