

Congregational Church of Laconia, UCC  
Minutes of Council  
September 26, 2007

PRESENT: Olie Anderson, Warren Bouton, Sandy Brallier, Jean Clarke, Emily Clement, Martha Clement, Dave Coddington, Kathy Giovanni, Diane Lockwood, Alida Millham, Judy Nelson, Beth Shehadi, Cyndy Shippee, Dan Tinkham, Diane Tinkham

Diane T. opened the meeting with a reading from "All We Have is All We Need".

Emily made a motion to approve the minutes of the August meeting. Diane T. seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

The first agenda item discussed was the implementation plan for the Consecrated Stewards program. The program as designed is an 8-week process, which will need to be collapsed due to time constraints. Alida will hold a Moderator's Forum on Sunday, September 30<sup>th</sup>. Next on the schedule will be a Leadership event, which will be a supper on Thursday, October 18<sup>th</sup>. On October 28<sup>th</sup> there will be a Stewardship lead-in service. Sunday, November 11<sup>th</sup> will be Consecrating Sunday. On this day a Guest Steward (tentatively Janet Heslam) will preach and there will be a lunch following the 9:30 service. The Stewardship work group will meet to firm up the schedule and confirm the details.

Olie Anderson was present to answer questions about the proposal from the Mission Committee to purchase video cameras and a computer for the purpose of recording the Sunday service. The cost will be just shy of \$20,000. The stated purpose of the equipment is to upgrade the format of the recordings made for shut-ins. Currently about a dozen audio tapes are being requested. Olie stated that having the equipment also opens an option to broadcast the recordings on public access television and to use the recording system for special events. The Peg Grothey Memorial Fund, from which the funds are to come, was earmarked for signage and flowers. The current balance of the fund is approximately \$30,000. There were a number of questions from council members as well as some concerns. Sandy commented that in last year's breakout sessions the idea of a Media Ministry task force was initiated. Specific policies would need to be developed before the recordings would be used in a wider public way. Alida called for a vote on whether the proposal should be presented to the congregation at the October 7 special meeting. 10 voted in favor and 3 were opposed. The proposal will be presented.

The proposed changes to the by-laws will be presented at a special congregational meeting on October 7. Also presented for a vote will be a proposal by the Trustees to replace the windows in the parsonage. It was decided to mail information about the by-laws changes, the video proposal, and the window replacement proposal to all members prior to the meeting.

The next topic discussed was the use of Fair Trade coffee at coffee hours, or rather the current non-use. Judy reported that many people did not like the Equal Exchange coffee. There are other brands of Fair Trade coffee available, such as Green Mountain. Also discussed were ideas on reducing waste and the eliminating the use of styrofoam cups.

**New Business:**

Bobbie Thomas has raised a concern about the Refugee Ministry. The original group disbanded 10-15 years ago, with Bobbie and others feeling that there is still a responsibility to the families. This issue will be placed with the Mission Committee. Questions include what will be the continuing role of the church in the lives of the original families served, in addition to new families that are identified. A possible link to the Caring Connections program was suggested.

John Thomas, the General Minister and President of the UCC, will be preaching at our church on Sunday, November 4<sup>th</sup>. Warren asked for volunteers to help plan for after-church activities. Beth, Alida, Diane T., and Emily will meet with Warren to discuss.

**Reports from committees:**

Trustees: Dave reported that the Trustees have been continuing to discuss the issue of smoking on the grounds of the church buildings. They have also discussed the need to pave the driveways, which will be addressed next year. The proposal to replace the parsonage windows will be brought to the congregation for a vote on October 7<sup>th</sup>. There is also a need to replace the roofs of both buildings.

Diaconate: Beth reported that the Deacons held a retreat, the theme of which was "Practicing Our Faith". The first speaker in the new Circle of Grace series (Who are our Neighbors) will be Dr. Fischler from PSU. He will speak on Monday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>. The group is working on a Thanksgiving project, which will include individual gratitude and thanks cards connected into a banner to be hung in the church.

Educational Ministries: Diane reported that the committee has been working on changing the format of Church school classes. The new High School class will meet in the Youth Room. We now have four youth groups. Warren will start a new bible study in October.

Parish Activities: Judy reported that the group has been discussing kitchen work that is needed and had questions as to whether estimates should be sought.

Mission: Diane L. reported that the bears knitted by the Stitches of Love ministry are almost ready to be commissioned and blessed. This will occur on Sunday, October 21<sup>st</sup>. Before the bears leave, they need to be sponsored by members to pay for shipping. There will be a sign-up at coffee hour. Dan mentioned that Ann Peck will be in the area and would like to visit.

Membership: Martha reported that a group of new members is scheduled for November 18<sup>th</sup>.

Kathy closed the meeting.

Next Council meeting – October 24, 2007, 7:00 pm

Opening – Judy Nelson

Closing – Warren Bouton

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Giovanni, Recording Clerk