

## Parish Council Minutes

April 22, 2014

In attendance: Bruce Weaver, Barbara Langill, Jeff Law, Chuck Cotting, Dotty Whittier, Debbie Cotting, and Rev. Dennis Bailey.

Moderator, Bruce Weaver convened the meeting at 7:05 P.M., and Chuck Cotting offered the meditation.

Council approved the minutes of the March 25, 2014 meeting.

**Pastor Report:** Rev. Bailey reviewed pastoral concerns and upcoming funerals and baptisms. He noted that the Holy Week services went well and thanked all the folks involved in the services and Easter breakfast. During the May 18 service, there will be a children's cantata. Also during the May 18 service, Sally MacDonald will be recognized for her 29 years of dedicated service as Director of Tower Day School. There will be a reception to honor Sally following the service.

**Financial Reports:** Treasurer, Jeff Law reviewed financial data as of March 31, 2014. Our overall loss in the Operating Fund year-to-date is \$74,192.03. This number is \$37,664.80 worse than last year, but \$8,329.89 better than budget. Income year-to-date is \$40,791.28 worse than last year, but \$1,060.21 better than budget. Last year's supplemental pledge drive is the main difference between this year's income and last year's. Jeff noted that pledges are running lower than last year and suggested that reminders should be sent to people whose pledges are not up to date. Bruce will ask Jim Marshall to send reminders and place an article in Tower Notes. Expenses are \$3,126.48 better than last year and \$7,269.68 better than budget. We are 75% through the fiscal year, and we are at 70% of our fundraising goal. A sub-committee comprised of Jeff, Bruce, Chuck, and Rev. Bailey will meet to begin planning next year's budget. Financial Secretary, Jim Marshall submitted a written report noting that 86 pledges have been received so far, and they total \$157,340.00. Forty-one pledging units from last year have not yet submitted pledges for Fiscal Year 2015.

**Christian Education:** Barbara Langill reported that the sale of Heifer Muffins earned \$378.00. On April 6, Spark Story Bibles were given to children in Pre-K through First Grade. Barbara reviewed the Rotation schedule through June 8 which is Children's Sunday. The Middle School Lock In was held on April 4-5. On April 13, the Youth Groups heard a representative from Joni and Friends speak about disability awareness. On April 13, the groups will volunteer at Cradles to Crayons. April 27 will be the last regular Youth Group meeting. High School youth will participate in the 30 Hour Famine on May 9-10, and both groups will travel to Canobie Lake Park on May 18 for their end of the year celebration. The Confirmation class will meet with Kathi Martin at 9:00 A.M. on April 27. At noon, they will present their confirmation projects and papers to Rev. Bailey, the Diaconate, and their mentors. May 4 is Confirmation Sunday. Barbara noted that 7 women attended the UCC Women's Conference in Portland, ME and were pleased to attend some great workshops. Barbara is working on two mission opportunities for this summer. From July 13-19, the High School youth and chaperones will work on a re-building project in Orland, ME. From August 18-22, there will be a local, "whole church" mission trip. Barbara is in the process of finalizing the location. The group will leave from Centre Church each morning and return in the evening.

**Outreach:** Barbara requested that, like last year, we make a \$500 donation to Joni and Friends from the Outreach budget. A motion to that effect passed unanimously. Parish Council had planned to vote on dispersing other available funds in the Outreach budget, but decided to postpone dispersing the funds until the May 2014 meeting.

**Membership:** Dotty Whittier reported that Membership has started the "Cousins" program designed to make new members feel welcome and included in the life of the church. The group is working on the Flea Market scheduled for May 17. People can rent tables or donate to the church table. Proceeds from the church table will be divided between

the church operating budget and the Youth Mission Trip. A lobster roll sale is planned for June 1, and a trolley ride through Salem is scheduled for June 8. Membership is exploring ideas for the fall, including another Peabody Essex museum tour and a wine tasting.

**Diaconate:** Margaret Waugh submitted a written report. Three Deacons participated in the Maundy Thursday service, two Deacons will assist with four Baptisms on April 27, and two Deacons will assist with the Confirmation Service on May 4. Attendance at the Easter Breakfast was lower than usual; the breakfast earned \$100 for the Organ Maintenance Fund. The Supply Minister, Rev. Jamie Howard, will attend the next Deacons' meeting to assist in planning worship services during Rev. Bailey's sabbatical. Doug Hodgkins will be on medical leave from June 15-July 6 and August 24-September 14. Noel Smith will be available to substitute for Doug for most services. Bruce Weaver suggested that Council members could attend the beginning of the Deacons' meeting on May 13 to meet Rev. Howard. The Deacons recommend that summer services begin in the Chapel on June 15 and that services return to the Sanctuary on September 14.

**Stewardship:** Carrie Pericola submitted a written report. She noted that the Stewardship campaign went well and that over 2/3 of the pledge cards have been returned. Stewardship is in the process of writing thank you notes to those who have submitted their pledge cards. Carrie reported that several women who participated in the Women's Retreat attended a workshop where electronic giving was discussed. They left the workshop feeling that Council ought to revisit the idea of offering electronic giving to the congregation because it is attractive to younger members.

**Finance:** Chuck Cotting thanked Bruce for procuring two large work tables for the basement kitchen. He reported on projects that need to be completed before the Tower Day re-licensing on May 13. Chuck will contact Glenn Pyburn regarding the placement of large boulders near the playground fence to protect it from snow being plowed against it. A Tower Day parent has inquired about purchasing the pay phone outside the Fireside Room. Verizon told Chuck that the phone belongs to the church so we are free to sell it. Chuck will contact the parent to discuss a price. During school vacation, T-Mobile will run fiber optics and replace some cabinets and an antenna. Chuck reviewed roof replacement bids noting that the process has been lengthy and several bids were received. It was moved and seconded to award the roof replacement bid to Hill Construction. After a period of discussion, the motion passed unanimously. The work will take place during the summer.

**Tower Day School Director Search:** Bruce reported that several resumes have been received and interviews have begun. Initial interviews have been conducted by Bruce, Debbie Cotting, and Kathy Dickson. All Search Committee members will be invited to attend second interviews of promising candidates.

**Fundraising:** Thirteen people have signed up to attend the Paint Party on May 6. It is hoped that more people will sign up before the April 27<sup>th</sup> deadline. Debbie Cotting and Barbara Langill will coordinate dates for the fall Yankee Candle Fundraiser.

**New Business:** Bruce requested that Council members be thinking of people who might agree to fill vacant slots on Ministry Teams or the vacant Vice Moderator's position.

There being no further business, Council voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 P.M. Rev. Bailey led a closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Cotting, Recording Secretary