

Church Council Minutes Union Church, March 16, 2015

Present: Jean Boyce (Clerk), Kevin Burke (CL&G), Eric Dodson (Admin), Abby Embry (Worship), Joan English (recorder), Kent Gilbert (Pastor), Doug Hindman (Vice Mod.), Dave Kobersmith (Church Admin), Kim Kobersmith (FD), Rachel Small Stokes (Assoc. Pastor), Bill Stolte (Properties), Gail Wolford (Moderator)

Devotion:

Kevin offered the devotional, a reading Prayer for a Leader, from Bless the Space Between Us by John O'Donohue.

Minutes: February minutes were approved.

Financial Reports

Shirley wasn't present, some discussion about the Capital Campaign Line of Credit 2051 of \$140,000. Bill S: Shouldn't the Line 2052, Member Loans, \$10,000, lower that to \$130,000? Yes, probably so, Dave will check with Shirley. Discussion of the \$100,000 AFCU (Appalachian Federal Credit Union) CD, Item 1020. The bulk of that investment is Lawson Hamilton and Burroughs-True Memorial Fund money

Annual Meeting prep

Several people were nominated for Board positions who are not actually church members – although faithful regular participants: BJ Godby, Austin Godden, Jessica Holly, Jane Mecham. The Constitution (5.6.2) allows for Church Council to waive the requirement that those serving on Boards must be members. Jean moved, Kim seconded, that their nomination be approved by Church Council. Passed unanimously. They shall be gently encouraged to request voting privileges, and invited to consider becoming associate or full members.

Michelle Hayden & Kevin Burke were nominated to serve on the Nominating Board by unanimous acclamation.

Discussion of Annual Meeting process. There are no Action Items other than elections & receiving the Annual Report.

Discussion of how Inactive Members are determined. Extracted from the Constitution : “when there is any indication that Union Church membership is no longer meaningful to them, either through attendance, contribution, service, correspondence, or other sign. Such a review of the membership lists shall ordinarily be conducted annually.” Maintaining membership lists are the responsibility of the Clerk. Jean consults with the Office Administrator and both Pastors yearly (at least) to maintain these lists.

Doug invited the group to set goals for next year's Church Council. Perhaps continue with Gail & Betty's work on the direction Union Church is going as a “program church,” and how to get there. Invited discussion on what we should focus on and how we might proceed.

Discussion that the Financial Policy needs updating – language still reflects 1999 Board structure & language. Could its revision be a project for the year? Dave responded that Finance Board agrees, and is looking at that policy as a Google Doc right now. What about directing more energy to the Sustainability Report – yes, good thought.

Kim suggested a planning calendar for the year's big events. Staff has been working on such for budgeting dates – working from the December Budget meeting backward; Bill requested that it be done for all big calendar items by the next Council meeting.

Upcoming major event – April 11 Board orientation, 9-2. 9-11 primarily for brand new Board members, then lunch, then all Board members do visioning, planning. All agreed it best to provide lunch for the event, not ask Board members to do a potluck. Jean suggested we ask Bob. Kim suggested acct. #6410, Leadership Development, as a funding source.

Board Reports

Comm. Life & Growth: Kevin reported. They had a special meeting about the books John Culp gave the Board—an approach to membership focusing on integrating and retaining new members – what to do with them once we've got them! The 4th Sunday gatherings have been well attended and very powerful. Next step – they are inviting new members who've joined in the past 3 months to dinner to give the opportunity for more in-depth sharing. The plan is to do one dinner a quarter. They'd also like to offer 2 programs a year – one on deepening one's faith and the other on recognizing and using one's gifts. CL&G is exploring the possibility of spinning off a smaller group that would handle coffee hour, lemonade on the porch – that kind of social function exclusively.

Kevin also shared that he believes the public perception of Union Church is very positive – 2 recent events: the KFTC Pie Auction and Stepping Out for Art – great Union Church support, esp. from Rev. Kent.

Dave pointed out that the connecting of people to program – as with WNL – is right in line with Sustainability thoughts.

Mission: No rep, but Joan reported the Bazaar is planned for August 29.

Properties: A congregation member offered money to purchase more pew cushions, they're moving ahead with that. They won't cover every pew, some prefer without. There will be a morning of leaf-raking on March 28, 9 am. Reminder that the Healing Arts Retreat will be going on, so the Community Room won't be available for coffee. Office kitchenette will be free. Discussion, but no decision, regarding pavers near chapel.

Worship: Good committed group, Abby may need to give up chair, as she is moving soon (boo). Working on greeting & welcoming, offering/communion. She has bought blue fabric to make stoles so greeters are easy to identify. Sue Peterson Blyth would like to stay on Worship (she rotates off in '15) - Nominating Board needs to be informed and name added to the slate.

Faith Development: Family Faith events are coming up – April 19 at Debbonnaire's farm, Camping trip at the end of July. Sustainagility effort – they are inviting donations for meals and sponsoring kids.

Church Admin: Dave reported that Dana Rousey has been helping out around the building: repaired hand rail, balcony chairs, organized WCSC closet, and many other tasks – she's been awesome! Clark Buckmaster worked on the Comm. Rm. Level Womens Room

Admin Board: Have begun writing job descriptions for all positions. Each employee will have the opportunity to provide feedback. These will be complete by the end of March. Employees will begin to fill out time sheets. Status of some will change from exempt to non-exempt (question of being paid overtime). We are currently actually breaking the law in that regard. Evaluations will be done by the end of July yearly.

Pastors: Rachel reported that the snow cut down on a lot of activity in February – but also created opportunity: she and Kent learned how to produce an online worship service and presented it – all in 5 hours – on Ash Wednesday. Debbonnaire's Meditative Writing class is online only, and has attendees from all over the country. Lent programs are going well, esp. Faith & Money; Habitat for Humanity house is done, will be dedicated April 4. Union Church pledges \$4000 and 700 hours. The house is still short about \$16,000 – Andy Blyth is performing a fundraiser April 11. Confirmation classes are going well, confirmands and their mentors are meeting regularly. Rachel and Dave both finished their project proposals for their certificates in religious fundraising. Dave has got 1 ½ years of statistical info and is sorting through an analysis of pledging using pledge & gift info, demographic info (but NO names attached). Trends will shape our programs and planning. Rachel's project is on future planning, how to connect mission, visioning for healthy churches. We have continued the practice of sending thank you notes at staff meetings – in about a month and a half we've sent out 65. It's been very valuable.

Next meeting: April 20, Abby will offer the devotion.

Respectfully submitted,
Joan English