

Parish Council Meeting  
November 30, 2011

In attendance: Bruce Weaver, Linda Ladd, Barbara Langill, Sandi Watson, Jim Marshall, Chuck Cotting, Dotty Whittier, Jeff Law, Carrie Pericola, and Debbie Cotting.

Bruce called the meeting to order at 7:10 P.M. and welcomed our new Council Ministry Team Nominees: Sandi Watson, Chair of Outreach Ministries and Carrie Pericola, Chair of Stewardship Ministries.

Council approved the minutes of the October, 2011 meeting.

**Pastor's Report:** Rev. Bailey was unable to attend, but he submitted a written report which Bruce presented. Dennis provided a list of events and activities he's been involved with during the past month. He continues to visit people in hospitals, rehabs, nursing homes, and at home. Dennis is preparing services for Advent and Christmas. He has not yet purchased a new computer, though he plans to buy one soon. He reported that the air exchange unit for the chapel was delivered, and the new heating unit should be up and running by Dec. 5. The air conditioning unit should be installed by Dec. 9. The oil tank will be removed, but no date is set yet. Dennis will take a week's vacation beginning 12/26. He will return on 1/2, 2012 so a preacher will be needed for 1/1/2012. Dennis has been summoned for jury duty on 12/19. He will inform Bruce, Linda, and the staff if he is required to serve.

**Treasurer's Report:** Jeff circulated the Treasurer's Report which included income and expenses through Oct. 31, 2011. He noted that pledge income is substantially lower than budget and lower than last year at this time. It may be that people are not up-to-date with their pledges, but the deficit may also be the result of receiving many pre-paid pledges at the end of the last fiscal year. Fundraisers are off to a good start, but Jeff cautioned that we need to maintain the pace if we are to meet our goal. Tower Day School balances are looking good.

**Financial Secretary:** Jim will analyze pledge activity in an attempt to explain why pledges are running behind.

**Christian Education:** Barbara reported that there have been children in the nursery each week, including 6 on Nov. 20 so it seems that having a consistent caregiver is having a positive effect. Rotation workshops have focused on Heifer International, and children have made crafts to sell at the Heifer Marketplace. Approximately 40 people attended the Advent Workshop. Barbara thanked Kathi Martin and Laurel Caputo for the spaghetti dinner, Dennis who led wreath making, and Heather Sievers, Kathy Delaney, Judie Potter, Nancy Miller, Carrie Pericola, and Denise Weaver for leading craft tables. The Scratch Ticket Silent Auction raised \$122 to be used to help fund the Nursery Caregiver stipend. Five members of the Middle School Youth Group joined other area youth for a Mission 1 event at Topsfield Congregational Church. They brought 55 non-perishable food items to donate to a local food pantry. Both Youth Groups assembled Birthday Boxes for Birthday Wishes. Generous support from the congregation and money raised through the Pumpkin Carving Contest allowed the groups to complete 9 boxes and provide supplies for birthday parties for children in homeless shelters. Twenty-seven turkeys were collected for Haven from Hunger. Barbara thanked Scott Desantis for the use of his pick-up truck to deliver the turkeys. The Car Smash raised \$251 for Heifer International. The Confirmation Class and several of their mentors participated in the UCC Heritage Tour in Boston. Dennis led a Confirmation Class entitled "God's People do Die". The class included a trip to McDonald's Funeral Home in Wakefield. Barbara reported on Youth Group events scheduled for the month of December. She also discussed the possibility of high school youth attending the UCC National Youth Event in July, 2012 at Purdue University in Indiana. The conference is held every 4 years. Over 3000 youth attend and participate in worship and workshops. The cost is \$425/person plus transportation. Mass. Conference is offering two bus alternatives: An express bus and a bus that would transport groups who want to extend their trip by joining others for a mission trip in Cleveland.

**Outreach Ministries:** Sandi Watson is in the process of building her team. The tree of gifts for City Missions Society will be placed in the Narthex. Sandi will post Outreach-related information on the Missions bulletin board which will be moved to a better location. She asked Council for their ideas of what we want Missions to be about. Sandi suggested that we have more hands-on projects and that we build on our connections with Haven From Hunger. They have a need for mentors for people who are building resumes and looking for jobs.

**Membership Ministries:** Dotty reported that volunteers made over 100 pies and carrot cakes and the sale netted \$900. Trivia night is scheduled for 2/13/12, and this year a silent auction will be added to the event. Membership hopes to have a progressive dinner in March or April, and they are planning ways to contact new families and visitors with welcome letters and invitations to events. Membership would like to involve the Confirmands and Church School classes in coffee hour and greeting.

**Diaconate:** Linda reported that Doreen DiFillippo has joined Diaconate. Two recent breakfasts raised \$280 for the organ fund. In an effort to get the congregation's attention for the start of worship, the prelude and postlude, the Deacons will usher the choir in as soon as they come into the Narthex, close most doors, and ask the congregation to stay in the sanctuary to enjoy the postlude. Linda expects that Dave Wallace will service the organ fairly soon. We now have the ladder needed to service the organ pipe area. In Dennis' absence on 11/13, Diaconate worked together to lead worship, using text provided by Dennis, and to support Sandi Watson who presented the sermon/message on Heifer. Christmas decorations are up. Candles will remain in the windows until 1/15 per bridal

request. Linda reviewed the schedule for lighting the Advent Candles and noted that services on 12/25/11 and 1/1/12 will be held in the chapel. New Year's Day will not be a communion Sunday. Linda informed Council that the St. Patrick Family Players have offered us the date of Sunday, 3/25 to perform The Resurrection. We would provide a spotlight and refreshments. Proceeds from the offering would go to the St. Patrick Players. Council approved the performance.

Finance Ministries: Chuck reported that the chapel steps have been repaired, but the underpinning is failing so the steps will need to be replaced in a year or two. Chuck has one proposal of \$4850 to replace the steps. Chuck will contact Jim Wersackas to firm up dates for the remaining furnace work and to evaluate the need for a thermostat in the Kindergarten classroom. Chuck received estimates from Baker Electric to replace two parking lot lights (\$2200) and add a light at the parking lot entrance (\$1200 including shield.) In the spring, Chuck would like to re-do the parking lot apron. He will seek estimates. Bruce reported that temporary repairs have been made to the asphalt roof, and repairs to the rubber roof should be made soon.

Fundraisers: Council discussed ideas for future fundraisers.

Council approved a special meeting of the congregation on January 22, 2012 to approve the appointment of Sandi Watson as Chair of Outreach Ministries, Carrie Pericola as Chair of Stewardship Ministries and Doreen DiFillippo - Diaconate.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:05 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,  
Debbie Cotting, Recording Secretary

**Next Meetings: Wednesday, January 4<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday, January 31**