

CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES Monday, February 7, 2011

The Regular Meeting of the Church Council, 1st Congregational Church of Deep River, was called to order a 7:40pm in the Upper Room by Moderator Bob Butkus.

Members in attendance: Val Nucci, Jack Coulter, Bob Butkus, Jane Moen, Dale Winchell, Sybil Higgins, Gerry Nolin, Emily Bjornberg, Heidi Lee, Laurie Eriksson, Fran Phinney, Fred Phinney, Bob Butkus - Moderator, Rev. Tim Haut, and Deb Van Wyngaarden-Clerk.

Rev. Timothy Haut opened with a prayer.

The minutes of the regular meeting of Monday, December 6, 2010, were unanimously approved as printed.

Collector's Report - As of January 31, 2011 \$26,804.00 has been turned over to the General Fund. Of that amount \$1,780 is advanced 2011 pledges received in 2010 and \$19,757.00 received in 2011 for a total of \$21,537.00 or 9% of amount budgeted for pledge goal. The total of Prayed For to date is \$3,505.00 or 10% of amount budgeted.

Treasurer's Report – The following report is as of January 31, 2011: Burroughs Savings Account (Repairs & Maintenance)-\$1777.35; Cemetery Fund-\$9909.27; Debit Card Account-\$668.27; Doris Pelton Memorial Fund-\$45.28; General Fund-\$37,982.70; Gifts & Bequests-\$50,704.24; Good Samaritan-\$6449.91; Grohs Investments Fund (for CD-3yr. term)-\$4000.00; Grohs Savings Fund (for various CE expenses)-\$3125.30; Haut Fund (Ministerial Scholarship Fund)-\$5736.79; Kitchen Fund (continuing kitchen expenses)-\$394.42; Macgregor Fund (outdoor ministry)-\$41.53; Memorial Fund-\$6561.53; Mission Fund-23,502.01; Phelps Savings CD-\$5802.64; Phelps Savings (Music) \$2169.74; Program Maintenance Savings-\$8661.89; Sabbatical Fund-\$6893.64; Samuel F. Snow Fund-\$1012.15; Stephen Ministry Fund-\$2638.52; Supplemental Health Insurance (6 month CD)-\$22,878.58; and Youth Music Fund-\$32.25.

Cemetery – Val had no report.

Christian Education – Laurie said they held a meeting on Jan. 10th. She reported they selected positions within CE. On Jan. 23rd they held a teacher forum; they discussed low attendance at church service, which is affecting Sunday School attendance. One of the ideas brought forth was "invite a friend" to church in March. Keri Petrovic is spearheading DRCC to become a level 1 green church per UCC guidelines (there are 3 levels). She was initially the church member who first initiated changes on going green in Sunday School. Green ideas will be announced the Sunday before Ash Wednesday about how all of us can be "greener", at home and at church. Earth day is Good Friday and to celebrate on Palm Sunday children in our Sunday School will be making origami lilies to form a cross. A copy of the "Internet Safety Guidelines", Safe Church Policy Supplement, 2/7/2011 was distributed.

The guidelines will be available on-line and in the church office for church members to review prior to implementation. Val noted that it's a good idea for members to have two profiles especially regarding Facebook - a personal and a professional one.

A vote on implementation of the "Internet Safety Guidelines", Safe Church Policy Supplement, 2/7/2011 will take place at the March Church Council meeting. Once the guidelines are passed, there will be information about the policy in the Messenger.

Christian Service – Gerry said the recent bake sale held outside Adams brought in \$3000 for the Chiappa family (Ben's Light Fund). They hosted coffee hour yesterday and had a sign-up sheet for those interested in being notified of upcoming CS events. Collection of Baby Care Kits will start soon. The skating fundraiser (to raise funds for CS projects-approved at previous CC meeting) might be held in the beginning of March; the date tbd.

Church Delegates – There was no representative or report.

Council Members at Large – Jane no report.

Deaconry – Heidi said they met after the All Boards Meeting in January and members were assigned duties. She mentioned that the Pulpit Bible has been repaired. There will be training for new Board members on Communion, etc. The Deacons are preparing for Lent and Easter. It was noted by Heidi that it is practice that if a scheduled Deacon is unable to attend service, former Deacons will be asked to assist prior to other lay members of the church.

Historical Committee – There was no representative or report.

Senior Minister – Tim said he held one baptism and two funerals in January. Two services in January were officiated by Rev. Ed Falsey and Cheryl (seminary student) and Cheryl will prepare another service in February. There will be Lay Reader workshop held on February 26th at 10am in the sanctuary for those interested in helping with readings. Valentine's Breakfast is Sunday morning, February 13th. Tim gave a special thank you to Jack Coulter for making sure the snow on the roof and parking lots were cleared during our recent heavy snow storms. Tim reiterated that the Trustees and other volunteers are so wonderful and that we depend on the good faith of volunteers like Jack. Phyllis Haut will again be visiting Haiti the last week in February. He is working on Lent and Easter activities. Tim was excited to report that DRCC already has another seminary student interested for next year; we have become known as a teaching church. He will meet with her and will give his recommendation at a future CC meeting.

