

**CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES
Monday, March 7, 2011**

The Regular Meeting of the Church Council, 1st Congregational Church of Deep River, was called to order a 7:33pm in the Upper Room by Moderator Bob Butkus.

Members in attendance: Nancy Peluso, Heidi Lee, Emily Bjornberg, Pam Visel, Fred Phinney, Fran Phinney, Amanda Higgins, Laurie Eriksson, Sybil Higgins, Val Nucci, Gerry Nolin, Jane Syme, Bob Butkus, and Deb Van Wyngaarden-Clerk.

Emily Bjornberg opened with a prayer.

The minutes of the regular meeting of Monday, February 7, 2011 were unanimously approved as printed. Deb V. received an e-mail from a church member regarding fundraising motion. Deb V. made a motion to discuss e-mail in Old Business as a motion cannot be changed once printed. Seconded by Val Nucci, which passed by unanimous vote.

Collector's Report - As of February 28, 2011 \$49,826.00 has been turned over to the General Fund. Of that amount \$1780 is advanced 2011 pledges received in 2010 and \$39,554.88 received in 2011 for a total of \$41,334.88 or 18% of amount budgeted for pledge goal. The total of Prayed For to date is \$6312.00 or 18% of amount budgeted.

Treasurer's Report – The following report is as of February 28, 2011: Burroughs Savings Account (Repairs & Maintenance)-\$4182.90; Cemetery Fund-\$9912.40; Debit Card Account-\$207.72; Doris Pelton Memorial Fund-\$45.29; General Fund-\$57,167.34; Gifts & Bequests-\$50,720.23; Good Samaritan-\$6872.94; Grohs Investments Fund (for CD-3yr. term)-\$4000.00; Grohs Savings Fund (for various CE expenses)-\$3126.29; Haut Fund (Ministerial Scholarship Fund)-\$5738.60; Kitchen Fund (continuing kitchen expenses)-\$394.54; Macgregor Fund (outdoor ministry)-\$41.54; Memorial Fund-\$6628.60; Mission Fund-\$23,393.91; Phelps Savings CD-\$5802.64; Phelps Savings (Music) \$1921.47; Program Maintenance Savings-\$8664.62; Sabbatical Fund-\$6895.81; Samuel F. Snow Fund-\$1012.15; Stephen Ministry Fund-\$2639.35; Supplemental Health Insurance (6 month CD)-\$22,878.58; and Youth Music Fund-\$832.51.

Cemetery – Val N. reported no activity.

Christian Education – Laurie E. said that the 4th/5th Sunday School class is attempting to get DRCC recognized as a Green Congregation (there are 3 levels). An "Action Steps to Become Recognized as a Green Congregation" (www.ctucc.org/greenchurch) was distributed. There were several examples given by Sybil H. on what has been accomplished at DRCC thus far. Sunday School will be including "Monthly Tips" in the Messenger how the church is going green as well as what congregation members can do at home. The Application to Volunteer was updated. Interest items changed/added: Deleted Joy Fellowship, Jr. & Sr. P.F. and made one category-Youth Groups; deleted Jr. Choir & Jr. Bell Choir and made one category-Youth Music Programs; and added Youth Programs, Mission Trip Leaders, Chaperone, Youth Special Events categories. A check box was also added: Are you employed by DRCC? Lastly, a bullet point was added that states the signee of said document reviewed and understands the Digital Covenant.

Motion: Gerry N. made a motion that Council endorse the Sunday School's proposal of DRCC trying to reach level 1 in the green congregation initiative. Val N. seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

Motion: Heidi L. made a motion to accept the "Internet Safety Guidelines, A Safe Church Policy Supplement" dated February 7, 2011 as written into church policy. Gerry N. seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

Christian Service – Gerry N. stated that they are starting the collection for baby care kits. They will be working with the Jr. PF in assembling kits; they will be meeting together on March 21 to take inventory and start assembling kits. On April 11, any remaining kits will be assembled. The skating fundraiser has been postponed indefinitely. Gerry spoke to the Board regarding ideas mentioned at February Council meeting regarding fundraising. The Board discussed a neighbor in need (not to be confused with UCC's N-I-N which is world-wide) idea in which once a month a DRCC church family is sponsored. The family would be anonymous and at the suggestion of Rev. Haut. Idea will be brought forth to the Ad-Hoc Fundraising Committee.

Church Delegates – No representative or report.

Council Members at Large – No representative or report.

