

Minutes of the Council, South Church in Andover

January 4, 2009

Present:

Committee	Co-Chair
Deacons	Jeff Cutts
Deacons	Polly Pyle
Trustees	Chris Williams
Trustees	Charles Ziegenbein
Christian Ed	Duncan Pyle
Youth	Alyson Shaw
World Service	David Strong
Women's Ministries	Elaine Geffken
Giving	Rachel Combs
Giving	Laurel Ziehl
Nominating	Dave Floreen
Music	Don Miller
Fellowship	Garnet Jacavano
Delegates	Janet Clarke
Moderator	Bill Schroeder
Clerk	Bonnie Zeigler
Treasurer	Morgan Kiker
Superintendent	Susan Henke
Assistant Superintendent	Debbie Bohrer
Member-at-Large	Roxy Barry
Member-at-Large	Catherine Jacavano
Guest	Rob Thomas
Senior Pastor	John Zehring
Director, Christian Ed	Terry Ebner
Administrative Coordinator	Linda Hacker

Opening Devotion

Polly opened the meeting with a devotion - a story about her friend Gunilla Lundquist, who was an exchange student who lived with Polly back in the 70s. "Enjoy life as this is your time on earth" was the theme of the devotion.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the November meeting were approved.

Planned Giving

Rob Thomas attended the meeting to describe a new program on planned giving. Rob sees a need to separate clearly the planned giving from "stewardship" (i.e., *Giving*). He would like to set up opportunities for members to include South Church in wills and also to set up opportunities for annuities. Mary Beth Fahey and Jim Van der Pol have joined with him to form a task force, and Rob attended the meeting to ask for the Council to approve the task force. Dave Floreen commented that the effort is overdue and needs to be ongoing. Rob suggested he might be able to do a soft-spoken and tasteful effort, with early adopters as the seed members, who might also give testimonials and help to communicate to the congregation. Bill said that we need to make sure there is "somebody here" when people are ready.

Rob is an estate planning lawyer and he spent some time defining one mechanism to give as a "codicil", or addendum, to an existing will. The codicils would have to be signed and witnessed, but the original will does not have to be completely redrafted.

Roxy suggested that a workshop on wills might be a valuable starting point.

Bill led the group through the chartering process. Motion to charter the ad hoc committee was moved, seconded, and approved. Appendix A provides the statement of purpose for the committee

Pastor-Parish Relations Committee

Anne Clough, the chair/covener of the group, reviewed the statement of purpose for the committee. Anne suggested that the committee can help to identify concerns among the congregation that might not otherwise surface to John. Anne also sees the committee as a source of support for the pastoral staff, to help bring issues to the staff and also to avoid staff burnout. Anne said that apparently these committees work well in other churches, even though we haven't had one. The committees tend to meet relatively rarely, about 4 times a year. Bill noted that the committee supports all the pastors, which, right now, includes both John and Jonathan.

There was some discussion about the difference between this committee and a Diaconate subcommittee. John pointed out that the Diaconate responsibilities, as described in the bylaws, are focused on supporting the pastors and the worship program. John said that this committee is balanced, "in trust", supporting both the congregation and the pastoral staff, in confidence, and is typically core to

church governance. Bill and Janet underscored that this approach is highly recommended for all churches.

Janet also asked how the Deacons would be part of the committee, when the terms are 4 years. You always need a Deacon on the committee, but a Deacon would have to come and go, since they only have three year terms.

Janet asked about the term length, and Anne responded that the four year term is designed to keep the turnover low, while permitting one of the four to roll off each year.

Bill pointed out that the committee is a “work in progress” and that some aspects of the operation will evolve over the first year.

The Council discussed ways to communicate the membership of the Committee – and it was mentioned that we need a general way to communicate members of ad hoc committees.

Laurel asked what is the process of resolution for problems – what are the parameters – how long? what happens? How are actions or decisions communicated?

John said that congregations need to provide feedback in healthy ways, and that pastors are subject to stress, substance abuse, and other issues.

Motion to approve membership and approach of the committee passed. Members are **Tom Guy, Dave Bryan, Anne Clough, and Marty Mason**. Statement of purpose is in Appendix B.

