



United Methodist Church of Danbury
Church Administrative Council
Minutes

March 10, 2024

Council members and guests present: Penny McKown - Chair, Pastor J. Michael Cobb, Val Bose, Audrey Cain, Kim Cain-Moreira, Tonya Clark, Shannon Cobb, Loren Euvrard, Carlos Ferreira, Marti Foster, Kim Goodwin, Mary Lou Heyel, David Johnson, Dr. Lucinda Johnson. Allison Kent, Bishop Rouse, Val Stagen, Jim Teer, Sue Teer, Carrie Tesbir, Lorena Tesbir, Myra Tesbir, Phyllis Tranzillo.

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

Council members not present: None

The meeting was called to order at 11:45 AM

- **Opening Prayer and Devotional** – Pastor Michael offered an opening prayer and thanked the Council and the group for the offering of their time. The Devotional was from Galatians 1 and the Pastor offered lessons from it. He read from Multiplying Love and talked about how the business of the Church supports its mission. He also discussed how UMCD reaches people.
- **Introductory Remarks & Pastor's Report** – The new structure of the meeting was discussed with one part devoted to ministries of nurture, outreach, and witness and the second part addressing administrative and supportive responsibilities. Penny said she went to God for help in working with the new format. She bought and referred to the Methodist Book of Discipline and she also referred to Guidelines: Church Council 2017 – 2020. Penny will circulate this reading. Michael talked about a focus on bringing Christ to the world.

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

- **Ministries Already In Place:**
 - **Patti's Closet** – Phyllis talked about the beginning with 6 families using the service. Since they started working with ARC of Danbury, they have serviced 15 – 40 families. They received a donation of \$100.00 from Newtown. Volunteers are needed. Sue that people are very nice and happy and grateful to see that children's clothes are available. It is very rewarding. People from the new church using our space have helped with translation. Clothing from Patti's Closet is offered the third Saturday of a month at UMCD and the fourth Friday at ARC.
 - **Dorothy Day and Renewal House** – We are no longer volunteering at Dorothy Day. Renewal House will be discussed at a future meeting.
 - **UWF** – Before the meeting, Karlene told Penny she had nothing new to report. Penny talked about some things that Karlene is or has been working on. The Book Club has been meeting monthly.
 - **Church Visitation** – Val Stagen said it is important to keep in touch with people to help cheer them up and for them to discuss health, bad times, and family deaths and problems. They are very happy to receive the cards that we have been signing and she has been sending.
 - **Mission and Outreach** – Phyllis said she still coordinates Thanksgiving bags and the Diaper Drive. She also fills backpacks for middle schoolers. She will also will research the Salvation Army's Angels Program.
- **Ministries in Progress:**
 - **Targeted Outreach** – Lorena is developing ideas for this new ministry along with the Pastor. She and the Trustees are scheduling a cleanup of the Church environment. Maybe there can be a Vacation Bible School in August. We can work with other churches to try to reach other families. Michael is looking for lists of families new to the area who may be looking for a church to attend.