Deaconry – Heidi L. said they are gearing up for the Lenten and Easter season including Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services. The 1st Lenten supper is March 16th. Nancy P. and Peter Smith will be the guest speakers at the Youth Communion class. Grace K. will coordinate Palm Sunday breakfast; Rev. Haut is working on obtaining a speaker. An order form for Easter Flowers has been placed in April's Messenger and will also be included in the Weekly Bulletin. Arlene Macmillan, who coordinates the ushering schedule, asked the Deacons if it would be acceptable to have 2 ushers per week instead of 4, except on days of heavy attendance such as Easter and Christmas. She is having difficulty recruiting enough volunteers to fill the schedule. These two ushers would then ask volunteers from the congregation to help with the offering collection. At Rev. Haut's request, the Deacons and Trustees will be compiling a wish list of items needed by the church, which could be referred to when Memorial Gifts are offered. The idea of a Technology Committee has been proposed. Heidi will contact Luther Moen to see if he would be willing to train and supervise a group of volunteers who would be in charge of the sound system, and possibly other tech issues as the need arises. Deaconry came up with an idea to purchase much needed new Bibles and Hymnals with a zero impact on the budget. Members were invited to make a monetary donation for the items and in return a book plate would be placed in the Bible or Hymnal acknowledging the gift.

Historical Committee – No representative or report.

Senior Minister – Emily B. reported for Rev. Haut - Happy Birthday Rev. Haut! The Elm City Girl's Choir did a fantastic job. In the month for February, he had three (3) funerals, one (1) baptism, and did not officiate at any weddings. Rev. Haut thanked everyone for their prayers for a safe return for Phyllis Haut for her volunteer trip to Haiti. He is prepping for Lent, Ash Wednesday Services, and encourages the congregation to attend DRCC's Lenten Suppers and be challenged by our Sunday School in "Are You Smarter Than a 6/7th Grader". The Women's Breakfast was wonderful as usual and congratulates Gina Sopenski and Emily Bjornberg, as Women of the Year. Rev. Haut asked in Sunday's church service to send him pictures of where you see God in your lives during the Lenten Season. Rev. Haut received an official letter from Allison Glass, seminary student from Andover-Newton, requesting that she be placed in DRCC. She is a member of the Killingworth UCC church. The Lay Reader orientation went well and was well attended.

Director of Christian Education – Sybil said that \$386 was collected at the Souper Bowl collection and all proceeds go to the Deep River Food Pantry. The 6th/7th graders are assembling the hygiene and school supply kits for CWS. The 6th/7th graders are well on their way of reaching 100 hours of community service (there is no curriculum) as they are at their ½ way mark. (Volunteering can take place inside or outside church). The kids are gearing up and ready to challenge church members in "Are You Smarter than a 6/7th Grader" during Lenten Suppers. Sybil asked members refrain from using "4th grade" when referring to the Communion Class as there are older kids in the classes. When referring to communion classes please use "Youth Communion Classes". New this year, the Communion class will be preparing the bread for the Maundy Thursday service, with the assistance of the Hostetlers. The 6/7 grade class again volunteered and went up to the Eddy Shelter. Along with the dinner and dessert they prepared, they also brought up 29 care kits. The 8th Grade is preparing to launch the Heifer program for April. Scout Sunday went nicely, the Confirmation Class sleepover is April 8-9, and Sybil will be assisting six (6) Boy Scouts in obtaining their Religious Award.

Vacation Bible School – Amanda reported that VBS was advertised at the Chester Carnival with a tractor pulling our Veggie Tails.

MOTION: Deb V. made a motion to allow VBS to offer bagged lunches for sale after Children's Sunday to support VBS on June 19, 2011. It was seconded by Val N., which passed by unanimous vote.

Director of Youth and Family Ministry – Emily B. appreciated all the help during the Medieval dinner, from Dorothy DeMichael and her crew in the kitchen to the teens and their parents to the Silent Monks and the ingenious acts throughout the evening. NOLA Take a Chance made more money than budgeted (see NOLA report below). The Midnight Run was held on 2/26/2011 and there were 42 participants in seven (7) vehicles. Everyone who attended felt it a meaningful mission. On March 21st the Jr. PF will work with the BofCS to put layettes together. On March 13th Joy Fellowship will be going to Chesterfields Nursing Home and on April 10th they are going to the Ray of Hope Farm. Individual and group mission trip scholarships were disbursed. Emily will be attending the Sunday El Salvador trip meeting to discuss with participants how to prepare for the journey spiritually.

El Salvador – Pam V. said they worked on their Silent Monks performance for the Medieval dinner, thanked the church for the \$1300 group scholarship, Emily B. will be attending their next meeting (see Dir of Y&R above), the group will be working at the Craft Fair, and a \$500 payment is due.

