

Parish Council Minutes - January 7, 2015

In attendance: Bruce Weaver, Margaret Waugh, Jim Marshall, Dotty Whittier, Chuck Cotting, Debbie Cotting, Barbara Langill, Kathi Martin, Carrie Pericola, Jeff Law, and Rev. Dennis Bailey. Moderator, Bruce Weaver convened the meeting at 7:05 P.M., and Jim Marshall offered the meditation. Council approved the minutes of the Dec. 3, 2014 meeting.

Pastor Report: Rev. Bailey reviewed pastoral concerns and outlined his worship-related activities over the past month. He conducted a baptism on Dec. 28 and officiated at a memorial service on Dec. 20. Rev. Bailey provided a list of new people attending church and encouraged Council members to chat with them on Sunday morning.

Financial Reports: Treasurer, Jeff Law reviewed financial data as of Dec. 31, 2014. He noted that the Dec. information is preliminary since he has not received bank statements yet, but he doesn't expect the numbers to change much. Our overall loss in the Operating Fund year-to-date is \$28,797.10. This number is \$4798.55 worse than last year, but \$29,943.44 better than budget because supplemental pledge income is not included in the budget. Income year-to-date is \$10,951.22 better than last year and \$28,287.01 better than budget. Pledges largely caught up in December. Pledge income is now \$5396.29 worse than last year, but \$2864.93 better than budget. The Supplemental Pledge Drive brought in \$30,685 in November and December. Expenses are \$15,749.77 worse than last year, but \$1656.43 better than budget. The variance from last year is mostly due to paying the Supply Minister in July and August of 2014. There was no such expense in July and August of 2013. Jeff noted that we need to continue to keep pledges up-to-date, continue fundraising, and maintain good expense management. Jeff reported that the Get-Together Wheel made a generous undesignated donation to the church. Council voted to apply the funds to the Rock the Boat Campaign.

Christian Education: Barbara Langill reported on Christian Education and Youth Ministry activities for the past month. On Dec. 7, the youth gave the Heifer message, and the SPARK class sang a Heifer song. The Heifer Marketplace was held after worship; the children sold the ornaments they made. Barbara thanked Linda Ladd for directing the Christmas Pageant on Dec. 21. On Feb. 1, the Youth will give the Heifer message, and Bibles will be presented. On Dec. 7, the youth made fleece hats and scarves to donate to the City Mission Christmas Shop. The Dec. 14 Cookie Swap, organized by the High School youth, was a great success thanks to the many donations of cookies. The event raised \$300 for the Youth Mission Trip. On Jan. 4, the Youth had an Epiphany Party with a Yankee Swap. On March 11, both High School and Middle School Youth Groups will volunteer at Cradles to Crayons. They will collect gently used children's clothing in February. Barbara informed Council that the nursery care provider has given her two week notice; her last day will be Jan. 11. Alicia Dwyer has agreed to fill in. Barbara reported that Education Ministries plans to change to the Godly Play curriculum for the ARK children (3-6 year-olds.) She noted that the Gingerbread Ark made by a group including students from 2nd grade through high school won a ribbon for Most Authentic. Barbara informed Council that she plans to retire by Sept. 1, 2015. Council members thanked Barbara for her extraordinary service. The Moderator noted that meetings will be scheduled soon to discuss filling this vacancy.

Education: Kathi Martin remarked that the Godly Play curriculum is geared for younger children and is helpful to use with a group of children with different learning styles. The curriculum is designed to help children explore their faith through stories. There are many hands-on materials to support the curriculum, and shelving is needed to store them. Kathi and Barbara envision a folding storage cabinet or a folding set of bookshelves that could be kept and used in Todd Hall. Council voted to approve the purchase of a "Godly Play" storage cabinet, purchase price not to exceed \$1000, with funds coming from Memorial Funds designated for Christian Education.

Membership: Dotty Whittier reported that members of the Membership Team helped with Night in Bethlehem in a variety of ways. All felt that the event was great for fellowship and community outreach. Membership is organizing the Trivia and Silent Auction to be held on Saturday, February 7, 2015. They are soliciting items for the Silent Auction, looking for donations of appetizers and desserts, and encouraging people to form teams and sign up.

Diaconate: Margaret Waugh reported that the Deacons participated in the Christmas Concert on Dec. 21, both Christmas Eve services, and the baptism on Dec. 28. She noted that the 5 PM service on Christmas Eve had the largest attendance in 3 years. Diaconate wanted the 5 PM Christmas Eve service to be enjoyed by people of all ages, and they met their goal. The music was outstanding as was Becca Sievers' presentation as Mary. The new flat screen TV, donated by the Seelig family in memory of Bill's father, has been installed in the Fireside Room. Worship services can now be viewed there by parents with young children or others who need to leave the Sanctuary. The all-church workshop on Church Growth, presented by Marie Lucca, has been scheduled for March 8 after worship. A light lunch will be provided by the Diaconate. Whole Foods at MarketStreet has generously donated 2 cases of tapioca to be used in the beef stew recipe for Bread and Roses. This donation will be used over the next year to prepare meals for over 200 clients on the first Wednesday of each month.

Stewardship: Carrie Pericola reported that the total of supplemental pledges received as of 12/28 is \$30,685.00. The Christmas offering totaled \$4746.00. The theme for the next Stewardship campaign will be "Blessed To Be A Blessing." Printed materials will use graphics from the UCC, but be customized to include our church name. Stewardship is meeting soon to develop a time-line for the campaign.

Finance: Chuck Cotting reported that our 2 gas boilers were serviced and inspected on 12/4/14. A small leak in the copper piping will need to be addressed in the spring. The gas furnace for the Office area was replaced on 12/12/14. Windy conditions on 1/5/15 caused the water heater pilot to blow out. The custodian and Chuck were able to re-light the pilot. A failed fuse caused the heat to go off in the Sanctuary on Sat., Jan. 3. Sunday worship was moved to the chapel, and the fuse was replaced on 1/5/15. Scott DeSantis replaced the failed faucets in the kitchenette and the second floor men's room. Repair or replacement of the main kitchen faucet is being investigated. Baker Electric replaced the Sanctuary and Chapel thermostats with 7-day devices, installed the old Sanctuary thermostat in the Fireside Room, and installed an outlet for the oil-filled heater and lighting in the crawl space under the first floor Ladies' Room. Chuck is working with Baker Electric to find lighting options for the Book of Remembrance in the Narthex and the 5 failed lights in the parking lot. Heavy rains in December caused flooding in the parking lot. Quick action by Rev. Bailey and the loan of a water pump and hoses from the Lynnfield Fire Dept. prevented flooding in the building. A 1 1/2" water pump and 100 feet of hose have been purchased so that the church has a pump and hose available. They are stored in large bins in the Boiler Room near Todd Hall.

New Business: Rev. Bailey spoke with Rev. Colburn of St. Paul's Episcopal Church about collaborating on the Easter Sunrise Service. Bruce thanked everyone involved with all the Advent and Christmas activities and services.

There being no further business, Council voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 PM. Rev. Bailey led a closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Cotting, Recording Secretary

Next Meeting: Wednesday, January 28 Meditation: Kathi Martin