

St. Paul UCC Church Council Meeting
June 13, 2006

The meeting was called to order by President Thomas Thieman with 13 members present including: Tom Thieman, John Voress, Lisa Davidson, Mary Finke, Ann Kuhn, Janice Schroer, Lowell Quellhorst, Kathy Topp, Mark Dicke, Betty Dietrich, Virginia Kuenning, Don Scheer, and Rev. Weir. Meditation was provided by Tom Thieman.

Secretary's Report

Minutes of the May 9, 2006 meeting were reviewed. Don Scheer moved to accept the minutes as written. Mark Dicke seconded; motion carried.

Treasurer's Report

The Fund Activity Report for May was available for review. The month of May ended with a deficit of \$8809.98. The year-to-date deficit is \$15,323.64. Council expressed concern over such high numbers and there was discussion as the expenses were reviewed. It was noted that some expenses, such as the youth ministry team's salary, are paid from endowments and therefore are not contributing to the deficit. When compared to last year, income is down by \$3543 and expenses are \$7686 higher. Tom Thieman made the reminder that the budget was passed by congregation and we all have a commitment to strive to meet it. Lowell Quellhorst made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. Kathy Topp seconded. Motion carried.

Committee Reports

"Catch the Vision" – The committee is scheduled to meet mid-July.

Membership Committee – The Membership Committee requested that Council approve their suggestion to remove several rows of pews in the sanctuary to open up space for fellowship after Sunday services. Their suggestion was prompted by the increasing numbers of people who are staying to mingle over coffee and cookies after the service, but who may be discouraged if it is too crowded. The pews that are proposed to be moved are the front rows on the north side which are almost always vacant and difficult to see around the pulpit. Any pews removed would be put in storage. It was suggested that the new folding chairs could be brought in for services with very high attendance. In addition, the chimes could be brought from the balcony so they could be played right in the Sanctuary. After Council visited the Sanctuary and discussed the possibilities, Virginia made a motion to allow the Membership Committee to remove the pews and make the Sanctuary more receptive to the after-service fellowship time and possibly the chimes. Kathy Topp seconded and Council approved the motion.

Mission Report – Rev. Weir reported that nine adults and six youth are going on the upcoming El Salvador trip.

Worship Report – Ann Kuhn reported that the Worship Committee met on June 12 and has taken steps at finding new members. Some ideas discussed were the possibility of inviting members of the congregation to sing in the choir during holiday seasons, and having a parents gathering/service during Spirit Safari Club for the parents who bring their children but may not stay for church service afterward. The next meeting is scheduled for mid-July.

Reports

Board of Christian Education – Janice Schroer reported that Senior Breakfast was enjoyable and well-attended. Diane Gilberg's term as superintendent has expired and Theresa Hemmelgarn will be moving into the position. Diane has graciously offered to continue to help until Theresa is settled in her new position. Council, with Theresa's input, will begin to search for someone to fill the position of assistant superintendent.

Deacon Report – Kathy Topp reported that the deacons are busy organizing the many details for the church picnic.

Elder's Report – Ann Kuhn reported that, with the help of Janice Schroer and Allen Bushman, everything went well for the communion when she was absent.

Rev. Tostrick's Report – (Provided by Rev. Tostrick) The month of May is a time of anticipation and transition. Many of us are making plans for the summer, which will hopefully include some vacation time. There are also the transitions to be made by our graduates and others who are making life changes. During this month we experienced a reduced number of persons needing hospital care and treatment, and for this we are thankful. There were some new and challenging pastoral care needs during this month, which I think the congregation has responded to very well.

During the month of May, I made 19 home visits, 11 hospitals visits, 8 nursing home visits, and had 5 office consultations. I officiated at 1 wedding and participated in the baccalaureate service. I also preached at 1 Saturday evening worship service and 1 Sunday morning worship service.

I hope that the summer ahead will be one filled with many good times and events for you and your loved ones.

Rev. Weir's Report – The Ohio Conference meeting will be this weekend and Rev. Weir will be attending much of it.

Trustee Report – Lowell Quellhorst reported that Ralph Plattner had spoken with someone from the village about painting the parking lines. The village will be doing that within the next couple of weeks.

Lowell has received quotes for replacing the damaged sidewalks: it will be approximately \$850 for the two spots by the North door, \$5239.75 for the sidewalks in front of the church up to the ramp, and \$3705.50 for the section all the way to the end. Council will look into raising the funds privately and not use any of the church budget for the project.

As discussed last month, Tom Thieman, Ralph Plattner, and Lowell Quellhorst pulled out the dead branches. The phone line running across the brick appears to be something that the trustees will be able to take care of themselves.

