

Official Minutes - September 19, 2015
Executive Committee Planning Retreat
Union Congregational Church
South Bristol, Maine

Present: Linda Brunner, Sue Edwards, Bill Glendinning, Priscilla Glendinning, Sally Gundersen, Beth Hood, Lori Wright, Norman Wright

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:05.

Invocation

Pastor Beth Hood opened with a prayer.

Bill Glendinning moderated the meeting.

Meeting Schedule and Minutes

We began with item three on the agenda: meeting schedule and minutes. Sue Edwards asked that regularly scheduled meetings of the church be clarified for her. The Deacons will meet every month on the second Sunday of the month. The Board will meet every month on the third Sunday of the month. And the Executive Committee (EC) will meet every other month on the fourth Sunday of the month.

The secretary of the respective groups will be responsible for sending a copy of the minutes to Lori Wright to post on the church website. The secretary is also responsible for placing a copy in the notebooks kept in the narthex and for making ten copies available for congregants to pick up, if they'd like.

Lori Wright will put an announcement in the bulletin each week as appropriate about upcoming meetings.

2015-2016 Goals and Objectives

Deacons. Sally Gundersen reported the goals and objectives as follows:

The deacons goals and objectives are to further the ONA process, to support Beth both in general and in her ongoing efforts to become ordained and to continue to promote the spiritual health of the Union Church congregation.

Priscilla Glendinning asked about the ONA workshop that is being held at the UCC Annual Meeting next month in Augusta. Beth Hood reported that the annual meeting (10/16-17 at the Conference Center in Augusta) was holding an ONA workshop for delegates but there will be an workshop at 2:00 on Oct 18th that is open to everyone. The delegates from South Bristol include Beth Hood, Sally Gunderson, and Donna Plummer.

Beth Hood pointed out that Janet Claar would be coordinating the coffee hour after service each Sunday.

Christian Outreach. Priscilla Glendinning reported that SB UCC would continue to deliver food to the food pantry in New Harbor. They would also continue to provide food baskets to families in the community at Thanksgiving as appropriate. Donations continue to be made to organizations that make requests, as funding is available.

Beth Hood remarked that Penny Mardoian is doing an “exemplary” job of sending notes from the church to people mentioned in joys and concerns.

Hospitality. Lori Wright stated that the church would hold a Harvest Fair on November 21st in the parish hall. The committee felt the Harvest Fair was more successful at that time than previous fairs held shortly before Christmas. It was also noted that Lori Pinkham is organizing a holiday fair at the school like she did last year.

Priscilla Glendinning suggested that the church needed new members on the Hospitality Committee. Sally Gundersen said anyone who is interested can get involved.

Music. Linda Brunner noted that the Music Committee has really not met. An informal meeting was held earlier to discuss the scheduling of the organist/choir directors. At that time, Linda Brunner said that it was so nice to have Haley Graves perform and she thought it would be nice to have more young people perform in addition to the Sunday School performances which are so enjoyed. Music will be covered in the survey as it is an integral part of the service. If and when we have a “real” meeting, Priscilla is on that committee as a member of the congregation, and if we had such a meeting in the summer, of course we would include Lois Allen as well.

Sue Edwards asked how music would be addressed in the upcoming survey. Linda Brunner said that among other things, it will ask people to identify some of their favorite hymns for consideration.

On October 11th, Maryann Lauterback will play her harpsichord at church.

Bill Glendinning asked if the cabinets in the narthex that are full of music could be cleaned out. Linda Brunner agreed.

Pastor Parish Relations. Bill Glendinning said the committee has met and that all members seem to be in agreement with how they are progressing and communicating.

Priscilla Glendinning asked what the process was for follow-up with concerns raised. Bill Glendinning said that each case would be handled individually. Some cases would warrant follow-up meetings; others email responses.

Beth Hood reported that she has asked Carolyn Maunz to help with the survey as she has experience with this sort of thing. The PPR committee will review the survey and then the Board and Deacons will review it before it is sent out.

Lori Wright suggested that an annual survey would be useful for all kinds of reasons.

Pemaquid Peninsula Cooperative Ministry. Beth Hood reported the PPCM is in transition because the ministers of the participating churches has been in flux. There seems to be very little interest by congregants to continue this effort and that needs to be addressed. People seem supportive of the Snack Pack program but Beth Hood would like more volunteers for this effort. She has asked Connie Kennedy, the school secretary, if there would possibly be interest on the part of parents to participate.

Beth Hood noted that the Lenten suppers were wonderful in getting people together to talk but that they were not well attended by South Bristol congregants. Bill Glendinning thought the PPCM should continue in some form to provide a means of support for the three participating ministers but that if events aren't well attended, the "program" aspect should be stopped.

Priscilla Glendinning stated that the services held at the Lighthouse were beautiful and well-attended.

