

**Minutes of the Council, South Church in Andover
February 25, 2008**

Present:

Bill Schroeder	Moderator
Kate Kallis	Staff
Linda Hacker	Staff
Morgan Kiker	Treasurer
Tom Larsen	Deacons
Lynne McDonald	Deacons
Lisa Guy	Trustees
Betsy Davis	Trustees
Fran Fink	Stewardship
Page Bouchard	Stewardship
Ron Dann	Music
Eric Stubenhaus	Nominating
Vicki Hoyt	Board of World Service
Anne Hemmer	Board of Women's Ministries
Jane Ingram	Youth
Steve Fink	Member at Large
Anne Clough	Clerk

Devotions

Bill Schroeder led devotions based on "Who Is Robert? And Why Do We Follow His Rules, Anyway?" written by Martin Copenhaver. Henry Robert developed Robert's Rules of Order after frustration with a church meeting. However, Bill noted that, rather than depending solely on rules developed from parliamentary law, what we seek in congregational meetings is spiritual discernment so that we can seek to discover what Christ would have us do. We are thankful that we can (and do) encounter the spirit of God in our meetings.

Approval and Review of Minutes

The January 28, 2008 Council Meeting and the January 30, 2008 Annual Meeting minutes were sent to members before the meeting for review and were approved by unanimous vote.

Financial Report

Morgan Kiker reported that annual collections to date are \$124,051, which is 3.2% ahead of our budget plan and 2.0 % ahead of last year. These figures include a \$5000 prepayment of a pledge.

2008 Annual Giving pledges to date are \$587,015 (293 giving units). 2007 Annual Giving pledges totaled \$609,427 (301 giving units). There have been supplemental pledges by three giving units in the amount of \$2,000.

Our total debt is \$816,445, which includes \$500,000 debt to the Trust Funds and \$316,445 debt to Enterprise Bank

Supplemental Stewardship Campaign

Page Bouchard and Fran Fink reported that the supplemental stewardship campaign material was scheduled to be mailed the next day and would have a deadline of March 9th for responses. The plan is to accompany the mailing with presentations during worship on March 2nd and 9th with response forms available at these church services. The committee is planning to make personal

contact with as many as possible through boards and committees whose members will be encouraged to speak with all their friends. After Easter, dependent on the response to that point, they may try to get information about large donors and go and speak to them. However, there may be a concern to go once more to those who have already given more than others.

There is a need for some strategic planning by council with respect to our financial picture in the future.

Discussion on Membership Growth

Bill Schroeder initiated a brief discussion on membership growth with more discussion planned for subsequent meetings. If we had more members, we could do so much more. Some brainstorming followed about how to welcome folks into the church. We already have seen instances where children come before the parents and then the parents come. Suggestions included invitations to programs that the church is sponsoring - musical programs, plays, environmental programs. Perhaps the Green Team could invite an outside speaker and open the presentation to the public. Other suggestions included more use of newspaper pieces, letters welcoming new people to the community and inviting them to visit South Church, postcards inviting people to Easter services. Sherry Tupper will be coming to the next council meeting to help us pursue this topic further.

Search Committee Status

Eric Stubenhaus reported that the committee working on setting up a pastoral search committee has received seven commitments so far and are waiting to hear from two others. Council needs to approve this committee. When the search committee membership list is complete, there may be a short council meeting after church to vote on this.

Interim Committee Report

Jane Ingram spoke about the creation of a South Church timeline, from 1711 to the present, which will appear in Fellowship Hall in mid-March. The purpose will be to “reconnect with our history in order to be ready to redefine tomorrow!” Church members will be invited to put their own highlights on the timeline.

The culminating event for this activity will be an all-church luncheon on March 30th with Rev. Dr. Jim Antal, Mass Conference President, who will be our guest preacher that day. We will be able to ask questions and have a discussion with Dr. Antal about future directions for South Church at the luncheon.

