



United Methodist Church of Danbury
Church Administrative Council (via Zoom)
Minutes

January 10, 2024

Council members and guests present: Penny McKown - Chair, Pastor J. Michael Cobb, Tonya Clark, Marti Foster, Bishop Rouse, Val Stagen, Sue Teer, Lorena Tesbir, Phyllis Tranzillo.

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

Council members not present: Val Bose, Dr. Lucinda Johnson.

The meeting was called to order at 7:31 pm.

- **Opening prayer** – Penny McKown – Be Our Light for the New Year
- **Opening Remarks** –
 - **Grateful for Advent Bible Study and Beautifully Decorated Church** – Penny said that she had a lovely time in Church here in Danbury. It was a nice approach to add a little bit to the Church decorations each week of Advent. That was not done in her Methodist Church in Maine where she spent Christmas.
 - **Basic Lay Servants Ministries Class** – Penny will be our Lay Member to the Annual Conference. This class is a prerequisite for the Conference. An announcement about the book will be placed in the newsletter and others were encouraged to attend the class. Penny is grateful for the opportunity. Pastor Michael thanked Penny and said that the training would be good for all.
 - **Accepting or Amending of Minutes** – The December 2023 minutes were accepted as written. Marti made a motion to accept them as written and Bishop seconded. Passed unanimously. Marti will ask Erika to post the updated minutes on the Church Council bulletin board.
- **Pastor's Report** –
 - **Special Charge Conference – January 28, 2024** – The DS approved this special charge conference for the purpose of approving the nominations approved by the Nominating Committee. The nomination process is still a work in progress but there are enough acceptances to proceed. The Conference will be held after the Worship service on 1/28/24. Connecticut law requires that nominations be opened one hour before voting. Pastor said the hour wait would be a good time to discuss the “State of the Church.” There is a lot going on. He will send out more info as the data approaches. He hopes the entire process will take an hour and 10 minutes. The one hour will also be used for the fundraiser discussed below.
 - **New Paradigm for Administrative Council Meetings** – Pastor Michael is working with Penny, to change the Council meetings to be 6 times a year, in person, after Worship service. The Discipline only requires 4 meetings a year so that requirement will be met. A meal or pot luck lunch could be served or people could bring their own lunches. This will probably start in March 2024. The staggered meeting times will give everybody a chance to attend. It will also give positive things happening a chance to percolate and will increase fellowship.
 - **Some Thoughts on Multiplying Love: A Vision of United Methodist Life Together** – Pastor Michael bought 15 copies of this book from the Beautiful News store owned by Carla Pierce. He has distributed the copies to parishioners and will continue to do so. He said the book understands the controversies Methodism has been undergoing and rebuts the negative aspects. It offers a “love ministry” and offers a positive path forward. He had 3 other points to offer about the book:
 1. Let's be done with the decade plus of controversy over LGBTQ+ and “be done with it.”
 2. It is a good starting point to get us all talking together.

3. He would like to focus on it for the next three months. There is a General Conference in April 2024 and the eyes of the world will be on Methodism. After reading the book we will be better prepared to discuss why we are special and what we offer.

Phyllis said that she read the first part of the book and was excited; it talked about love. Penny quoted from the book "If you cut me, I bleed Methodist."

- **New Business:**

- **Nominating Committee Status.** The Pastor said the process is proceeding slowly but surely. Most of the major positions have been filled and one person has been found for SPR. In the short-term, some people will have to double up but that is not a long-term approach. The work will continue. It was noted that the agenda for this meeting was only one page long, as some unfilled positions not required by the Discipline could be dropped. He was interested in forming a new youth-oriented committee with a focus on forming relations with young people and other related items to form a successful youth ministry. This committee would replace the Education and former youth committee.
- **Chili and Chowder Fund Raiser – January 28, 2024** - Penny said that Sue Teer has been a great help with organizing this fund raiser and had great suggestions. She screen-shared the reservation form that will be used and a copy will be sent to Erika tomorrow for inclusion in the newsletter. Use of the form will help in estimating how much food should be prepared. The clam chowder will be made from the same recipe that was so popular at the Pumpkin Festival. Penny will make the chowder and turkey chili. The containers will be the same ones used at the Pumpkin Festival, with a capacity of about the same volume as two cups of coffee. Val Stagen volunteered to make some chili and some cookies. Penny and Sue are looking for seed money, in cash, to facilitate processing, to buy ingredients and materials. Texas Roadhouse will donate rolls and butter. The forms will be ready on January 14th and can be filled out, sent by mail, or phoned in. Payment can be made at pickup. The Pastor would like to use compostable materials going forward and said that his seed money contribution can be used to make up the difference between plastic and compostables. Material on hand should be used up first. Sue Teer will use her dishwasher at home to wash the silverware used as the Church's dishwasher is not working.
- **UMCD Book Club – January 14, 2024** – Karlene sent Penny an email requesting that the book Club notice be returned to the newsletter. The details are "**The book for January is *The Words We Whisper* by Mary Ellen Taylor. The meeting will be Sunday, January 14, 2024 at 2pm. The meeting will be at the home of Karlene Lombardo. The address is 70 Old Ridgebury Road in Danbury. You may contact Karlene at: lombardodk@gmail.com. This property is handicap accessible. There will be treats and warm beverages.**"

