

## Church Council Minutes

**Date:** November 17, 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 Staff:** Julie Harley  
Mark Buck  
Leah Fowler  
Marylen Marty-Gentile  
**Special** Claudette Zobel, Bob Hahn, Marcia  
**Guests:** Ashton, Joan White

Moderator Laurie Jolicoeur called the meeting to order at 7:31 and opened it with a prayer.

**I. Joys and Concerns:** Joys were expressed for the fact that over 40 people called to volunteer to pass out Thanksgiving turkeys at the Food Pantry and for the completed renovation of the PADS day center. Concern for a 16 year old family friend diagnosed with cancer.

### **II. Omnibus Motion: Approval of Council and Congregational Minutes and Membership Report.**

Action: the October minutes and the Membership Report were approved by unanimous vote.
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#### **Baptism:**

December 20 -- Christopher George Shkutov, son of George & Sarah Shkutov

#### **Death:**

November 1 – Cindy Schmidt O'Reilly, former member

#### **New Members – November 1:**

Duane Cole and Joe Powers  
Leah Fowler and Chris Gajilan  
Nydia Sahagun and Beatrice Cruz  
Lisa Scott

**III. Guest Presentation** – Joan White, First United Nursery School. Joan shared a brief overview of the First United Church Nursery School, covering its history and objectives. The Nursery School has been connected to our church for 51 years.

**IV. Big Picture Discussion: Mission at First United – a Prophetic Witness.** Bob Hahn, Marcia Ashton and Council member Bob Haisman were at our meeting on behalf of Faith in Action. Bob Hahn spoke to his belief and desire that mission becomes an even more integral part of our church and that it be part of our 20/20 Visioning process. The mission effort has transformed in recent years from being a grant-writing committee to bringing mission **into** the church (Food Pantry, Walk-in Ministry) to an emphasis on taking mission **outside** the church (our work in Colombia, justice efforts, etc). For the first time, Faith in Action requested and received a line item in the budget as a result of a diminished reliance on our endowment to fund mission. The Committee desires a movement to involve all members of the church in mission and to have 10% of our operating budget going to mission by 2020. They brought forth five action items for Council to consider. These are outlined in the attached report.

**Action:** It was moved, seconded and unanimously voted to support a congregation-wide peace vigil on a Friday night in December. This Christmas Season of Peace Night would be held to recognize the eight year effort by First United Peace Makers who witness for peace weekly.

**V. Revised Recommendation from Finance for the 2010 Budget.** Claudette Zobel, chair of Finance, presented the latest budget with up to date projections. The budget that was distributed to Council did not contain the most recent pledges, which would add almost \$35,000 bringing it to \$652, 471. Claudette reported that pledges continue to trickle in and it was not unreasonable to believe that our total pledges would amount to \$675,000. Based on this, her recommendation was to pass the proposed budget. This budget includes some significant changes: adding a \$10,000 line item for mission, an increase to the Buildings & Grounds budget to \$40,000 and a half-time associate pastor replacing the position vacated by Mamie Broadhurst.

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the revised recommended budget of \$652,471, and add \$15,000 of it to the Personnel budget for staffing expenses. After brief discussion that included consideration of adding to the mission budget if there were extra funds, the motion was voted and approved. Discussion ensued about how the decision was made to cut a fulltime pastoral position to half-time. It was moved, seconded and approved to reconsider the previous motion and discussion about the process of budgeting decisions continued. It was explained that over the last several weeks the Finance Committee, in concert with representatives from the staff, Council leadership, Buildings and Grounds and Faith in Action met to discuss priorities and realities. There were congregational meetings and informational e-mails. Decisions were not made in a vacuum and were prayerful and thoughtfully explored.

**Action:** It was moved, seconded and approved to accept the recommendation of the group made up of representatives of Finance, Council Leadership, Buildings & Grounds, Faith in Action and the staff to fund a half-time position.

Discussion continued regarding staffing considerations – how responsibilities might be distributed if the staff was smaller, how we might finance a full time position, how we might distribute additional funds should they become available.

**Action:** It was moved, seconded and approved to adopt the revised recommended budget of \$652, 471 and add \$15,000 of it to the Personnel budget for staff raises.

## **VI. Overtures to the Presbytery of the General Assembly**

**Action:** It was moved, seconded and approved to endorse the ordination of Gay, Lesbian, Bi-sexual, Transgendered persons and to conduct civil marriages and commitment ceremonies of GLBT persons.

Both of these overtures will be brought forth at the 2010 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

## **VII. Committee Reports**

- Lou Valsoano, as a PSC member, expressed concern about this committee's work in light of the staffing cuts. His concern rises mainly for the applicant's themselves. He will work with the PSC to work on a communication that advises the applicants that the search is being revised.

**VIII. Moderator's Report:** Laurie reported that Kelly Brouwer continues to receive a monthly housing stipend and is working part time as a chaplain at Children's Hospital.

## **IX. Staff Reports:**

- Julie reported that Pauline Coffman and Judy Vojta are in the Middle East. Julie, Deb Stracco, Penny Ebsen and Lois Theissen Love are attending the Army's School of the America's protest at Ft. Benning, Georgia. She is also planning a mission trip to New Orleans for adults from June 19 – 27, 2010.
- Marylen is working on Hanging of the Greens preparations. Ministry to fifth and sixth graders is proceeding. Another healing service is being planned for December 20. The first, for Beth Drews, was held in October.
- Leah is being installed on December 13. She has survived her first FUJI lock in. She reported that a Presbyterian delegation to Colombia is being planned for late July 2010 and we will hopefully be included.
- Mark expressed joy for the new members who recently joined. The Deacons are meeting with the Visitation Team to more closely coordinate our visiting to shut ins. Alice Winters, a Presbyterian missionary in Colombia will be here to lead a program on November 30.

## **X. Introduction of the Evaluation Process of the Lead Pastor**

Laurie reminded us that as a part of Julie's contract with First United and at her request, she is to be annually reviewed by Personnel and Church Council. This process, with input from Julie and the Personnel committee, came to council in the form of an online survey and covered various aspects of her ministry and leadership. Survey results were tallied and will be further processed by Personnel under the leadership of Al Parchem and Elan Long and these results will be shared with Council and with Julie in early December.

**XI. Executive Session:** Laurie adjourned the meeting to Executive Session.

The regular meeting resumed.

**XII. Remembrances:** We held fellow Council member Megan Lewis in our thoughts on the death of her grandfather.

**XIII. Where Did We Experience the Holy Spirit in Tonight's Meeting?** Support and fondness for the Nursery School and Joan White's presentation, gratefulness for the devotion and passion of our Faith in Action committee and appreciation for the time and effort put forth by so many lay people in our church, especially during the stewardship drive and budget negotiations.

Becky Kuntz closed us in prayer.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Beth Mrkvicka, Clerk