



United Methodist Church of Danbury
Church Administrative Council
Minutes

June 2, 2024

Council members and guests present: Penny McKown - Chair, Pastor J. Michael Cobb, Val Bose, Pam Clark, Tonya Clark, Shannon Cobb, Cliff Davis, Debbie Davis, Jimmy Davis, Loren Euvrard, Marti Foster, Mary Lou Heyel, Janet Hinderliter, David Johnson, Dr. Lucinda Johnson. Allison Kent, Bishop Rouse, Val Stagen, Carrie Tesbir, Lorena Tesbir, Myra Tesbir, Phyllis Tranzillo.

Council members contributing by e-mail, text message, or other means: Karlene Lombardo, Val Stagen.

Council members not present: Audrey Cain, Sue Teer.

The meeting was called to order around 12:00 Noon.

- **Opening Prayer and Devotional** – Penny offered a prayer for Juneteenth. Penny thanked everybody who helped with the setup, serving, food, cleanup, etc. for the pulled pork luncheon. Pastor Michael gave a Devotional from the book entitled Good English. and offered a prayer.
- **Introductory Remarks & Pastor's Report** –
 - **High Points of General Conference.** Michael has attended three conferences and this one was the best one. He will give a presentation to our parish clergy and members on June 12. [Note: after the meeting, this presentation was postponed.] It will also include observations from the Annual Conference occurring June 6-9, 2024. At the General Conference, differences were recognized. The Methodist structure will change from being US based to eight equal regions. He said this is a dismantling of a racist structure. Each region will be able to focus on its own needs. This is a fairer structure. Most of the churches who left the Methodist structure did so for budgetary reasons. Also, politically so they can run their own show. 20% of the churches left nationwide. Only 5 churches left in our Conference, about 98.5% stayed on. The budget was reduced by 46% and there will be reduced apportionments. A question was raised – what will the churches that have left do (varies by church) and will they still communicate with churches that stay on (email, etc. is always available.)
 - **Revitalization of UMCD Community Ministry.**
 1. VBS - The Trustees have done a lot of work and our church is a more attractive place. People coming to UMCD will see a church they want to be a part of. We have no kids in the Church now but we plan to do a Vacation Bible School (VBS) the week of August 19. This should attract more people as other VBS's will be in July. Doing a good program will help entice people to come back. We will work with the Spanish church and have a bi-lingual VBS.
 2. LGBTQ considerations. Michael was asked to provide a table for the Church at the Pride Day event. He could not do so because it is not something UMCD would want. He feels we need to share with the community. He will provide a reading list for 2 discussions and Romans will also be used as a discussion topic.

Part One - Ministries Of Nurture, Outreach, And Witness:

- **Ministries Already In Place:**
 - **Patti's Closet** – Phyllis said clothing from Patti's Closet is offered the third Saturday of a month at UMCD and was offered the fourth Friday at ARC. However, ARC changed its day. Phyllis is in contact with another community outreach organization that could host Patti's Closet.
 - **Mission and Outreach** – Some new ideas are being addressed. Existing and dormant initiatives were discussed and reviewed. These included Angel Trees, Thanksgiving bags, backpacks, and others. An

organization called “Off the Streets” was discussed. It holds things like microwaves and kitchen tables for formerly unhomed people who now have a place to live and need such items.

- **UWF** – The UWF raised \$590.00 at their Mother’s Day bake sale. They donated the funds to the Church. The Book Club will meet on 6/16 and 7/14 In the Memorial Parlor at UMCD at 2:00 PM
- **Church Visitation** – Val Stagen could not attend but left cards for people to sign.
- **Ministries in Progress:**
 - **Targeted Outreach** – Lorena is working on VBS and will work with the New Life Church in Fairfield. She is thinking about having an “afternoon away” for parents to drop off their kids for a while.
 - **Trustees Report on Issues Relating to Targeted Outreach** – Phyllis talked about working on repairs, etc. to help get ready for VBS. A lot of waiting is involved for repairs but things are being done. The problems with the well and the water in the kitchen have been addressed. Other small things have been done in the kitchen, for example, cleaning the sink and the salt and pepper shakers.
 - **Welcome and Evangelism:**
 1. Lucinda now has a committee consisting of Kim-Cain Moreira and Carrie Tesbir. Carrie will help with reaching out to young children. The Pastor has been reaching out. 4 out of 8 cards have been returned. We can be a buddy for new people.
 2. Penny talked about attending the 2024 Connecticut District Conference in May. The featured speaker was Dr. Leonard Sweet. He said that evangelism should not be a “push” but rather gentle steps which he called “nudges.” Penny said that conferences are a rewarding thing to attend and she urged others to take advantage of them. She is training to be a lay servant but **not** to be a lay speaker. She felt connected at the conference as she saw people who had attended ZOOM classes with her.
 - **Membership** – No report.
- **Future Ministries:**
 - **Spiritual Gifts Assessment** – Penny distributed a link to this assessment before the meeting and asked people to complete it. She received it at a class she took. Several people shared their results with some surprising and often amusing results.
 - **Nominations and Development** – The results from the inventory can give people insights into their strengths and help guide them to roles they could take in the Church.
 - **Suggestions from our Church Family** – Several potential ministries for us to undertake were discussed. Some people might work with them if their current or future schedules permitted. Among those discussed were divorce care and mental health. A new addiction counseling service is just starting up in Danbury – no details available yet.
- **Connectional/Cooperative Parish Opportunities:**
 - **General Conference Dinner and Update** – Michael will be giving an update on June 12 at a special meeting (see above.) [Note: after the meeting, this presentation was postponed.] The presentation’s aims are updates, fellowship, and answering questions.
 - **November Event** – Early planning is going on for a special service on November 3, 2024, 2 days before Election Day. Pastor wants to bring people together, Democrats, Republicans, (and others) to bless those who may be hurting because of the upcoming election. He is planning to work with ARC and other organizations. This event could also gather publicity for the church.
- **Educational Opportunities: Suggestions to Meet People’s Needs:**
 - **Falling Upward – Summer Study and Fall Book Study (Summer Reading)** – There will be an 8-session review of this book. People would read the book in the Summer and review it in the Fall.
 - **Lay Servant/Speaker Classes** – People are urged to pursue these courses. We can grow in discipleship. The pastor would like there to be an Education Committee.
 - **NYAC Email update** – The agenda contained a link to an address where one can update the kinds of email they receive from NYAC. A brief demo was given. The way to update the email you receive is to follow the link and enter your email address.
 - If you are not in the database, you will be sent to a screen where you can enter your info and pick the topics to which you would like to subscribe.
 - However, if you are in the database, you will be sent an email with a clickable button. Click on that button and then you will be sent to a screen where you can enter your info and pick the topics to which you would like to subscribe.