Religious Education. Lori Wright submitted the following:

The Sunday School teachers have had two meetings in preparation for this school year. In addition to Lori Wright, Sally Gundersen and Carolyn Maunz, we have added Donna Plummer, Tenley Seiders, Sue Edwards, Connie Kennedy and Betsy Graves to our list of teachers and substitutes. For five weeks during the fall, we will use Raising Children to Love Their Neighbors as our curriculum, and then from the end of October through the end of January, we will be using Women of the Old Testament for our lessons. For the remainder of the year, we will focus on Progressive Christianity's Joy Year Two, and finish the lessons we did not use in previous years. For recruitment, thirteen children received personal invitations to join us on Sunday mornings, and the announcement went into the South Bristol School newsletter. We will continue to do community service projects such as our hunger walk, and making soup for the food pantry, and plan to have the children sing in church from time to time, as attendance allows. Our time frame for the classes have changed this year, 9:30-10:45, to allow our parents fifteen extra minutes between dropping off and picking up the children; we will meet from 9:30-9:55 for our lesson, go over to church through the Children's Moment, and then back to the parish hall for craft, activity, and snack. Parents will pick the children up at the parish hall at 10:45.

There will be no classes on school vacation weeks, and our Lead and Assistant teachers have signed up through the end of the November, to date.

Bill Glendinning offered that there couldn't be enough praise for the work the team does for the children. Everyone agreed.

Board. Linda Brunner reported that the Board will meet every month on the 3rd Sunday after church. If there are too many people who are unable to be present, they will try to meet on an evening, a late afternoon or even a Saturday morning so that they don't miss a month.

The most urgent task is to get the needed work completed on the Parsonage. Norman Wright has had a hard time attempting to pin down Kenny Lincoln about getting the work done so he has also contacted Kenny Seiders about possibly doing the work. The tenant has stacked some

firewood and we need to get a new wood stove installed ASAP. We will be reviewing the energy audit and discussing the priorities. Insulation is important.

The Board is planning to install a new propane furnace in the church. It is the Board's understanding that this will save money in the long run. Alan McPhee thinks it will cost 4 to 5 K and the exhaust pipe that's too long won't be needed any more.

Don Maunz asked that Lori Wright highlight month to month changes in her report and she is already doing that.

Invested Funds. Lori Wright reported that the two invested fund accounts were combined to reduce fees and that there is a schedule for review the invested funds annually. That date has not yet been determined for this year. Bill Glendinning asked when that should happen. Lori Wright felt it should be done in the spring.

Stewardship. Lori Wright reported that the church has talked about doing more with respect to stewardship but that over the years, the church has held to sending one letter each year.

Executive Committee. Bill Glendinning reported that the EC met in July and has decided to meet every other month. The committee will be reviewing the by-laws to identify areas where procedures are needed or need updating.

Bill Glendinning reported that he had a conversation with the postmaster. She raised a couple of concerns. One concern is power outages. She doesn't mind not being able to operate equipment but she is concerned about the lack of heat in the winter. Bill Glendinning suggested that perhaps the church can investigate the availability for a propane space heater to keep her temporarily warm in the even of a winter power outage. She also raised the point that the P.O. pays for garbage pick up but that they don't really generate garbage. She would like to cancel that contract when it comes up for renewal. Bill Glendinning pointed out the church uses the garbage pick up and that perhaps the church should get its own contract.

Bill Glendinning's interest/goal is to get the Pastor's office exterior wall painted before the old weather sets in and complete the siding job next to the P.O. door. He will personally do some masonry touch-up on the loading dock which he rebuilt a few years ago.

Sue Edwards asked if a couple of things could be done to improve communication: update the church phone message regularly, publish committee chair names and email addresses in the bulletin, and make weekly updates to the church website.

Beth Hood took responsibility for checking and updating the church voice mail. Lori Wright agreed that she could make weekly updates to the church website.

Beth Hood stated that she would like the Board to put out a bid for maintaining the church grounds (mowing, plowing, etc). She feels it is important to hire someone for this purpose rather than rely on volunteers to increase reliability and to not take advantage of people.

Old Business

Sue Edwards reviewed the outstanding action items from previous meetings. All items were closed with the exception of one: identifying monthly needs at the food pantry. That will be ongoing.

Nomination Process

Beth Hood asked that clarification be made as to how the nomination process was conducted.

At issue is the selection of the nominating group itself. Linda Brunner stated that the church has more or less conducted the process the same for the last couple of years. Beth Hood asked if the church couldn't ask for volunteers to be on the committee a couple of months before the Annual Meeting. She also thought positions should be rotated. Bill Glendinning pointed out that the church did away with term limits at the 2014 Annual Meeting as they weren't realistic. There are 51 slots and that the church doesn't have a large pool of people to pull from so if a person wants to be a chair for 10 years, they can.

Priscilla Glendinning asked if there couldn't be sign-up sheets in the narthex for things.

Wrap Up

Minutes Availability. Sue Edwards will get the minutes done this week.

Next Meeting of the Executive Committee

The next meeting will be Sunday, November 22nd in the pastor's study, immediately following coffee hour.

The meeting adjourned at 11:50.

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Edwards
September 26, 2015