NOLA - Amanda H. said they made \$494 on the Take a Chance table at the Medieval dinner, thanks the scholarship committee for the \$1300 group sponsorship, 300 celebrity letters went out requesting donations, local business letters will be going out this month, the Take Stock in our Youth program is well underway and there have been several teens asking for more stocks, the Yankee Candle fundraiser will soon start (no table in Fellowship Hall, however individual teens may approach church members they know) and a parent/teen team will be attending a meeting at Tri-Town Youth Services to get information for applying for a mini-grant.

Nominating – Fran P. read a resignation letter from Amy Winchell into record.

MOTION: Fran P. made a motion to accept the resignation from Amy Winchell from the Church Street Child Care Board with regret. It was seconded by Gerry N., which passed by unanimous vote.

Stewardship – Deb said that as of 2/27/2011 there are 175 pledging units for a total of \$189,499.00. They are working on their 10 question questionnaire regarding stewardship and the church overall; are working on a video regarding what DRCC means to our members; will attend a Teen Issues class to remind teens of their pledge commitment; are working on adding a stewardship brochure into the New Member packet; and are working on the 2012 campaign. They are building on the Building God's Family campaign of 2011 with "able" being added as a component. It is in conjunction with the sustain"able" green church initiative the Sunday School program is working on.

Trustees – Jane Syme reported for the Trustees. Jane noted that snowplowing is \$1000 over budget; they are aware of the wish list the Deacons are preparing; the Trustees are having specs done in regards to the lower fellowship bathrooms, with plans to convert to one (1) unisex bathroom; and they will be sprucing up the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall with some painting. Jayne Mather will represent the Trustees on the AdHoc Fundraising committee. They are following up with the Ivory Restaurant on their proposal regarding % of sales to the church with coupon. CSCC raised \$1115 from their Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser (proceeds go towards their field trip fund).

Kitchen Committee – Fred P. said the selling of the Corned Beef Dinner tickets (held on Sunday, March 13th) have been going well. Dinner will be served at 12:00pm. Sybil H. noted that the Kitchen Guidelines are now on-line and a copy has been laminated and posted in the kitchen.

Women's Fellowship – Nancy P. and Sybil H. said the group needs new leadership.

Faire/Flea/Rummage – No representatives or reports.

Pastoral Relations – Heidi L. said they will be meeting with Cheryl Anderson this coming Wednesday.

Personnel – Nancy P. noted that they will begin speaking with staff in May.

Outdoor Ministry – No representative or report.

Old Business –

Deb V. first wanted to make it clear that she in no way "adds" items to motions, minutes, etc. which she does not hear. She sends minutes out to Fran P. and Val N. prior to sending them out to Church Council to help clarify items. She also e-mails members when she needs clarification of what they had said.

Deb V. received and read an e-mail from a church member regarding concerns regarding the Ad Hoc Fundraising Committee motion and members on the committee.

Church Council reviewed the motion as printed: 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 Moen, 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.

Council Members felt the motion was accurate. Tim did not need to be on the committee as he is honorary member of all boards and committees of DRCC. He will be notified of all scheduled meetings and included in e-mails. Gerry N. felt it important to have staff members on committees to give their input. The motion and discussion stands as written. Fran P. asked that full names be included.

Motion: Deb V. made an amendment to the original Ad Hoc Fundraising Committee motion to include the Director of Youth and Family Ministries on the Ad Hoc Fundraising Committee. It was seconded by Gerry N., which passed by unanimous vote.

Jayne Mather will represent the Trustees (mentioned in Trustees report). Fran P. asked to be a Member of the Congregation on the committee.

Members of the Ad Hoc Fundraising Committee are: Jane Moen, Fran Phinney (both as Members of the Congregation), Emily Bjornberg -Y&F, Sybil Higgins-CEd, Gerry Nolin-CS (-unless another member of the Board steps forward), Jayne Mather (Trustees), and Heidi Lee (Deacons).

Deb V. will e-mail Council the on-line article about Essex Congregational Church as an Open and Affirming Church as published in the Valley Courier. Open and Affirming will be discussed at a future Church Council meeting, likely after Easter.

New Business –

Pam Visel noted that Thula Sizwe will be in Connecticut from October 31 through Nov. 6, 2011 and they asked if DRCC could provide host families from the church. There is currently no performance planned at DRCC.

The Deep River Food Pantry is in need of shelving.

Emily B. gave the closing prayer.

The meeting adjourned at 8:38pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

Deb van Wyngaarden

Church Clerk