

Community United Methodist Church  
CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
January 8, 2014

**Members Attending:** Bill Abernethy, Nancy Abernethy, Pat Becker, Al Brunsting, Nate Burke, Brenda DeGeer, Stephen Edwards, Nick Giannasi, George Groves, Beth Hagemeyer, Sally Hines, David Hollander, Rev. Grace Imathiu, Mary Jacobs, Rich Kaffka, Sylvia Kupferer, Mary Markwell, Rev. Sarah Meacham, Jim McCloud, Elmer Schirmer, Ollie Taylor, Graham Wills, Mary Wu, Dale Zimmerman

Chair Bill Abernethy called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. and read an opening meditation.

Minutes of the November meeting were corrected and entered into the record.

Chair Bill Abernethy welcomed new member Mary Wu who is Vice Chair of the Nominations Committee.

**Finance:** Brenda DeGeer reported that giving during the month of December was exceptional and enabled us to end the year with income approximately \$30,000 over budget. Expenses were over budget by \$13,000. Salary and benefits were over budget and Trustees expenses (repairs and maintenance and utilities of the church and parsonages) were over budget because of unexpected expenses related to the boiler. Office expenses were under budget. CUMC paid the full 2013 apportionment. Brenda said it was a phenomenal end to the year.

Rich Kaffka thanked the council, staff and laity for their cooperation and support. The church is healthier than it was a year ago and maybe in some time. We are a Rainbow Covenant church for the first time since 2008. The 2014 budget is balanced with an amount for reserve and an amount for capital expenditures. It required sacrifice on the part of the staff, programming and members. The stewardship campaign was very successful. Rich then answered questions regarding the budget. (see report.)

**Motion: Rich Kaffka moved that the council approve the budget for 2014. Ollie Taylor seconded. The motion carried.**

**Stewardship:** Al Brunsting reported that pledged giving is up more than 10% over last year (\$664,000+ versus \$626,000+). Al referred to the item on the "To Do List" that stated a goal to establish tithing as the norm rather than the exception. The Stewardship committee would like to conduct a survey of the congregation regarding tithing. Al passed out a sample and asked council members to review it. Pastor Grace said that we need to focus on what the council charged Stewardship to do which was to grow the congregation spiritually. Tithing is one discipline toward that goal. Council members suggested wording changes. Al noted that the survey will be anonymous because we will be using Survey Monkey which enables anonymity. Al asked council members to note any recommended changes and hand them in or send them to him by email. (See report)

**Motion: Pastor Grace Imathiu moved that Al Brunsting and Ed Cotners' names be added to the Building Committee. Pat Becker seconded. The motion carried.**

**Senior Outreach Ministry:** Sylvia Kupferer would like to see an ad hoc committee formed to support the implementation of the hearing loop. She believes the committee should include a member from trustees, someone familiar with the CUMC sound system, someone from Community Players, the music director or his designee, someone from the ushers and one of the pastors. Bill Abernethy questioned whether a committee was necessary or whether an individual could oversee this function. Sylvia responded that she believes all the groups who will be using the equipment should be involved so they support the final result. She has someone in mind to chair the group. The church council supports the formation of the ad hoc committee and the Nominations committee will assist the chair in forming the team.

Sylvia mentioned that the church still needs to sign and send in the paperwork. Jim McCloud said that the trustees need a certificate of insurance with CUMC on it before the paperwork can be signed as well as an invoice for the down payment. Rich Kaffka will send Sylvia wording around what is required and Sylvia will contact the vendor to see that the proper documents are prepared and sent to us. (See report)

**CUMC To Do List 2013-2014:** Chair Bill Abernethy reviewed the list.

1. End CY 2013 in a position of financial solvency, within budget and tracking effectively going into CY 2014 through a combination of spending control and increased revenue. *Achieved but we must*

*continue to communicate information to the membership to encourage full payment of pledges and possibly additional giving.*

2. Pay our apportionment in full each year and return to Rainbow Covenant status. *Achieved.*
3. Achieve sustainable weekly Average Worship Attendance of a)350 b)375 c)400. *Made solid progress but need to adjust the goals.*
4. Reduce membership rolls to a)1000 b)900 c)800 via pastoral contact. *Action postponed. Sending out letters in early February. Will report on results in May.*
5. Establish tithing as the norm rather than the exception. *Significant progress. Stewardship will conduct an anonymous survey and report results.*
6. Structure/restructure teams to include the broadest practical representation of membership. *Will continue to build on momentum. Transitioned to having people ask to be on teams rather than just appointing them.*
7. Hold 3 or 4 social events each year designed to attract a full range of participants to worship services. *Work in progress. Have held a number of social events and will continue.*
8. Foster stability and continued growth in healthy and/or promising small groups. *Staff have been working with leaders to set groundwork for small groups. May need volunteers to spearhead. Nick Gianassi will put together a list of all the small groups in the church.*
9. Support and refine our dual outreach programs focused upon local (ECHO) and distant (Henryville, IN, Honduras) opportunities/needs. *Work in progress. Honduras is active with a trip in the spring. Pat Becker, Pastor Sarah and Jim Rainwaters will continue to work on this when Jim returns.*
10. Establish a realistic operating time frame to achieve structural/building goals. *Work in progress. The feasibility study will be conducted between Jan. 15 and May 15 and the report will produce an expectation of what we will receive in a capital campaign. If we can proceed with the full plan we will hold a campaign in the fall. If we need to break it up it will change the timing.*

Bill asked those with names beside the items on the To Do List to let him know whether the goal should be kept as is or revised and to identify other goals that should be added for next year.

**Building Committee:** Jim McCloud reported that the office had been remodeled for \$4,978.30 with \$174.50 recovered from recycling metal and labor donated for demolition, carpentry, painting, computer and phone final connections. Wall and trim paint were also donated. (See report)

**Staff Parish Committee:** Graham Wills reported that the new employee handbook has been posted on the website and they are hoping to get it approved by January 15. Other church handbooks were reviewed and the format is based on one created by the Iowa conference. Suzanne Wills will serve as a temporary office assistant for three months until the position is filled permanently. Her hours will be from 8:30 am to 1:00 pm. five days a week and she will report to Pastor Grace. This will be announced to the congregation. Graham has asked Dave Hollander to take over the hiring process to avoid any conflicts since Suzanne (Graham's wife) may apply for the full time job. SPRC will hire a temporary Christian Education Director for 3 months.

**Pastor Reports:** Pastor Sarah noted that she has been at CUMC for 6 months. December was a difficult month but there have been two highlights. She has watched the SPRC and Finance committees work together making difficult decisions and keeping their relationships in tact through the process. The 5<sup>th</sup> grade class which involved eight adults who had not worked with young people before was a joy.

Pastor Grace talked about her difficult beginning at CUMC when we were in dire financial straits and the parsonage was not ready for her. This year has been so different. Both the Bishop and the District Superintendent called her yesterday when they found out we had returned to Rainbow Covenant status. Sunday there will be a blessing of new leaders in the church. There will be a program insert about the Rainbow Covenant achievement. Rich Kaffka will thank the congregation for what has been accomplished.

Nick Giannasi led the closing prayer. The meeting adjourned at 8:37 p.m. The next meeting is March 12, 2014.

**The next meeting will be March 12, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.**

Sally Hines  
Secretary

See additional reports on Attendance and Missions.

