

Church Council Minutes

Date: December 15, 2009

Time: 7:30 PM

Place: Chapel

Members: Laurie Jolicoeur, Moderator Megan Lewis
Stuart Gillette, Vice Moderator Gy Menninga
Beth Mrkvicka, Clerk Lara Miller
Rick Ashton Dan Pietrini
Jane Barker Connie Ronnow
Elizabeth Crowell Deb Stracco
Beth Drews Lou Valsoano
Bob Haisman Tom Wolford
Becky Kuntz

Church Julie Harley

Staff: Mark Buck
Leah Fowler

Marylen Marty-Gentile

Special Pauline Coffman, Al Parchem

Guests:

Moderator Laurie Jolicoeur called the meeting to order at 7:30 and opened the meeting with a song and a prayer.

- I. Sharing the Spirit of Practice** Deb Stracco has found through testing, observation and experience that her personality type is well suited for intuitive, imaginative spiritual practice. She finds Augustinian prayer and dialog journaling to be particularly meaningful and helpful to her and also responds positively to the practice of Lectio Divina.
- II. Joys and Concerns** Concern was expressed for a First United nursery school teacher and her health crisis, for the death of a pastoral friend and mentor and for fellow Council member Beth Drews. Joys include the return of children home from college, wedding anniversaries and engagements and for Leah Fowler's installation on December 13.

III. Omnibus Motion: Approval of Council and Congregational Minutes and Membership Report.

Action: the November minutes and the Membership Report were approved by unanimous vote.

Baptism: Eleanor An Balch, daughter of Brandon and Nicole Balch

Death:

November 7 – Al Strane, grandfather of Megan Lewis, great-grandfather of Jack and Katherine

November 20 – Bill Miller, father of Walter Miller, grandfather of Gehring, Ilse and Mahala

IV. Sharing the Spirit of Group Practice: Marylen led us in a discussion of Chapter 9, Resting in God. Experiencing for ourselves what it means to rest in God, we spent several minutes in silence – simply trying.

V. Draft Staffing and Job Descriptions – Through collaborative discussions between staff, Personnel and Council, a draft document of revised job descriptions has been created. This new staffing plan is based on having a part time pastor to fill our vacancy. The decision was made that Julie Harley will work most directly with Faith in Action and on the focus of our visioning process, Leah Fowler will continue her work with youth and adult education and Marylen Marty Gentile will be responsible for programming from birth through confirmation. The new part-time associate position will focus on membership and caring ministries. These proposed changes have been presented to Committee Chairs and there will be opportunities to discuss them at a January 10 Congregational meeting. The changes will be voted on at the next Council meeting scheduled for January 19. Discussion centered on ways to share this draft plan with the congregation and the impact of these changes on the staff. There is a Council e-mail address (council@firstunitedoakpark.com) for feedback and questions.

VI. Pastoral Search Committee Update – Lou Valsoano reported that the PSC is committed to following through on its mission, despite the new changes to the position. The committee has seen the draft staffing report and will be working on revising the job description and profiles. There is concern about finding someone dynamic and qualified given the new lower salary. All 77 of the people who had applied for the fulltime position are being contacted about the change in our focus.

VII. Personnel Committee – Al Parchem, chair of Personnel, brought forth three motions.

Action: a recommendation that the charge to the Pastoral Search Committee be changed to search for a part-time associate pastor whose specific duties are to be determined at a maximum total compensation package of \$42,000 annually covering salary, benefits and professional expenses. Council approved.

Action: a recommendation to change the position description for the Organist to allow the job to be shared by two musicians. The quarter-time position will be split approximately 2/3 and 1/3. Total compensation for the two positions combined will not exceed \$21,000. Salary and FICA may not exceed \$20,000. Up to \$1000.00 may be allocated for professional expenses. The 1/3 position will not be eligible for reimbursement of professional expenses. Council approved.

Action: a recommendation that Council accept compensation and professional development increases for staff totaling approximately \$9500.00. The approximately \$5500.00 unused budget should be allocated to the new part-time pastor position. Council approved.

VIII. Big Picture Conversation – Our Denominations Mark Buck and Pauline Coffman shared impassioned perspectives of our two denominations (UCC & PCUSA respectively). Both of our denominations provide us with an historical anchor and connectional relationships to other churches locally, nationally and globally. We can do more in partnership than we can alone, and both denominations offer us a corporate conscience. Each provided handouts, which are attached.

IX. Moderator’s Report

Action: a recommendation to approve a Corporate Resolution stating that as the Council Secretary, Beth Mrkvicka can attest that she as well as Moderator Laurie Jolicoeur and Chair of Finance Claudette Zobel are authorized to direct the purchase or sale of investments in accordance with the terms and conditions provided in the documents governing our Trust Investment Account with Park National Bank. Council approved.

X. Staff Reports

Julie - reported that First United has the “best lay leaders” she’s ever worked with!

Marylen – reported on the success of Hanging of the Greens and that the rehearsal included silent meditation.

Leah - reported that the FUSH Work Camp will take place June 14-20 in Ohio

XI. Where Did We Experience the Holy Spirit/God in Tonight’s Meeting? In the silence, in remembering Beth Drews.

XII. Remembrances The Potts family has made a gift to the church in Gerald’s memory.

XIII. Other Business via E-Mail

1) a recommendation has been made from Buildings and Grounds that we change our IT support service from Duke and Associates, located in a far west suburb, to Assure Horizons, a local IT company. Under the leadership and research of Mike Mizen, several reasons including concerns about security breaches with our current service along with the benefits of having a local reputable service were cited. Mike will continue to look into the contractual and cost issues associated with making this change.2

Megan Lewis closed us in prayer.

The meeting was adjourned 9:40.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Mrkvicka, Clerk