

Community United Methodist Church  
CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
May 14, 2014

**Members Attending:** Bill Abernethy, Nancy Abernethy, Al Brunsting, Gary Chipman, Brenda DeGeer, George Groves, Sally Hines, Rev. Grace Imathiu, Mary Jacobs, Rich Kaffka, Sylvia Kupferer, Rev. Sarah Meacham, Forrest Rice, Betsy Roche, Dale Zimmerman **Guests:** Sam Leventry, Lynn Pries

Chair Bill Abernethy called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. and read an opening meditation.

Minutes of the March meeting were entered into the record.

**Pastor Grace:** Bishop Professor Zablon Nthamburi will be preaching on June 7/8<sup>th</sup>. Bishop Nthamburi is a retired Bishop in the Methodist Church in Kenya and is closely connected with Kenya Methodist University. Since we do not have a Worship Committee Pastor Grace asked that the Council make the decision on whether to hold the summer services in the park in July. The cost is \$200 per Sunday which will come from the Worship budget. The council agreed that the services should be held in the park.

Pastor Grace would like to pursue the steps toward becoming a Reconciling Congregation. She asked about the history and Dale Zimmerman reported that years ago becoming a reconciling congregation was approved by the board and presented to the congregation without dissent but the Northern Illinois Conference had an objection to churches belonging to outside organizations. The committee did not want to do anything in opposition to the conference's position.

**Motion:** Al Brunsting moved that the council grant Pastor Grace authority to form a core team to begin guiding us through the steps to reaffirm our commitment to becoming a reconciling congregation. Sylvia Kupferer seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Pastor Grace deferred to Lynn Pries who reported that CUMC will co-sponsor a Vocational Discernment Conference for High School and College Students at North Central College from July 18 – 20, 2014. The conference is partially funded by a grant from the United Methodist General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. The event helps students consider their vocational calling to serve God and to prepare for their future. CUMC pastors will participate in the planning and will preach and lead workshops. The CUMC Treasurer will receive the \$8,000 grant, keep it in a separate fund, disburse funds and make a final report of expenditures. Lynn will act as the overall coordinator. Rich Kaffka asked for assurance that the costs will not go over the grant amount and Lynn assured him that he will watch the budget carefully.

Pastor Grace raised a concern that since neither the new President or the new Chaplain at North Central College are CUMC members, we will have to be more aggressive to maintain our alliance. Bill Abernethy asked Lynn Pries what we can do to promote this relationship and Lynn suggested we need to be welcoming to the new chaplain. George Groves suggested we have a reception for the new Chaplain and arrange for him to speak to a joint Sunday School class. Al Brunsting asked if there is an opportunity to encourage students in the STEM program to attend CUMC and Lynn noted that an NCC chemistry professor attends Wesley UMC and we could do a joint program on Science and Religion. Bill suggested Lynn work with Al on this.

**Nominations:** Pastor Grace asked that the following nominations be approved:

- **Chair of Staff Parish Committee Betsy Roche, (seconded by George Groves)**
- **Member of Staff Parish Committee Kevin Markwell (seconded by Al Brunsting)**
- **Lay Member to attend Annual Conference Al Brunsting (seconded by George Groves. The nominations were approved.**

**Membership Secretary:** Gary Chipman reported that the Book of Discipline states that the Membership Secretary should report regularly to the church council. Gary has talked with Suzanne Wills, the administrative assistant, and there are many things that are currently done manually that should be done in CMS (the Church Management System software). Gary intends to write inactive members asking if they want to stay on the membership list. Bill Abernethy asked what happened to the idea of associate members. Pastor Grace said that having associate members is probably not the best way to proceed. Bill asked if we

could publish the names of inactive members so members who knew them could tell us if they have moved away. Bill asked that Gary put together an official Membership Roll and bring it to the next council meeting. Gary asked how long we should keep records on transfers and withdrawals and Brenda DeGeer referred him to the Archives & Records Committee.

**Attendance/New Members:** Mary Jacobs reported that average worship attendance for the first 19 weeks of 2014 was 278 as opposed to 290 last year. Through June of 2014 we will have either 12 or 14 new members (7 or 8 families) as opposed to 12 new members (10 families) in 2013.

**Finance:** Rich Kaffka reported that giving and expenses are stable. We are under budget on salaries because we are not working with a full staff. We are far stronger than 2 years ago and stronger than last year. Rich is concerned that the positions that are open are crucial for growth. He emphasized the importance of good liturgy, good music and good sermons. Brenda DeGeer added that the watchword for the year is “prudence.” Al Brunsting commented that we originally set up the budget with non-pledged giving at 0. When we chose a number based on history the budget came together. Rich said that now we have 3 years of reliable history so a projection based on history will be more accurate.

**Youth Ministry:** Pastor Grace reported for Nick Giannasi. Thirteen kids have committed to going on the summer mission trip to the Tree of Life Relief in South Dakota on August 3 – 9. The group is currently raising funds and is hoping to raise \$10,000. Money raised that is not needed will go toward next year’s trip.

**Trustees:** Sam Leventry said that a work day is planned for May 31<sup>st</sup> from 8:30 to noon and a table will be set up in the hall to get people to sign up.

**Staff Parish:** Betsy Roche reported that the committee is focused on keeping the mission of the church top of mind as they look for new staff. Forums have been held inviting the congregation to give input on what is important as we for positions. The committee is very aware of the time frame and is meeting every other week. Extra meetings will be called if necessary to keep things moving.

**Senior Outreach:** Sylvia Kupferer reported that the wisdom services will focus on Saturdays when most seniors can come. Issues on Aging is holding a June 5<sup>th</sup> workshop with Trivent Financial Services that will cover getting your papers organized. Trivent is donating folders. Attendance is limited to 30. The STARS group would like to create a prayer room at the church. The quilters are making 50 superhero capes for children who are ill. Pastor Grace said that the STARS Chimers will play during worship this summer.

Forrest Rice mentioned an article in Christian Century about the hardening of positions in the United Methodist Church on same sex marriage. The article suggests the disagreements are symptomatic of a more serious split on conservative versus moderate views. The Tribune recently published an article on a same sex wedding that was canceled at the United Methodist Church in Orland Park. There was general discussion.

**Pastor Sarah:** Number 7 on our To Do List for the year had to do with designing a social event for people of all ages and Pastor Sarah was responsible for this item. She reported that with the help of Joyce Brunsting the Easter breakfast fulfilled this and was a great success. We will be doing something like this again. Pastor Sarah made two other observations. First, between 15 and 20 people attended the services every Wednesday morning during Lent and second, less than one quarter of the Church Council attended Holy Week Services.

Pastor Grace offered a thank you to Mary Jacobs for all she has done as she prepares to retire.

Pastor Sarah led the closing prayer. The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

**The next meeting will be July 9, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.**

Sally Hines  
Secretary

See reports on Christian Education, Finance, Hunger Commission, Missions, Sr. Outreach and Staff Parish.