

## Church Council Minutes

**Date:** Tuesday, January 19, 2010  
**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** Vision Team Members Dick  
**Guests:** Krissinger and Sara Stevenson

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** Laurie Jolicoeur shared her recent experience of attending a Japanese Tea Ceremony with Beth Drews and Sara Stevenson. She appreciated many of the messages she received including the idea of “one time, one meeting”. In other words, this is the only time you will encounter this specific event so be present to the moment – you will never experience it again. She felt a strong mutual respect between the host and guest as well as an appreciation for those unknown people who molded the tea cup, painted the art work and created the setting.

**II Joys, Concerns and Remembrances:** Continued love and concern for Beth Drews, who is now at the Ark Hospice Center, concern for a friend who underwent a double lung transplant and for the people who gave their lives to make it possible. Compassion was expressed for the families of Nursery School teacher Eva Evans, Bill Browne and Barb Downs.

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

<p><b>Action:</b> the December minutes, January 10, 2010 Congregational meeting and the Membership Report were approved by unanimous vote.</p>
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**Birth:**

December 16, 2009 – Thomas Jeffrey Carter, son of Sarah Deardorff Carter and Joshua Carter, brother of Madeline and Barrett

January 5, 2010 – Graham Kiddrick Norton, son of Jeff and Ashle Norton, great-grandson of Dave Norton

**Baptism:**

December 20, 2009 – Christopher George Shkutov, son of George and Sarah Shkutov

January 17, 2010 – Livia and Sophia Nitsche, daughters of Edward and Maria Nitsche

January 17, 2010 – Micah Butler-Del Rio, son of Maria and Beth Butler-Del Rio

**Death:**

December 10, 2010 – Father of Kim Cornman, grandfather of Eva, Amy and Jesse  
John E. White, cousin of Steve Mrkvicka

January 5, 2010 – Bill Browne, husband of Mary

Vince Hassel, step brother-in-law of Sara Faust

Monna Richert, aunt of Sara Faust

Margie Brooks, mother of Marsha Hubbuch, grandmother of Nicholas,  
Philip and Christopher

**IV. Sharing the Spirit of Group Practice:** Leah led us in a discussion of the last chapter in the book we've been reading for the past year, *Spiritual Leadership on the Cutting Edge*. She encouraged us to contemplate those times in our lives where we lived on the edge and took a risk. We discussed our "life on the edge" experiences and agreed that the times we move outside our comfort zones are what we remember the most.

**V. Big Picture Conversation – Vision 2020:** Members of the Vision Team spent time sharing their work for the last eight months. Their task was to name the challenges our church faces as it looks into the next decade and discern a vision for us. We learned a bit about our past, their process of discernment and what they learned from conversations with community leaders, other churches and members of First United. God's vision for us calls us to action. The three key concepts of this vision are:

- **Moving from words to witness in our relationship with God**
- **Moving from individualism to intimate fellowship with other members of the church community**
- **Moving from charity to changing structures in our relationship with the world**

Our challenge is to make these concepts real and live into this vision. How we do this will involve making decisions and measuring progress. The Vision Team asks for the support of Council to engage the congregation in conversation and action towards living

the vision. They will be making a similar presentation at the Annual Meeting on January 31, 2010.

**VI. Staffing and Job Descriptions:** Personnel is finalizing revised job descriptions that are needed as a result of the new part time pastor position. Shifts in pastoral responsibilities are providing challenges and new opportunities for our ministers. Julie, Leah, Mark and Marylen shared their feelings about these changes and all are looking forward to new experiences and positive outcomes with their new responsibilities.

**VII. Vice Moderator's Report:** Stu will be sending all committees information on creating an Institutional Memory of the work they do.

**VIII. Moderator's Report:** Laurie is looking for ways to engage Council in a mission project as a group and is open to suggestions. She asked Council to be thinking of the qualities we want in Council members and to consider potential members to recommend to the Nominating Committee.

**IX. Staff Reports:**

- **Julie** – appreciates and respects Council's thoughtfulness and caution to "buy into" the Vision Team's findings.
- **Marylen** – shared a gratifying Quest class that involved a presentation by long time members on the history of our church.
- **Leah** – promoted the upcoming FUSH Coffee House on January 31 and described a Lenten art project she is planning for FUSH.
- **Mark** - reminded us of the upcoming New Members classes in February.

**X. Other Business:** In December via E-mail, the following two resolutions were voted on and approved:

**Action:** The following resolution was duly adopted by the Council of the First United Church of Oak Park at a vote taken via e-mail December 23, 2009 with a quorum being accounted for:

Whereas, Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code permits a minister of the gospel to exclude from gross income (in computing federal income taxes) a church-designated allowance paid to her as part of compensation to the  
Extent used by her for actual expenses in owning or renting a home; and

Whereas, The Reverend Dr. Julie Ruth Harley is compensated by the First United Church of Oak Park exclusively for services as a minister of the gospel; and

Whereas, the First United Church of Oak Park does not provide Reverend Harley with a parsonage; therefore, it is hereby

RESOLVED, that the total compensation paid to the Reverend Harley annually will be \$87,975. Compensation will be allocated as such; salary for the calendar year 2010 shall be \$47,975 annually and housing for the calendar year 2010 shall be \$40,000 annually. The housing allowance is designated to be a housing allowance pursuant to Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code; and it is further

RESOLVED, that the designation of \$40,000 as a housing allowance annually shall apply to calendar year 2010 and all future years unless otherwise provided. This resolution will be confirmed and documented in the January 19, 2010 council meeting minutes.

**Action:** The following resolution was duly adopted by the Council of the First United Church of Oak Park at a vote taken via e-mail December 23, 2009 with a quorum being accounted for:

Whereas, Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code permits a minister of the gospel to exclude from gross income (in computing federal income taxes) a church-designated allowance paid to her as part of compensation to the  
Extent used by her for actual expenses in owning or renting a home; and

Whereas, The Reverend Leah Fowler is compensated by the First United Church of Oak Park exclusively for services as a minister of the gospel; and

Whereas, the First United Church of Oak Park does not provide Reverend Fowler with a parsonage; therefore, it is hereby

Resolved, that the total compensation paid to the Reverend Fowler  
For the calendar year 2010 shall be \$60,900 of which \$30,450 is hereby designated to be a housing allowance pursuant to Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code.

**X. How does Council see the spirit at work in our life together?** Through the hard work, commitment and leadership of the Vision Team, which is urging us to take our faith to the edge.

Marylen closed us in prayer.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40.

Respectfully submitted,  
Beth Mrkvicka, Clerk