Heitkamp Electric has been contacted to install the Smoke/Heat System and the job is being scheduled.

Tom Thieman has spoken with Don Kuck about the insurance policy up for renewal to make sure there is no fear of a lapse in insurance. Currently the premium is about \$7000 for coverage of \$4,600,000. The coverage is to be increased by 15% to accommodate the increase in the price of building materials. The new quote will be provided soon. There is a possibility of raising the deductible from \$1000 to \$10,000 because of memorials that cover self-insurance. There will also be a \$600 credit when the Smoke/Heat system is installed.

Old Business

Website Update – No update at this time.

Request from Cancer Association of Auglaize County – A donation of \$745.75 will be made as a result of the special offering that was collected on Sunday, June 11.

Establish Capital Improvement Fund – No update at this time.

General Synod Education – A committee was selected from the list of attendees of the General Synod Education sessions. Norm Holcomb, Janice Schroer, John Voress, Tom Thieman, Evelyn Wenning, Chuck Gamble, and Bill Tostrick have formed the committee that has met once already and has another meeting scheduled.

New Business

Dot's Salary – When last discussed, a 5% increase was given effective January 1, 2006, scheduled to be reviewed in June for an additional 5%. After discussion, Ann Kuhn made a motion to honor our commitment to Dot and reward her service with the additional 5%. Betty Dietrich seconded the motion and council approved. Tom Braun was notified that the increase should begin July 1, 2006.

Betty Hatfield's Vacation Time – Betty has been employed since 1985 and has never had an increase from the initial one week of vacation time. A committee of Don Scheer, Tom Braun, and Betty Dietrich was formed to determine fair vacation compensation for part-time employees.

Review UCC Hymnal Memorial – Rev. Larry Holmer, former pastor of St. Peter's in New Bremen, recently donated 130 hymnals to St. Paul that he had previously donated to St. Peter's as a memorial to his parents. St. Peter's had discontinued using them, having left the United Church of Christ. These hymnals would supplement, not replace, our red hymnals. This would allow some songs to be used which would not otherwise be available because of copyright laws. An anonymous donor has given Rev. Holmer funds to replace the memorial. Janice Schroer made a motion to accept and make use of the hymnals; Mary Finke seconded and the motion passed.

Review Memorial to Update Chapel Area – John and Bill Tostrick would like to update the chapel area of the Assembly Room in loving memory of their mother and father. Proposed updates include adding a drape and cross, an altar or communion table, and a possible improvement to the back of the piano to coordinate with the other finishes. Quotes and sources are currently being explored.

Update on Church Picnic June 18th and Rev. Weir's 35th year of ordination – Kathy Topp has ordered the meat and buns, and the deacons are taking care of manning the grill, setting up the tables and games, seeing that the electricity is run, etc.

Garden Club Request – Kathy Topp brought a request from the Garden Club to beautify our church grounds by removing 27 shrubs/plants that are either dead, overgrown, or crowding out others. The dying redbud by the parsonage and two damaged shrubs by the parking lot will need to be replaced, but otherwise the Garden Club has planned to minimize expenses by transplanting whenever possible and using the Landscaping Fund for any necessary purchases. Ann Kuhn made a motion to give the Garden Club permission to do whatever they deem necessary to continue with their lovely work. Betty Dietrich seconded the motion and it was approved with thanks to the Garden Club for their hard work and fantastic results. Tom Thieman also reminded them to ask for help if they need it.

Announcements

Ohio Conference June 15, 16, 17

The youth were again invited to serve pancakes at the annual pumpkin festival.

The following thank you letter from Terri Goodwin was received:

To the "body of Christ", the congregation of St. Paul,

Thank you for the gifts, which I will wear around my neck and place on my "study" wall. Both will continually remind me of your friendship and love.

You made this "stepping stone" in my "calling" even more special by your support, your presence, and your love. The entire worship service, and dinner fellowship after, were truly labors of love, and I am very humbled by your gifts.

Again, I wish to thank the family of Anna Kuest, who has made my "calling" a reality through this special memorial. I pray that in the future others will benefit from her generous gift.

To all who feel "called"...remember..."it takes the faith of a mustard seed...and the nurturing of an entire congregation...to bring that "call" into fruition.

I look forward to continuing my ministry as co-director of the youth ministries program. Together, Lori and I are passionate about the future of our youth and that is very exciting! I pray that God will work through us in the weeks and months ahead as we minister to them, and hopefully watch them grow in their faith!

In Christian fellowship and love,

Terri Goodwin

With no other business to discuss, Virginia Kuenning made a motion to adjourn. Lowell Quellhorst seconded, and the meeting was adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

Lisa Davidson, Secretary

Tom Thieman, President