- **Finance –**

- Tonya said that the Finance Committee met last week. She is working on end-of-year reports and they should be finished after she completes the reconciliation. Apportionments were not paid. Last year we borrowed from the Trustees to pay them; Tonya did not want to do that again this year. We are approximately \$12,200.00 in arrears on apportionments. Tonya and the Trustees are doing a financial audit to look for cost cutting measures. The 13th month letter will be sent out soon. There is about \$6,000.00 in the checking account.
- Michael asked how we thought the Congregation feels about the apportionments not being paid. Tonya said that there are spiritual and financial implications. People should understand there is a shared ministry, Tonya will touch on the subject in her 13th month letter. She asked the Pastor to review the letter before it is sent out.
- Tonya said that Worship cancellations do not typically have much impact on people's giving.
- **Financial Secretary** – Sue said that pledges for 2024 are currently at \$98,725.00. Pledge cards will continue to be accepted.
- **Contingency Planning** – Marti said that in response to an inquiry from the Pastor to Penny, that he had no major concerns about the Chili-Chowder fundraiser. Covid is not transmitted by food and masks will be worn as warranted. After the January 7th Worship cancellation Marti sent the Pastor the section about Church cancellations from the DRAFT Contingency Plan. Michael was asked to comment and said that specific assignments should be mentioned. We also need to make a list of people who should be notified by phone due to no or limited Internet access. Jan Elwell, Barbara Fulton, and Kathy Wolf were mentioned. Jan was happy that somebody contacted her. It is important to contact people to show that we care about them.

- **Trustees** –
 - Phyllis said there was not a lot to discuss since they moved their meeting to January 24. She planned to catch us up at the Charge Conference. She appreciates everybody's hard work. An energy audit of the Church was done last Friday. She is awaiting the results.
- **SPR** – No report.
- **Altar Guild** – No report.
- **Church Visitation** – Val Stagen shared updates on Barbara Fulton's husband Robert, Jim Teer, and Minnie Rouse. Specifics will not be mentioned in the minutes due to privacy concerns. Jim Teer was pleased to receive get well cards from the Church. Pastor Michael said that he spoke with Pat Roig and will be visiting the Roigs. Phyllis also had a chance meeting with the Roigs. It was mentioned that the Christmas caroling effort was a big help in reaching out. It also gave people who cannot easily attend Church a chance to enjoy our fellowship and to meet members they may not have known.
- **Music and Worship** – Bishop thanked everybody for their help in setting up Fellowship Hall for Worship. Pastor Michael hung some banners in the hall to make it more attractive.
- **UWF** – Karlene sent her report by e-mail. It is included below:
 - ["For the United Women in Faith \(UMW\) we sent \\$235.00 to Wesley Heights Assisted Living in Shelton."](#)
- **Welcome and Evangelism** – No report.
- **Other Announcements** – Chris Russock, in an email to Penny, announced her resignation as Facebook Administrator. She said she would like the position to be filled by a Church congregant. Chris sent Penny two emails which she screen-shared. They are included at the end of the minutes. Penny thanked Chris for her time in developing, supporting, and updating the Facebook page. Tonya said that Facebook content could be sent to Instagram and urged people to check in on Facebook when they attend services. Penny hopes for continued progress. Michael said it is an easy way for people to find us and it is important to have regular updates. He said that there should be multiple administrators, at least one of whom should be staff. But a congregant should definitely be an administrator as well.
- **Closing prayer** – Pastor Michael
- The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 PM.

The next meeting will meet under the new scenario discussed above and will probably occur in mid-March 2024 after Worship.

Respectfully submitted,



Marti Foster

Chris's emails appear on the following pages.

01.10.2024

Memo

To
Penny McKown

From
Chris Russock

Re
UMCD's Face Book
Account

Comments:

Penny, as I previously mentioned to you, I wish to relinquish my role as the church's Face Book administrator.

Therefore, I would kindly request that the Church Council select another congregant for this job as soon as possible. Once that person has been selected, I will then remove my personal credit card which is now tied to the account and then I can be deleted as the administrator.

For background information, the Face Book page was created back in 2010 and has been managed by several congregants over the years. I've been managing the page since 2016.

Finally, for the Council's information, I have attached one backend report which provides some demographic information about those who follow the page.

Once someone has been selected, please let me know.

