

**Minutes of the Council, South Church in Andover
December 18, 2007**

Present:

Bill Schroeder	Moderator
Lisa Stedman	Staff
Kate Kallis	Staff
Terry Ebner	Staff
Linda Hacker	Staff
Morgan Kiker	Treasurer
Tom Larsen	Deacons
Lynne McDonald	Deacons
Lisa Guy	Trustees
Fran Fink	Stewardship
Vicki Hoyt	Board of World Service
Ron Dann	Music
Eric Stubenhaus	Nominating
Laurie Sorota	Youth
Steve Fink	Member at Large
Janet Clarke	MACUCC and Andover Association Rep
Anne Clough	Clerk

Devotions

Tom Larsen led devotions. He focused on two carols (Hark the Herald Angels Sing and Come Let Us Adore Him) whose words we often do not think about carefully enough and closed with a prayer.

Approval and Review of Minutes

The November 26, 2007 Council Meeting minutes were sent to members before the meeting for review and were approved with one correction by unanimous vote.

Treasurer's Report

Morgan Kiker passed out a collection analysis sheet and pointed out that we are approximately 2% down on this month's revenue to date as compared to last year's revenue at this time.

Chuck Crockett has made a request to the nominating committee for an additional assistant treasurer. The number of assistant treasurers is currently set to be in the range of 8-11. Morgan would like to have the upper number changed to 12. Such a change would have to be posted and announced before the January Annual Meeting. It was decided to get a sense of the council on this matter and then check the bylaws to determine the exact process that needs to be followed. The council agreed in principle to an increase to 12 members.

140 families have not yet pledged.

2008 Financial Forecast

Fran Fink reported that the Stewardship Committee had met on the previous evening. The committee is planning to make calls in late December or early January to those members who have not yet pledged. Reminders will also appear in Five Minutes. Committees are asked to urge their members to send in their pledges. Pledges can be made by telephone, email or using the pledge forms. We are currently approximately \$200,000 short of what we need for pledges. This amount of shortfall would lead to real problems budget-wise and would most likely necessitate a cut in our

staffing and/or our missions. We need to know pledge amounts so the budget can be drawn up. The suggestion was made to make pledge cards available at the back of the sanctuary during Christmas services and activities.

It was also noted that we have been gentle up to now in our requests and reminders. However, people need to know the seriousness of the problem. We need to give the congregation an opportunity to understand and respond.

Planning for 297th Annual Meeting

Reports from the Board of Trustees, the Treasurer, the Stewardship Committee, the Board of World Service, the Trustees of the Trust Funds, the Nomination Committee (with an update since our June meeting), as well as the Parish Record and Statistics for 2007, and the Minutes of our last annual meeting and special meeting in June, should be included in the Annual Report. Linda Hacker needs input for the annual meeting report by January 15th.

The agenda from last year's annual meeting was passed out to council members.

The Updates and Reports section of the meeting will include information about the Interim Ministry Team, the Seeds of Faith Fund, the Phillip Newell Retreat as well as other planned retreats, and will also include an opportunity to give thanks to our staff.

We discussed creating a video show for the close of the meeting, similar to previous years. Several names were mentioned as people who could help with this (Tom Jones, Joan Johnson, Rich Brown, Dave Stone). Cal's retirement party in pictures and/or the Day of Service video were also suggested.

Search Committee Selection Process

The process for coming up with a senior pastor search committee in the next month or two (or, at the latest, by the end of February) was discussed. How will we form this committee? The bylaws state that this is the responsibility of church council. A suggestion was made that three members of the council be selected to work with Bill Schroeder for this task. Eric Stubenhaus, Tom Larson and Laurie Sorota were chosen. The bylaws state that the search committee should have nine members from various committees of the church. It is important to educate as to what it is the search committee does before recruiting members. It was suggested that two or three alternates should be chosen as well.

Staff Reports

Kate Kallis reported on a very busy month. Gifts that Matter has been doing well at fellowship hour after Sunday morning worship. On December 16th, a Blue Christmas service was held in the chapel with Ron Dann as a leader and Harmonic Regression providing music. A small group attended and the service was very worthwhile. A Sunday morning healing service in the chapel is being considered for the future.

Six people will be traveling to New Orleans in February. They will be working on a construction project and in schools. School supplies have been requested.

Program planning is underway for a woman's retreat during the first weekend in February with the theme "What's A Woman To Do?"

Lisa Stedman reported on planning for Christmas services and reiterated her appreciation of South Church's great staff. On Sunday, December 30, morning worship will focus on favorites in music, story and poetry.

Terry Ebner reported that things were going well in Christian Education. Though the numbers in Sunday School are down a little in comparison with other years, those attending are attending very faithfully.

Jim Vanderpol wants Terry and Jonathan to come and talk to deacons about the need for inter-generational contact.

Linda Hacker invited council members to write something for the Lenten book and reminded everyone about the January 3rd deadline.

Board of World Service

The Board is looking at missions and evaluating what they want to do for next year. They are holding off on decisions till the budget is in place and will indicate this at the annual meeting. They are discussing what to do if their budget is severely cut. The board needs to look at its giving with respect to the support we give to local and church/youth missions.

Men's Christmas Eve Breakfast

Steve Fink reported that 150 men from 5 or 6 congregations have signed up for this event. He also said that planning has begun for a men's retreat this spring.

Deacons

Lynne McDonald urged support for this year's Lenten booklet and suggested that council members use email and encourage friends to contribute. Forty entries are needed.

An Inquirer's Class (two 2-hour Sunday sessions) will be held in late January and early February.

The deacons are looking into events in the future that would involve The Graduates, youth and young families.

Ad Hoc Adult Ed Group

This group is providing Sunday morning adult study. In addition, a number of members have been involved in the Education for Ministry (EFM) program. The EFM program will be starting a new group in this course of study soon.

The Phillip Newell Retreat is another initiative. This retreat will be held on April 27, 28, and reservations will be taken starting in January. The retreat will be advertised on the Mass UCC website and attendance will be held to around 60.

Trustees

The work on the parsonage is pretty much complete. There are several good candidates for renting the property.

We are down to \$0 in the building reserve fund. The Christmas offering will go to replenish this fund.

The board reported last month on the denial of the request to the zoning board to break up the property on the Central and School Street corner into housing lots. Lisa reported that there is now another proposition on the table and/or the developers are trying to overturn the latest decision.

We are over budget for this year and are over \$30,000 behind (mostly heating costs) even before starting on a budget for next year.

Youth

Laurie Sorota and Laura Jordan cannot continue to do Summer of Service on their own. The Youth Board wants to set up a committee to help with the planning and carrying out of summer youth missions. They are planning their first organizational meeting early in January.

Music

Tamara Rozek is back from Australia. Thanks to Carol Georgine West, Linda O'Donnell and Charles Leinbach who took over her duties in her absence.

Twenty-five people took part in Christmas caroling and enjoyed a pizza dinner afterwards.

Charles Leinbach is in charge of heading up a music visitation ministry to nursing homes.

Nominating Committee

The committee is working on lists to help in the process of identifying potential members for boards for the upcoming year.

Closing

Tom Larsen led the group in a closing prayer.

NEXT MEETING DATE: Monday, January 28, 2008 at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted

Anne Clough, Clerk