



United Methodist Church of Danbury

Church Administrative Council

Minutes

September 15, 2024

Council members and guests present: Penny McKown - Chair, Pastor J. Michael Cobb, Tonya Clark, Shannon Cobb, Loren Euvrard, Marti Foster, Bishop Rouse, Val Stagen, Sue Teer.

Council members contributing by e-mail, text message, or other means: None.

Council members not present: Val Bose, Audrey Cain, Dr. Lucinda Johnson, Lorena Tesbir, Myra Tesbir, Phyllis Tranzillo

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

Opening Prayer and Devotional - The Pastor read parts of Scripture concerning the Pentecost story. Penny welcomed everybody to the meeting. A request was made to keep the meeting short and focused on Church business.

• **Introductory Remarks & Pastor's Report** –

- **Stewardship** – Michael and Myra have been discussing this. We have been busy with VBS, Peace Camp, and other things. Michael is wondering how to equip us to do God's work outside of the Gospel.
- **Charge Conference** – It will be held Sunday, November 10 at 2:00 PM (time to be verified.) The location will be Bethel UMC as in previous years. The Charge Conference is used to recognize accomplishments and look at where we are going. There is a lot of paperwork required. The nomination process will be discussed later in the meeting. The last Church Council meeting of the year, originally scheduled for November 10 will need to be rescheduled.
- **Church-Wide Study** – The Pastor would like to study what happens and how it affects us. Some questions that were raised follow. What is our mission and how is it relevant here? What happened at General Conference and how do we present it to the general public? It concerned LGBTQ concerns but more than that. How does it fit into evangelism? Whom do we want to reach? The Pastor then reviewed a pamphlet called The Next Faithful Steps, A Guide for Reflection and Action After General Conference 2024. He also discussed an enclosed outline for a Fall Study about what's next for us. He suggested viewing a documentary entitled 1946 - The Mistranslation that Shifted a Culture, which suggest that a Greek word in the Bible was incorrectly translated to mean "homosexual." He suggested that the congregation should be polled to see if we want to pursue discussions about LGBTQ issues. He was asked what if the vote was 50-50. He responded that the discussion would bring out a lot of good ideas.
- **Dinner Presentation on General Conference** – Not discussed.
- **Children and Family Ministries** – Many people come to the Church because of our offerings for their children, e.g. baptisms, confirmation, and Sunday School. VBS was a success and helped kick start children's ministries. We are gathering staffing for Sunday School. We will offer free babysitting and a clean carpet in the Children's Room. Andrea Herrera's daughter will be involved. Kathy Wolf will be involved and was noted as being good with kids. Sunday School will take place during worship, not before. It was noted that the Church sign would need to be changed to reflect the new hours. The Pastor plans to offer children's messages whenever children attend worship.
- **Community Outreach – Offering Help in a Divided World** – On the Sunday before Election Day, November 3 at 8:00 PM, Michael plans to have a joint non-political session for people to talk about feelings and concerns about the upcoming election. The focus would be more on local elections than national ones. Prayers of gratitude and for a peaceful transition will be offered. Several religious leaders of various temples, churches, etc. will be invited. The police are being made aware of the effort.

Politicians will be invited but they will not be allowed to give speeches or politicize. The hope is that people will see that we are trying to bridge the gap.