- **Trustees Report on Issues Relating to Targeted Outreach** – Phyllis talked about several issues and their progress. These includes new parts for the urinals, addressing water pressure, turning back on or replacing the water fountains, and the roof replacement currently in progress. We would like new people to walk in the Church and say that it is a nice place.
- **Welcome and Evangelism** – Lucinda said that she and the Pastor have been discussing this new committee. Michael has a vision of going out into the community, We have to grab people when they come to Church and make them feel welcome – be warm and open to them. We need to tie into why they are here so they continue to come. Lucinda is purchasing evangelism cards. We need to address how to bring people to Church. Maybe offering Sunday School would help. Lucinda would like people to join her committee.
- **Membership** – Audrey is getting to know this responsibility. Sha said membership is important and she is working on seeing how many active members we have and on determining why people don't attend.
- **Future Ministries:**
 - **Facebook** – This is one way we present ourselves and one way that people can find us. Chris Russock performed many roles on FB. Michael had taken on the Administrator role. We don't want to lose Chris's work and we need other people to help. One does not need to be computer savvy but it helps to be familiar with the Internet. If interested please see Michael. Help and training would be given to any volunteers.
 - **Nominations and Development** – This is a year-round effort.
 - **Suggestions from our Church Family** – Penny talked about attending the Laity Convocation and suggested that other people consider attending similar functions. We need suggestions for new ministries from our congregants.
- **Connectional/Cooperative Parish Opportunities:**
 - The Corned Beef Dinner at the Newtown UMC was attended by 10 people from UMCD. Everyone enjoyed it immensely.
 - People are encouraged to attend the Bishop's Day on the District on March 25 and the joint Maundy Thursday Service with the Unitarian Universalist Church on March 28.
- **Educational Opportunities: Suggestions to Meet People's Needs:**
 - **Basics of Methodism – February 28 and March 6** – The Pastor offered this course for people who will be joining the Church and for existing members. It was suggested that the questions from the Multipling Love book could be used to start discussions, Some movies also present educational opportunities.
 - **Lay Servant/Speaker Classes** – Penny took the Lay Servant Ministries Basic Course as a requirement for her role as Lay Member to Annual Conference. Ten people from several churches participated in the course. The book was great and the use of ZOOM and breakout rooms enhanced the experience. Penny plans to take further Lay Servant courses and encouraged others to take these courses. She is however not interested in being a Lay Speaker.
 - **Identifying and Considering Our Spiritual Gifts** – Penny reviewed a spiritual gifts inventory as part of her Lay Servant course work. She hopes that people can use this inventory to assess themselves and use their spiritual gifts to strengthen our Church. God gives gifts and everyone has gifts.
- **Worship:**
 - **Music and Worship** – Bishop said that buying the used clavinova (digital piano), which replaced the two old pianos in the rehearsal room, was a great decision and it is working out very well. The musicians like it and it enhances our spirituality. He is working with SPR on the search for a new music director.
 - **Altar Guild** – Val Bose said they could use some "new blood", especially for help on Saturday preparation when we restart worshipping upstairs. She is looking for ideas for decorating the table upstairs. We need teams to set up and take down decorations. She ordered a new chart for requesting altar flowers. Easter flower order forms for flowers to beautify the Sanctuary for Easter, were made available starting today. Forms must be submitted before Palm Sunday, March 24th, as Easter comes early this year. To save on delivery charges and facilitate logistics, we have been picking up the flowers. The flowers should be set up in the Sanctuary on the Saturday before Easter.

Part Two: Administrative and Supportive Responsibilities of the Church:

- **Accepting or Amending of Minutes From Last Meeting** - The January 2024 minutes were accepted as written. Marti made a motion to accept them as written and Tonya seconded. Passed unanimously. Marti will ask the Pastor to post the updated minutes on the Church Council bulletin board.
- **Fundraising/Fellowship Events** – Pastor Michael said that we should consider some fundraising events to raise money to help in bolstering our children’s ministry. It was noted that replacing or repairing the water fountains in the building would be a help with this. Lorena will assume the role of Safe Sanctuary Coordinator. She said maybe we could get volunteers from the local high schools to help with child care after they take Safe Sanctuary training. Penny talked about the Christmas Tea event. She said it might be nice to have entertainment during the event as the St. Patrick’s Day event at Newtown UMC included an enjoyable presentation of Irish music and dancing. The estimated date for the Pumpkin Festival is Saturday, October 12, during the holiday weekend (like last year.) No major objections were raised. Planning for it should start soon.
- **Committee Reports – Financial Stewardship:**
 - **Stewardship** – Myra is working with the Pastor on ideas. She talked about running a campaign as usual. She is looking for volunteers.
 - **Finance** – Tonya presented the 2024 budget and the actual finances to date. This report was displayed on the screen and will be sent to Council members. She pointed out that the budgets for the past few years have always shown a deficit. Our apportionment amount is lower than last year and apportionments are being partially paid.
 - **Treasurer** – Marti is getting familiar with QuickBooks and the system. He thanked Tonya for helping him out. He said he scrutinizes all expenses very carefully.
 - **Financial Secretary** – Sue said that giving statements help keep track of how they help the Church.
- **Committee Reports – Buildings And Property Stewardship:**
 - **Trustees** – Phyllis reported earlier in the meeting.
 - **Contingency Planning** – Marti made a motion to approve the previously distributed Worship Cancellation excerpt from the DRAFT Contingency Plan. Lorena seconded. Passed unanimously.
- **Committee Reports – Lay Leader** – Bishop mentioned some Trustee projects including the rug change and the review of heating equipment. The roof is currently being replaced. Leaks from the roof may have caused damage to the carpet in the Sanctuary. If so, insurance payments could contribute to the cost of replacing the carpet. Bishop said that Church attendance has been averaging 40 people a week and he would like that number to be 80. He encouraged people to bring other people with them to Church.
- **Other Announcements** – Val Bose raised a concern about the renaming of “United Methodist Women” to “United Women in Faith.” Other people raised a similar concern. It was pointed out that this decision was made by the New York Conference UMW in March 2023 and not by the people in UMCD.
- **Closing prayer** – Penny McKown – [A Baking Prayer](#)
- The meeting was adjourned at 1:17 PM.

The next meeting will be on June 2, 2024 after Worship.

Respectfully submitted,



Marti Foster