Budget

Chris Williams presented the budget. Pledges returned to date are \$572,000; estimated additional pledging was \$25,000; estimated uncollectable (5%) was \$28,600; non-pledged giving was estimated at \$30,000. Thus, final estimated revenues are about \$651,640 against expenses of from \$682,533- \$718,131, depending on whether or not some important additional needs are addressed (including the nursery worker, painting the church, and the possibility of adding a theological student to the pastoral staff.)

Trustees expressed significant concern about the state of the building reserve fund. Some building rents are now directed to the building reserve funds, primarily to offset wear and tear on the building. Trustees would like to redirect other revenues into the building reserve, as a general practice.

The Moderator pointed out that we have to get to a balanced budget – asking “what is the nature of the situation and what are the steps we can take to present a budget at the annual meeting on January 27”. The Moderator asked the Council to stay at the higher level and not focus on small, detailed amounts.

The general conclusion was that we need somewhere between 30 and 60K in additional pledge giving to make up the difference, and last year we asked for a targeted giving that netted about that much.

The Giving committee reported that estimates of pledging were \$578K as of the day of the Council meeting.. Giving felt that they will be able to pull in the last 42,000 or so of pledges – casting a broad net . Rachel pointed out that Giving doesn't consider the 5% uncollectable.

Giving proposed to send a letter to the final group of pledge units who haven't pledged yet. There was some discussion as to whether this letter, the fourth, was really going to help if people hadn't responded prior to this one. Most people seemed to feel that the last letter has a particular value because it has specific numbers in it, because it is now after the holidays, and to help reach people who won't answer their phone. Giving has decided to go with the letter and then follow up phone calls.

Bill commented that the final 41 units are likely to be nonpledgers – they are likely to have a reason why they haven't responded. Thus, Bill suggested, perhaps we should share the picture with everybody. We've done this two years in a row, gone to the congregation for the extra, and targeted asking for more, and maybe there is a feeling that we shouldn't do that again, but maybe going to those who have pledged and asking for more like we have in the past two years might be better.

Discussion continued regarding how to get from the current position to the annual meeting. Chris felt that what we do this year should be different from last year. Currently, the items in budget are interest and debt repayment, salaries, insurance, utilities, missions – is there anything that could be adjusted? Jeff suggested that perhaps the self-loans could be renegotiated. Alternatively, we could revisit missions, given that current data suggest that much of our mission-related giving is not captured by the overall budget. Chris said the Trustees didn't recommend A vs. B, but she would be hard pressed to say no raises next year and hard pressed to say “no paint”, when we have an initial offering of \$9600 toward that effort.

John said that the options are limited. Some other churches are spending down their endowments, which is not an idea he supports. The only other options are to increase income or decrease expenses, or possibly get a small group of donors to set up a match process. In addition, there was some discussion around the structure and/or timing of a “town meeting”, or other ways to get the word out to the congregation that more giving would be required if we are to reach a balanced budget without reducing expenses.

Annual Meeting Planning

Bill reminded members that, if they have a financial report, they need to get it to Linda by the 21st. . Bill sent around an agenda and the Council confirmed that the meeting would start at 7 PM.

Linda Hacker

The church now has a new phone system, with the work done by Dave Meldrum, Bill, Morgan and Dave Stanwood. The new system speeds the connection of incoming calls, and should save a lot of time. The new system was donated.

Terry Ebner

Terry offered thanks to everyone for participating in Advent and Christmas pageant, etc. She also was grateful to the Deacons for poinsettias and to the Council for the week off.

John Zehring

- On January 22nd at 7 PM, John will be preaching at Temple Emmanuel, accompanied by the Jazz Disciples.
- A funeral for Rob Worthen, who passed away suddenly at 61 years of age, was scheduled for the Friday following the meeting.
- A meeting for new members is Jan 24.
- One of the things that is very important is teaching and learning. Adult ed has not been reaching as many people as we'd like to reach – John has decided to move ahead with a new way to do adult ed,(3 classes in a session, on weeknights, etc). We have recruited a Dean for adult education, who is Roxy Barry.

Reports of Boards and Committees were deferred to email submissions in the interest of time, and are appended to the Minutes as Appendix C.

Meeting closed with prayer from Jeff at 10 PM.

Next meeting is Monday, January 25, at 7:30 PM.

**Respectfully submitted,
Bonnie L. Zeigler, Clerk**

Appendix A
Statement of Purpose
Planned Giving Committee

The purpose of the committee will be to educate and assist congregation members to include South Church in their Wills, and/or to consider charitable, tax-advantaged planned giving opportunities during their lifetimes.