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

- **Ministries Already In Place:**
 - **Patti's Closet** – This will be held September 21 at UMCD and on September 28 at ARC. Last month's session was great, with very little clothing remaining. It was announced that \$690.00 was donated in memory of Patti Cohen-Hecht and given to Patti's Closet. Patti's husband was told about this. Somebody asked if Patti's Closet could also distribute adult clothing. The response was that we currently swap donations with another organization that distributes clothing to adults. We give them any adult clothing that we receive and they give us any children's clothing that they receive.
 - **Mission and Outreach** – There are 2 or 3 projects in the community. There was talk of a "Methodist Day" with 2 or 3 people participating.
 - **UWF** – The next Book Club meeting will be held on September 22 at the Church.
 - **Church Visitation** – Val Stagen said she visited with Judy Vogt and Jan Elwell. Michael visited Betty Ziegler. (No specifics are given here to preserve privacy.)
 - **Targeted Outreach** – Lucinda is great at welcoming people to the Church and getting contact info from them so that the Pastor can follow up with them. Everybody is encouraged to greet new people, even if you're not sure if they are new. Val Stagen suggested inviting people you know to Church. Penny said she greeted some new people. Michael said that Sunday School will have a good mix of kids and he has hope that some of them will become confirmands. The New Life Church is happy to help with Confirmations.
 - **How to Find UMCD on Google** – The suggestion to leave favorable reviews was reiterated.
 - **Other Social Media, etc.** Tonya suggested that people could check in on Facebook. Bishop Rouse's sons have been putting pictures on Instagram. We should let others see what we are about. Shannon Cobb said her organization has wide distribution through many means and she can help us. Penny distributed a chart about publicity info. The Nextdoor app was discussed. It is good to include stories on the postings; they can help to get more people interested in our Church and its happenings.
- **Future Ministries:**
 - **Nominations and Development** – We need to determine what leaders need and what people can do. People may have gifts they are not aware of. Committee heads should document what they do and maybe recommend people. What do the various titles mean? The Methodist Discipleship book gives good descriptions.
 - **Suggestions from our Church Family** – People could present their committee's functions during worship – this was done in the past. Job shadowing was another suggestion. Penny suggested that having a job fair would help people to understand what is involved in the various roles.
- **Connectional/Cooperative Parish Opportunities:**
 - Jesse Lee Church in Ridgefield is having its annual clothing sale on October 18 and 19. There will be an Italian Dinner at St. James Church on Saturday, September 21. The cost last year was \$15.00.
- **Educational Opportunities: Suggestions to Meet People's Needs:**
 - **Good Enough Summer Study and Fall Book Study (Summer Reading)** – The Good Enough sessions are going very well.
 - **Lay Servant/Speaker Classes** – Last month we said that they should be put in the weekly newsletter. They are still going on.
 - **General Conference Presentation with Dinner** – This event was cancelled.
 - **Interfaith Unity Service** – (See Community Outreach – Offering Help in a Divided World) section above.
- **Worship:**
 - **Music and Worship** – A Music Director candidate is being interviewed tomorrow (9/16/24.)
 - **Altar Guild** – No Report given.

Part Two: Administrative and Supportive Responsibilities of the Church:

- **Accepting or Amending of Minutes From Last Meeting** - The draft July 2024 minutes were presented before the meeting. Marti made a motion to accept them as written and Loren <I think> seconded. Passed unanimously.

Marti will ask Andrea to post the updated minutes on the Church Council bulletin board and include a link to them in the weekly newsletter. Michael said he would put a link to current, and, going forward, previous minutes, on our website. This link will not be available to the general public.

- **Fundraising/Fellowship Events –**
 - **Publicity For our Events** - Penny distributed a chart about publicity info, listing types and who is responsible for each type.
 - **Lunch Gatherings** - Val Stagen will organize lunches at area restaurants, for a fixed price, with a maximum of 20 people attending. The lunches would be held on Wednesdays. The first one was held at Whitlock's in Bethel and was well received and successful.
 - **Church Kitchen Cleanup** – The first sessions have gone well and all the participants were thanked in the agenda and at the meeting. Kitchen is looking great!
 - **Pumpkin Festival – October 5:**
 - **Silent Auction (Tonya Clark)** – An email will be coming out further describing this event. Several baskets that people are making or planning were described.
 - **Crafts – New Fairfield Senior Center** – Sue Teer has been in contact with them. They have several ideas.
 - **Rib Rally – October 17, Gold Buying – 10/11 – 10/13, and Christmas Tea – December 7.** – These events are all coming up. Not much discussion due to time constraints.
- **Committee Reports – Financial Stewardship:**
 - **Stewardship** – As said above “Michael and Myra have been discussing this. We have been busy with VBS, Peace Camp, and other things. Michael is wondering how to equip us to do God’s work outside of the Gospel.”
 - **Finance** - No report given.
 - **Treasurer**– Marti thanked Tonya for filling in while he was on vacation during the Summer.
 - **Financial Secretary** – No report given.
- **Committee Reports – Buildings And Property Stewardship:**
 - **Trustees** – It was mentioned that the bell tables need to be replaced.
 - **Contingency Planning** – Marti talked about the previously distributed “Resources” part 2 excerpt from the DRAFT Contingency Plan. It was approved unanimously by voice vote. Marti has asked Pastor Michael and Andrea to volunteer to handle a couple of Action Items. He is awaiting a response.
- **Committee Reports – SPR** – Loren said he and others will be interviewing a Music Director candidate tomorrow.
- **Other Announcements** – None.
- **Closing prayer** – Given by Council Chair Penny McKown.
- The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 PM.

The next meeting's date is TBD.

Respectfully submitted,



Marti Foster