A number of questions followed about the luncheon portion of this plan – standing or seated, food/menu, would we need the help of the Fellowship Committee, will there be children at the luncheon or babysitting. This level of detail has yet to be planned.

Staff Reports

Terry Ebner:

Bill Schroeder read a report from Terry, who was unable to attend the meeting. She reported that everything appears to be going well with CE and Adult Ministries. An alternative Sunday School class for non-traditional learners is being planned – age group yet to be determined. Holy Week plans and programs are underway.

Jonathan Drury and Terry are working with a group of Deacons on a speaker/discussion series for parents, beginning in March. A new BookNooks, “One Step in Eden,” by Philip Newell will begin soon.

Registration for the Newell retreat is going well with over forty people signed up. We break even at 50 people, not including money spent on food. Becky and Jeff Cutts have graciously offered to house Phillip Newell. We will continue to accept registrations up to 100 people.

Kate Kallis:

Kate spoke briefly about all the activities going on in the church – the women’s retreat, Cupid’s Cabaret, Godspell, preparation for the April mission trip. On March 1st, Lisa returns. There will be a healing service during worship on March 2nd.

Kate reported on the well-organized, well-managed mission trip to New Orleans, run by the UCC.

Looking ahead, we are planning to have a worship service, supper and sharing around the prayer shawl ministry. On April 12th and 13th, Mass Conference will host “Becoming a Blessed Church” with Ken Medina providing music.

Nominating Committee

Nominating Committee will start making calls this month. There will be a form in the bulletin to ascertain member’s interest in committees and boards.

Music Committee

The major spring musical work will be the Schubert Mass in G Major and will be presented on Mother’s Day, May 11th.

Andover Association

There have been a lot of pastoral retirements in the Andover Association and in the Mass Conference resulting in a lot of turnover and interim pastors. Vicki Keene is currently the interim pastor at the Trinitarian Church in North Andover.

Trustees

Tenants have moved into the parsonage. The property problem on the Central and School Street corner again came up to the zoning board on appeal. The building of housing on the lot in question was opposed by both South Church and Christ Church and permission to build was again denied.

Dave Stanwood has now taken over duties in the cemetery.

Men’s Retreat

The Men’s Retreat will be held the week before Mother’s Day – May 2-4.

Steve Fink also recommended Crawford Notch as a good place for an environmental retreat. It has a lot of potential for a variety of activities. August may be a good time for such a retreat.

Board of Women’s Ministries

The Board recently had a visit from Communities Together (former Council of Churches). They are looking for churches to participate in birthday programs for Hancock Court children. We will be doing a birthday celebration there in April. The board will once again be doing Easter eggs for Hancock Court. Inside each Easter egg will be a specific item or items that are needed there. Someone suggested the use of gift cards and Anne Hemmer said that she would find out where these would be most needed.

Youth Board

Jane Ingram reported that Cupids Cabaret went well and was all about missions. The format worked nicely and the youth netted over \$1000. Thanks to DISH and Ultimate Perk for their contributions to the evening's success.

The mission trip is April 18th. Chaperons are all lined up. The trip is full. The youth will sell refreshments at Godspell to raise money for their trip.

Deacons

A Deacon subgroup will put together a series of seminars for families to help parents to make better parenting decisions. Peter Anderson will be the speaker for May with perhaps a panel as well. There will also be an outreach to the community. Perhaps the Seeds of Faith fund could be used to help with this.

On March 26th, the Deacons will start to meet with the confirmation class and parents. They are currently looking at topics and format.

Jim Vanderpol's interview with Terry Ebner and Jonathan Drury may also be used as part of this program.

Board of World Service

Vicki Hoyt reported that Andy Gustafson would be coming to one of the board meetings to talk about Our Church's Wider Mission. The board will also talk about missions during worship.

Closing

Kate Kallis led the group in a closing prayer.

NEXT MEETING DATE: Monday, March 31, 2008 at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted

Anne Clough, Clerk