Appendix B
Statement of Purpose
Pastor-Parish Relations Committee

The Pastoral Relations Committee holds in trust the relationship between congregation and Pastors, pursuing the best interests of both equally. It encourages the Pastors know what people in the church are thinking and it encourages representatives of the congregation know what the Pastors are thinking. It provides a framework in which conflict can be dealt with creatively. It supports and maintains this relationship, and helps the Pastors and members of the church share ideas, hopes, dreams, and interpretations of mission.

Responsibilities:

For the Pastoral Relations Committee to be effective, the Pastors and committee members must be willing to communicate openly and honestly, and must recognize that all information shared, except that which is clearly stated otherwise or reveals illegal acts or a breach of professional ethics, is strictly confidential. The committee will have the following responsibilities in consultation with the Pastors:

- working for improved communication, interpretation and understanding between the congregation and the Pastors
- exploring areas of potential conflict between the Pastors' ministry and that of the congregation and assisting in developing alternative solutions and possibilities for avoiding destructive conflict
- openly and honestly communicating feelings and reactions of church members to the Pastors
- acting as a sounding board for the Pastors
- providing an opportunity for the Pastors to reflect in confidence about personal concerns, hopes, ambitions, and frustrations
- being alert to the Pastors' concerns between meetings
- demonstrating concern and support for the Pastors' family
- encouraging the Pastors to plan time for recreation, exercise, relaxation, family, and solitude.

Practical Guidelines:

- The Pastoral Relations Committee should be a committee of the Church Council and there should be periodic reports to the Council
- The committee members should be approved by both the Church Council and the Senior Pastor (i.e., either should have veto power over any potential member)
- At least one deacon should serve on the committee
- The committee may begin with members who served on the Search Committee.
- When new members are needed they should be recommended by the Moderator and Senior Pastor, to be appointed by Church Council.
- The committee will meet on a regular basis (probably three or four times a year)
- Any member of the committee or a Pastor may call for a special meeting of the committee at any time it is deemed appropriate
- The PRC should have 4 members, each serving one 4 year term, staggered so that a new member will join each year.

Revised and agreed upon by consensus of Pastor-Parish Relations Committee 11/30/09

Appendix C

Reports of Boards and Committee

(Submitted electronically after the Council Meeting)

Music Committee (Don Miller)

A lot of music over the Christmas season; we hope everyone enjoyed hearing it as much as we did putting it together and performing it. Kudos to Charles, who is coming up to speed quickly as the new director of Children's choirs, and to Tamara for all their time and hard work. During the fourth Sunday in Advent service (Advent 4 as we call it), we enjoyed the musicianship of the brass quartet throughout the service and, for the culmination (i.e., postlude) of the service, the Hallelujah Chorus with Maryalice on the timpani. Thanks to all in the congregation who augmented the choir for this wonderful yearly tradition conducted by Dave Penner.

The Sanctuary Choir and an augmented Harmonic Regression provided a musical prelude for the midnight service on Christmas Eve. We were very appreciative of the efforts of those who provided

"guidance" to the congregation for this. We hope the congregation was able to have some meaningful contemplative moments to prepare for the inspiring service that followed.

The Sanctuary Choir and augmented Harmonic Regression joined Linda O'Donnell's South Side school chorus to put on a wonderful concert in the Methuen Music Hall on December 13. Charles played Mendelssohn on the big organ and Tamara, in addition to accompanying the Choir and chorus, led the sing alongs of the big Wilcox carols, opening up the big organ to the delight of all. Most important, as this was a benefit concert organized by Neighbors in Need, we contributed to raising a couple of thousand dollars for NIN. (Another addition to Chris' list).

On Dec. 20, Charles corralled a group of hearty carolers and visited about 10 residences at Edgewood. As in the past, the carolers were very well received and the residents were very welcoming.

At our upcoming meeting on Jan. 10, we will officially welcome new Music Committee member Martin McGrath to fill out Dan Ryan's term.

We continue to work with the Trustees to finalize our 2010 budget. Last year, with our greatly reduced budget (less than half of our previous 3 year's average), in addition to dipping into our reserve fund, we were blessed with some generous donations which enabled us to keep our music program at the high level we wanted.