Director of Christian Education – Sybil said the Harvest Dinner raised \$738.25 for the Youth Mission Fund, Collections for UNICIF was \$284.23, the hat and mitten collection netted 35 pair of mittens-four hat & mitten combinations and 39 hats, which were donated to Tri-Town Youth Services. The 6th/7th Graders assembled 35 gift baskets for Kirtland commons and also made one large gingerbread house for their meeting area. Vacation Bible school will be held July 11-15 this year. Again, children from the UCC Church of Chester have been invited (this is a continuing partnership of over 10 years). The Teen Issues Souper Bowl collection on Super Bowl Sunday is being tallied and monies go directly to the Deep River Pantry. Sybil will let us know final collection count at next month's CC meeting. The 6th/7th graders are collecting items for health kits for the Eddy Shelter. This group of kids have formed a partnership with CS and the Eddy Shelter and it's great to see Boards working on joint projects together. Hygiene Kits along with School Kits for CWS UCC are being assembled in April. Since we have been collecting items throughout the year, any items we are low on will be collected from Feb. 6th-March 6th. Scout Sunday is Feb. 13th and Eagle scouts and highest ranking Girl Scouts will be recognized in the Bulletin. Current scouts are asked to wear their uniforms and there will be a special presentation. The Butterfly Project to honor children of the Holocaust will begin in May. Prior to the project, a Children's Sermon is being prepared. The 4th graders will start their communion classes on March 13th. Vanna has retired this year and has been replaced with "Are You Smarter Than A 6th/7th Grader" during our Lenten Suppers.

Director of Youth and Family Ministry – Emily shared an e-mail received from Sybil from a member of the church regarding the efforts of the Board of Christian Service at the Eddy Shelter. The church member has a family member who has been housed at the shelter. So much love and care goes into preparing our meals, that when DRCC is scheduled to bring up a meal, word spreads like wildfire! The Church member feels that even though her brother is not a religious man, the kindness shown by DRCC in this important mission, inspired her brother to attend Christmas Eve Service with her family. Emily reiterated thanks to the BofCS on supporting this mission.

Emily reported for the Youth Groups: Jr. PF went to the Eddy Shelter, Joy Fellowship had a movie night with pizza, and Jr. & Sr. PF attended a program in Middletown on the homeless in CT. After the program, the participants (we were the largest contingent!) came back to DRCC to sleep outside, overnight in boxes. This was the 2nd year DRCC participated in this homeless in CT awareness project and for the first time, UCC of Chester and Essex along with St. Joseph's stayed with us outside. Thanks to the BofCS for our great hot breakfast in the morning. Mike Peluso gave the sermon on Laity Sunday and did a wonderful job. The Medieval Dinner is on February 13th and the Midnight Run is on the 26th of February.

Emily asked for Mission Trip Leaders to give updates on their trips: Jane Moen spoke on behalf of the El Salvador trip. Thirteen people will be heading out on their trip on July 2nd. They have been doing team meetings with teens providing presentations on topics to prepare for the trip including the culture, need, civil war, etc. Emily will be presenting on preparing spiritually for the trip at an upcoming meeting. The toy

collection will be in May and will allow the congregation to support the trip with small toys and medical supplies. The team has supported our Church and the Youth Mission Fund by working at the Harvest Dinner and Christmas Faire. They will also be working at the May Craft Fair and the upcoming Medieval Dinner. The entire team has also been meeting separately to prepare an act for the medieval dinner. Parents will be driving the group to and from the airport to cut costs. Individual costs are \$1740 which will be paid for by participants. They have received \$1800 in scholarship from Project Fiat, the sponsoring organization of the trip, and private donors. They will be asking \$1300 from the church (a mission fund request form has been completed) These funds will cover t-shirts, tourist visas while in ES, and baggage fees for donations. Deb asked what the back-up plan was if the mission fund request was not approved and Jane reported that the chaperones and participants would have to pay the extra costs and that we would consider a native El Salvador beaded bracelet fundraising project.

Sybil Higgins reported for the NOLA trip which is from July 16-23. Amanda Higgins and Marjorie Russell are trip leaders. There are 42 attending - 33 youth and 9 adults. The plane tickets and vans have been secured and confirmed. Celebrity letters going out shortly and the group will have a "take a chance" table at the Medieval dinner. The groups next meeting is on February 13th. They will be seeing the documentary, "When the Levees Broke", a highly emotional film about what had and is happening in NOLA. An updated calendar on meetings and events was distributed to participants. All information regarding the NOLA trip is updated and posted on the DRCC website. We are excited about our new "stock" program and hope this is a fundraiser that is so successful that it can be used for future Church-Sponsored Youth Mission Trips. Fran asked what the back-up plans are in the works should mission fundraisers not raise needed funds. There is an anonymous donor who will cover a shortfall.

