

**St. Paul UCC Church Council Meeting
September 11, 2007**

The meeting was called to order by President Thomas Thieman with 12 members present including: Tom Thieman, John Voress, Lisa Davidson, Janice Schroer, Roland Dicke, Betty Dietrich, Norm Holcomb, Don Scheer, Cheryl Barlage, Shirley Henegar, Brice Schmitmeyer, and Rev. Weir. Meditation was provided by Norm Holcomb.

Secretary's Report

Minutes of the August 14, 2007 meeting were reviewed. Roland Dicke made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Cheryl Barlage seconded and the motion was approved.

Treasurer's Report

The Fund Activity Report for August was available for review. Tom Braun was on vacation, so Tom Thieman reviewed the report. The contributions for August were low, so the deficit saw a significant jump. The Year-to-Date deficit now totals \$18,060.36 compared to a \$16,866 deficit last year at the same time. However, Tom noted that the Year-to-Date expenses are only \$148,992.51 and well within the budgeted \$154,577. Tom has requested that the Stewardship Committee write a letter to the congregation asking everyone to be vigilant about their commitment to giving. Don Scheer made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report as written. Betty Dietrich seconded the motion, and council approved.

Committee Reports

Catch the Vision – A meeting is scheduled for September 17.

Membership Committee – No meeting has occurred.

Mission Report – Amy Scheer came to the council meeting to represent the Mission Team reporting on their meeting the previous night. The Project of the Year has collected a current balance of \$1665 to go towards Nu-Vizion. Flooding of their kitchen which was previously located in the basement has forced them to move upstairs to even more temporary and inconvenient accommodations. However, because Nu-Vizion is renting space from the hospital, they are still

uncertain as to their future, which in turn makes it difficult for decisions to be made on how best to spend the Project of the Year funds. In the meantime, Nu-Vizion would like to give back to St. Paul by providing service to our church. Amy Scheer had suggested that some of their youth could come down to help the St. Paul youth serve food at the Wing Ding.

The Mission Team has received thank you notes from their shoe donation, Lenten coin folders and the UCC Wider Church Ministries' blanket fund, as well as from Joe and Nancy Friedman from the Covenant Players for a donation to their mission trip to France.

Amy Scheer also distributed a petition called 100,000 for Peace by Rev. John Thomas requesting signatures to call for an end to the war in Iraq. The Mission Team suggested putting this petition in the next two Sundays' bulletins. Council members read the letter and a lengthy question and discussion period followed covering ideas such as the separation of church and state, the UCC's historical stance on peace, individual opinions versus the position of the church, petitions supporting an opposing point of view, and the actual wording of this particular letter. Eventually, a motion was made by Norm Holcomb that the letter should not be presented to the congregation. Betty Dietrich seconded the motion. Council voted by written ballots, and the motion carried. Rev. Weir suggested the church could use this opportunity to discuss and study the social and ethical issues that the petition represents.

Worship Report – Janice Schroer reported that the Worship Committee is trying to get together in September to get organized for the fall season.

Director of Youth Ministry – Carrie Cutlip presented to council information regarding a National Youth Workers Convention she would like to attend. She had attended it before and found it very valuable, and recommends it to youth volunteers as well. She reviewed information regarding dates, costs, and the possibility of sharing expenses with attendees from other churches and/or Bluffton College. Carrie cited research that shows that volunteers who take such seminars feel happier, better prepared, and less anxious. Information could be collected and shared from more seminars as well. Following a discussion, Roland Dicke made a

motion that St. Paul should allow Carrie to go and pay for both Carrie and one volunteer. Norm Holcomb seconded the motion and council approved.

Other Reports

Board of Christian Education – Greg Maurer was not present to report, but had told Tom Thieman that he didn't have anything to report. Rev. Weir reported that he will be meeting with the Board on Tuesday. He also gave the reminder that Greg Maurer is responsible for the Child Sexual Safety training and certifications.

Deacon Report – Don Scheer discussed the changes required with the deacons' schedule because of communion being scheduled for the last weekend in September and also the first weekend in October. It was also discussed that the speakers work well when CDs are played, but not for voices speaking.

Elder's Report – Janice Schroer reported that she will respond to the updated communion schedule.

Rev. Tostrick's Report – (Provided by Rev. Tostrick)

The month of August was certainly an active month with both highs and lows. August 19th was certainly a special day for me as you recognized the 40th anniversary of my Ordination. Once again, I thank all who helped to make that day so meaningful for me.