- **Worship:**
 - **Music and Worship** – Bishop said we would be changing worship time in July as usual. There was discussion as to what the revised time should be, 9:30 or 10:00, or alternating between the two times. There will be further discussions on this topic.
 - **Altar Guild** – Val Bose talked about clearing off the altar for Patti’s memorial service. During worship, she suggested that, for the Summer, people bring in flowers from their gardens for the altar flowers. It was noted later in the meeting that the flowers on the tables came from Penny’s and Marti’s garden.

Part Two: Administrative and Supportive Responsibilities of the Church:

- **Accepting or Amending of Minutes From Last Meeting** - The draft March 2024 minutes were presented before the meeting. Marti made a motion to accept them as written and Tonya seconded. Passed unanimously. Marti will ask Andrea to post the updated minutes and also a list of Council members on the Church Council bulletin board.
- **Fundraising/Fellowship Events** – The schedule of events has been distributed. In addition, there will be a ZOOM meeting on June 20 at 7:30 PM to discuss Pumpkin Festival planning.
- **Committee Reports – Financial Stewardship:**
 - **Stewardship** – Myra is working on traditional ways of doing stewardship as well as looking at different types of stewardship campaigns.
 - **Finance** – Tonya said that things are status quo and there is a financial struggle.
 - **Treasurer** – Marti continues to get familiar with QuickBooks and the system. He agreed it has been a financial struggle. He thanked Tonya for helping him out. He created a spreadsheet listing all the vendors we pay, how often, and how much, whenever the data can be found. He said he scrutinizes all expenses very carefully.
 - **Financial Secretary** – No report given.
- **Committee Reports – Buildings And Property Stewardship:**
 - **Trustees** – Phyllis reported earlier in the meeting.
 - **Contingency Planning** – Marti made a motion to approve the previously distributed “Hazard Preparedness and Evacuation” excerpt from the DRAFT Contingency Plan. Loren seconded. Passed unanimously. Marti said that there were a few more sections to be approved. Note: Before the meeting, Marti and Phyllis agreed that the excerpt that was reviewed at the October 2023 Council meeting should be considered to have received approval from the Trustees.
 - **Location of First Aid Kits** – The Pastor and Andrea found a first aid kit and a blood pressure cuff in the VBS Closet. In an email, Lorena said that she would update the first aid kit and keep both items on a high shelf in the crying room (the room right off the Narthex with the window.) She said there is a slightly larger kit in the Sunday School room with the mural. She is also willing to help put together a larger kit for the more public space of our building should we decide that is something we want. She would do that over the Summer. Marti noted there is a first aid kit in a drawer in the kitchen. That needs updating and can be used when we worship downstairs in the Winter.
- **Committee Reports – SPR**
 - **Music Director** – Loren is looking at a new prospect. He is hoping for progress and the candidate will be interviewed in the next two weeks.
 - **Church Administrator** – Andrea Herrera has been working out well as the new Administrator. She has a lot of initiative and the SPR was thanked for bringing her in. Val Bose asked how requests to her should be organized. Michael said that, since he is her manager, requests for her work or help should be addressed to him.
- **Other Announcements** – None.
- **Closing prayer** – Given by Pastor Cobb.
- The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 PM.

The next meeting will be a ZOOM meeting on either July 24 or 31, 2024 at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Marti Foster