Motion: To accept the following fundraisers for NOLA presented by Deb: February through trip-can collections in local businesses, Take Stock Program, Celebrity letters; Feb. 13th-Take A Chance (previously approved by Rev. Haut); March 7th-Yankee Candle Sales; April 2nd and 16th-Decorate a Drywall Screw at local hardware stores; May 7th-Participation in Craft Fair; May 14th (rain date May 21st)-Car Wash at Town Hall; and June 2nd-Jazz Concert at Town Hall. Motion was made by Rev. Haut and seconded by Gerry, which passed by unanimous vote.

Nominating – Fran said that there are still openings on Stewardship and Christian Education. She received word that Lynn Butkus is stepping down as chairperson of the Rummage Sale during the Flea Market. Anyone interested should contact a member of Nominating.

Stewardship – Dale gave a pledge commitment update for 2011. As of January 16, 2011, \$185,711 has been pledged. The budgeted pledge-line for 2011 is \$229,358. The committee followed up with letters and personal calls to those who pledged in 2010 and not 2011. We received approximately 16 additional pledges from those efforts. Deb noted that there is a consistent Prayed For group which will not "cross-over" to a pledge/commitment; this amount is approximately \$12,000. We recently had a meeting and are compiling a questionnaire for church members regarding stewardship and the church in general. We hope the feedback will give us a pulse of the church. Tim noted that he feels that Stewardship efforts have been exhausted for the 2011 budget and that the committee should be given the go ahead to move forward with their video and questionnaire ideas. The committee was thanked for their efforts during the hard economic time.

Trustees – Jack noted that it has been a difficult year for snow plowing – the budget is \$3,000 and the January bill came in at \$3300. The 2010 budget came in at a \$8500 shortfall which was better than expected. The Trustees discussed the possibility of having special collections. There have been furnace issues and they are reviewing their options. They are also revisiting lower fellowship hall bathroom renovations. An on-going fundraiser in conjunction with the Ivory Restaurant in Deep River was brought forth. Council liked the idea, however there are several questions Council would like Trustees to address prior to giving any approval. Jack will discuss with the restaurant owner concerns.

Kitchen Committee: Fred said that the committee will be meeting on Wednesday to discuss rules and regulations that need to be followed in the kitchen. He also reminded members about the Corned Beef and Cabbage fundraiser being held on March 13th to raise funds for kitchen items.

Women's Fellowship – No representative or report.

Faire/Flea/Rummage/Craft Fair – No representative or report. Sybil spoke for Claudia to remind everyone that the Craft Fair is May 7th.

Pastoral Relations – Heidi said that the Seminary Support Committee met with Tim and Cheryl and are in the process of completing a mid-term evaluation.

Personnel – No representative or report.

Outdoor Ministry – No representative or report.

Old Business – None.

New Business –

Deb voiced her concern that too many fundraisers, in particular dinners, are happening at the same time. Though members can pick and choose what they want to support, she feels that there should be limits. This has been discussed at previous Council meetings as well as the need to maintain a calendar of church-sponsored fundraisers and collections. Concern was expressed about direct solicitation at Sunday Fellowship Hour. There are several members going through hardships and it was suggested that there may possibly be dinner fundraisers to support the Good Samaritan Fund. The outcome of the discussion resulted in the suggestion that an AdHoc Committee be formed.

Motion: To form an AdHoc Committee to develop policy on fundraising, including coordination of mission fundraisers and how to manage fundraisers not directly related to church-sponsored missions. The Ad Hoc Committee on Fundraising is to be comprised of a representative from Trustees, Deacons, Christian Service, Christian Education and two other members from the Congregation. Val made the motion, Jane seconded, which passed by unanimous vote. Jane, Sybil (Christian Ed) and Heidi (Deacon) volunteered to be on the committee. Emily will coordinate the committee and will generate an e-mail with meeting time and location. Jack will report back to Trustees to find a Trustee to serve on this committee. The committee is to begin its task by May and present its report to Council at the September meeting, at which time Council will decide upon the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee on Fundraising.

Motion: To allow ticket sales in Fellowship hall for the Ben's Light Fundraiser to be held on March 20th at St. Joseph's Parrish in Chester starting February 28th for 3 weeks. Fran made motion, Gerry seconded, which passed by unanimous vote.

Rev. Timothy Haut gave the closing prayer.

The meeting adjourned at 10:00pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

Deb van Wyngaarden

Church Clerk

Future Meetings:

Monday, March 7, 2011 - Regular Church Council Meeting

Monday, March 14, 2011 - Annual Meeting

Future Agenda Items:

March: DRCC as an open and affirming Church

“Internet Safety Guidelines”, Safe Church Policy Supplement, 2/7/2011

Ivory Restaurant Fundraiser