The month was also filled with a number of events that required increased pastoral care. During August, I made 5 hospital visits, 14 nursing home visits, 18 home visits, and 7 office conferences. I also led one Sunday morning worship service and one Saturday evening worship. I planned and helped to lead one worship service at the Heritage Manor Nursing Home. There were 4 funeral services and 1 sacrament of baptism at which I officiated. I also participated in an Exit Interview at the Association Office in Tiffin, Ohio.

Rev. Weir's Report – Rev. Weir reviewed that he had participated in a three day training in June and a five day training in August in preparation for his time as an interim/transitional minister. He noted that this can also be a very energizing time for a church as well.

Rev. Weir has still been working towards saying goodbye to shut-ins, to packing, and to preparing for upcoming Sunday sermons. He is concerned about the time period from September 15-30 because he will have all the other pastoral calls to make and Rev. Tostrick will be gone.

Rev. Weir is looking forward to celebrating Worldwide Communion Sunday his last weekend here because it has always been so special for him and Delza. He also thanked council for their support and responsibility, as this was his last council meeting to attend.

Trustee Report – Roland Dicke reported that there was nothing new to report. He will try to call again to get a quote for waterproofing the bricks. Tom Thieman suggested that the trustees use fill dirt for the sidewalk that sinks, and taking a look at one of the Sanctuary doors that sticks.

Old Business

Update on Visual Technology – This issue will remain tabled for now, although Don Scheer has asked Carrie Cutlip to be thinking about what needs the youth may have.

Update on Director of Youth Ministries – Tom Thieman remarked that Carrie Cutlip has already begun her work and is doing a fantastic job.

Contract for Rev. Leah Matthews – Tom Thieman presented the contract to be signed for Rev. Leah Matthews for one year, renewable at the end of the year. It is very similar in salary to Rev. Weir, and includes moving expenses, the parsonage, and her current insurance. She has requested one vacation week per quarter, with no more than two weeks to be used together. Initially she will be staying at a cottage at Lake Loramie until the parsonage is cleaned and ready to move into. As she'll be maintaining her current home also, she'll need furniture for the parsonage if anyone has something to donate (keeping in mind that she is allergic to cats and smoke). Brice Schmitmeyer made a motion to accept Rev. Matthews' contract as presented and Shirley Henegar seconded. Motion carried with council's gratitude to the committee for selecting an interim minister.

Parking Lot Update – The East parking lot project has been completed and many thanks go to Crown Equipment for their part. We are presently looking at the poor condition of the South parking lot and what can be done to improve its surface.

Nominations for 2008 Council – There were no nominations yet.

Update on Stained Glass Windows – Norm Holcomb has spoken with Karl Mesloh who will write up a detailed explanation on the making of the stained glass.

New Business

Preparing Parsonage for Interim Pastor/Furnishings? – Roland Dicke reported that he has found someone who has agreed to clean the parsonage. Tom Thieman also noted that Rev. Weir’s office will need cleaned as well. Many volunteers are requested to assist with the cleaning process, although professionals will need to be hired for carpet cleaning.

Budget Committee – There will be a budget meeting held September 24 at 8:30 pm.

Amy Stuhlemmer – Since Kurt Stuhlemmer has been transferred to nights at his job, he’s requesting to resign his council position and have Amy replace him. He can then “sub” as a deacon.

Stay committed to task! – Tom Thieman encouraged council to stay focused; there is an excellent opportunity for our church right now. The new Director of Youth Ministries has already added a great new dimension, and when Rev. Matthews arrives that will add renewed interest as well. Tom reminded everyone that it is important to take advantage of this turning point in our church to focus on growth and renewal.

Stewardship Committee – They have met and are composing a letter to the congregation requesting an increase in giving.

Announcements

Sept. 30 – Rev. Weir’s Farewell

Oct. 6 & 7 – Rev. Busch will be here

Oct. 25 – Rev. Matthews takes full service

Dec. 4 – Council’s Christmas Party

Thank you notes were received from the Rev. Tostrick following his Farewell Reception and from the Gospel Tent Committee for the Auglaize County Fair.

With no other business to discuss, Norm Holcomb made a motion to adjourn. Roland Dicke seconded, and the meeting was adjourned with the Lord’s Prayer.

Lisa Davidson, Secretary

Tom Thieman, President