Thanks very much.

Chris

Audience

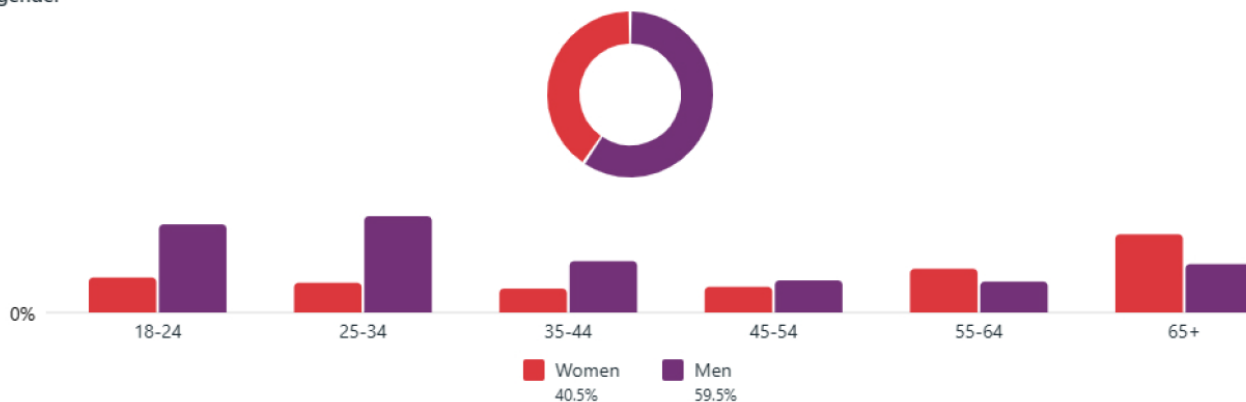
Current audience

Potential audience

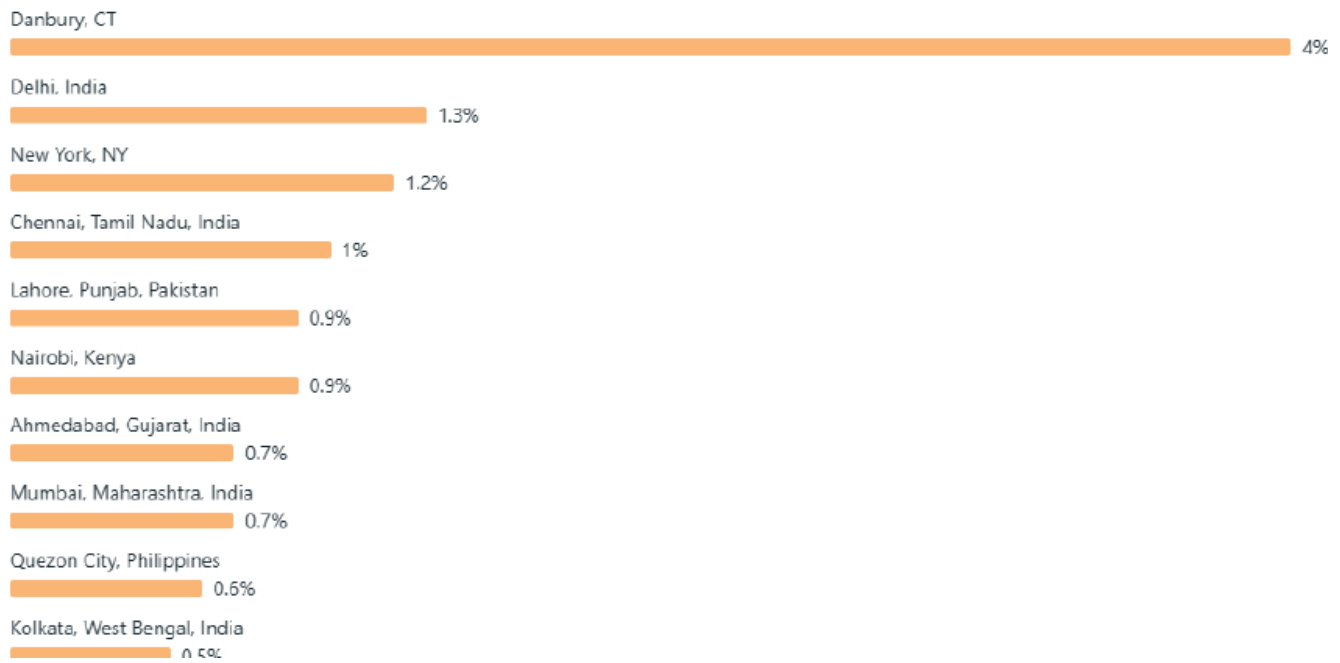
Facebook followers ⓘ

2,218

Age & gender ⓘ



Top cities



Top countries