Nominating Committee (Dave Floreen, Liz Roos)

Nominating Committee is busy preparing for its recruiting phase. We have received nearly all of your committee profile reports and we will be assembling them into a brief insert for Five Minutes and/or Bulletin as part of our outreach campaign. We will also be asking several committees to present a BRIEF 2 minute summation of what they do as an announcement during church beginning late January through April. Think of them as the committee version of the Giving Moments last fall. I will be sending all committees by Thursday a list of the current committee rosters as we know them. Please email me back with any corrections.

In addition our "What would you like to do for our church?" interest form will be in this week's program (we had it in two weeks ago. "If this is your last year on a board....you, too could have the opportunity to sign up!"

Child Care Special Committee (Dave Floreen)

Regarding the Child Care Survey, reporting for Kath Mason and Lynne Blech, we emailed surveys to dozens of parents of Church School parents and distributed forms on one Sunday. We plan to do one more follow-up email and class distribution. So far we have received 13 surveys; 9 said they felt there was a need for more child care, 1 said no and 3 others gave no response. 7 of the 9 said they would support child care financially, 2 said no and 4 gave no response. Most demand focused on Monthly 5 pm Saturday program, then annual meetings and perhaps Day of Service. Many said they would not use

child care at night for younger kids-bedtime, disruptive, etc. We'll have a full report by next council meeting.

Youth Board (Alyson Shaw, Kath Mason)

Our child care fundraiser was held in December. Although there weren't that many children to watch everyone had a great time. It was a great opportunity for the older kids in our church to interact with the younger kids.

We are trying to put together another fun event to play Laser Tag. Hopefully, this will take place the end of January.

We are gearing up for several big fundraisers for our annual mission trip to John's Island in April.

Aloha Cafe will be held on Feb 27th. We will be following the same format as last year as everyone felt that it was a great family outing.

Intermission refreshments will be served during all presentations of Joseph in March.

Mission trip plans are beginning to be made. Look for more on this.

Board of Women's Ministries (Elaine Geffken)

Our board was busy preparing for our annual holiday fundraiser, which was held on two Sundays in December. Lots of cookies were baked for our Christmas plates! We sold these along with bowls of candy, ornaments, Christmas cards. The confirmation class also helped us by making bags of reindeer food to include in our sale. The funds earned will go towards any one of our local organizations that the BOWM supports during the year.

Board of World Service

Day of Service (DoS)

We spent our December board meeting grappling with the issue of "ownership" for Day of Service. There is some understandable trepidation from members to assume what feels like a daunting task that has been very capably handled for 10 years now by passionate members of the church. Despite that trepidation, the Board updated our committee description form for the Nominating Committee with the explicit responsibility for this board to assume DoS. We have already been joined by one interested and passionate member in Kathi Levine and look forward to more new members joining with this same passion.

Additional local service outings

We are planning a Q1 service outing with one of our local missions to try to expand the calendar of service options available to people. We brainstormed options in December and plan to pick a mission

and dates. This is obviously open to all church members and is planned with the intent of stretching the spirit of DoS across the whole year.

Green Week

Based on the November church council meeting discussing Green Week, Kathi Levine is coordinating a service event, possibly tree planting, with Groundwork Lawrence along with the Green Team for Saturday May 2nd.

Members-At-Large (Roxy Barry)

We have filled the Sunday "greeter slots" through mid March, so all should feel "welcome" as they come through the door every Sunday! More to come!

Deacons (Jeff Cutts, Polly Pyle)

Christmas 2009

Although it seems like a year ago, the Deacons spent a bit of time making sure the advent wreath lighting, poinsettia deliveries, Blue Christmas and Christmas Eve services went off without a noticeable hitch

Pastors' Samaritan Fund

A quick note to Council to inform you that The Board of Deacons has oversight of the "Pastors' Samaritan Fund" (*formerly known as the Deacons' Communion Fund*), which provides financial resources to the South Church Pastors for anonymous charitable giving, primarily within the membership of South Church. Given last evenings discussions we think we should point out that the finding for this comes 'off budget'.

Communion Procedures

For all past and future Deacons we have updated our Communion Procedures, following last month's Communion review. They are dated 11/4/09, and they replace our earlier versions.

Lenten Booklet

We invite ... and in fact encourage ... Council and all members to contribute to the 2010 Lenten Booklet, "Our Earth, God's Sacred Space". Submissions (art, poetry, reflections, prayer) are due Sunday January 17th.