

## CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES

September 12, 2011

The Regular Meeting of the Church Council, 1<sup>st</sup> Congregational Church of Deep River, was called to order at 7:35p.m. in the Upper Room by Moderator Bob Butkus.

Members in Attendance: Rev. Timothy Haut, Heidi Lee, Emily Bjornberg, Gerry Nolin, Laurie Eriksson, Jon Hardy, Pam Visel, Jane Moen, Sybil Higgins, Bob Butkus, and Deb Van Wynaarden-Clerk.

Rev. Haut opened with a pray.

A motion was made by Sybil Higgins to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting of Monday, June 6, 2011 as written. It was seconded by Heidi Lee, which passed by unanimous vote. A member asked that comments made be stricken regarding the Fundraising Committee's report. Rev. Haut and Moderator Butkus noted that comments cannot be deleted from minutes, only inaccurate information.

**Collector's Report** – As of August 31, 2011 \$148,092.23 has been turned over to the General Fund. Of that amount \$1,780.00 is advanced 2011 pledges received in 2010 and \$123,200.47 received in 2011 for a total of \$124,990.47 or 55% of amount budgeted for pledge goal. The total of Prayed For to date is \$20,243.00 or 57% of amount budgeted.

**Treasurer's Report** – The following report is as of August 31, 2011: Burroughs Savings Accounts (Repairs and Maintenance)-\$4790.41; Cemetery Fund-\$9855.60; Debit Card Account-\$1122.52; Doris Pelton Memorial Organ Fund-\$45.33; General Fund-\$25,494.70; Gifts & Bequests-\$49,609.71; Good Samaritan-\$7051.80; Grohs Investments Fund for CE-\$4000.00; Grohs Savings Fund for CE-\$2971.59; Haut Fund (Ministerial Scholarship Fund)-\$5744.39; Kitchen Fund-\$1219.33; Macgregor Fund (Outdoor Ministry)-\$4122.84; Memorial Fund-\$16,751.28; Mission Fund-\$16,751.28; Phelps Savings CD-\$5802.64; Phelps Savings (Music)-\$1923.41; Program Maintenance Savings-\$9053.52; Sabbatical Fund-\$6277.78; Samuel F. Snow Fund-\$11012.39; Stephen Ministry Fund-\$2642.02; Supplemental health Insurance(6-month CD)-\$21,619.68; and Youth Music Fund-\$833.35.

**Note from Treasurer:** Balance of General Fund on 01/01/2011 was \$36,244.57 which indicates we have had to tap into prior year surplus. Shortfall in General Fund budget as of 08/31/2011 is \$7865.21.

**Cemetery** –Jon Hardy said there was one ( 1) interment in August (Joyce Strempel).

**Christian Education** – Laurie Eriksson said the Board met in May and focused on the September Mission Fair and teacher training/Sunday School sign-ups which were held in August. The Board thanked everyone for their participation in the Mission Fair and noted that it was a great day and the 12<sup>th</sup> consecutive Mission Fair with no rain!

**Christian Service** – Gerry Nolin said the Board was in charge of the Cake walk at the Mission Fair. The group continues to support the Eddy Shelter. Dorothy DeMichael is in the process of redecorating a room at the Eddy Shelter; they will also do more collections in the future. Gerry said the Board will provide help as needed for the Thula Sizwe group in November. They will be working with the Deep River Rotary in collecting cereal and peanut butter and jelly for a food drive to benefit theDR food pantry. The Board will be selling blanket cards again in November and will sponsor the "giving tree" in December. Mount Saint Johns is again willing to assist the church as needed during the holiday season.

**Church Delegates** – Norepresentative or report.

**CMAT**– Jane Moen would like to look into the possibility of the church sponsoring a “thrift shop”. Though she believes a location in the church would be ideal, she knows the space constraints and would like to look at rentals. Council indicated that she research the idea further and report back at a future meeting.

**Deaconry**– Heidi Lee noted that while everyone missed Rev. Haut during his Sabbatical, the church was blessed with wonderful guest preachers. She also thanked Emily Bjornberg for her assistance during the summer. Though Allyson Glass (seminar student) was “hurricaned” out as a guest preacher, the congregation will be happy to hear that she has been rescheduled to preach on Oct 9<sup>th</sup>. Upcoming events include: World Communion on Oct. 9<sup>th</sup>, Homecoming on Oct. 23<sup>rd</sup>, baptisms on September 25<sup>th</sup> and Oct. 16<sup>th</sup>. The Service at the River will be held on Sept. 18<sup>th</sup>. Heidi will be away for several Sunday’s so Grace Krick will be contact person in her absence. Heidi also indicated that the Deaconry was in charge of the bake sale for the Mission Fair.

**Historical Committee – No representative or report.**

**Senior Minister** – Rev. Haut thanked the Deacons, Emily Bjornberg, and members of the church for filling in this summer during his sabbatical. Rev. Haut would like future discussions about having the church as a possible disaster center in light of the recent tropical storm. He felt the church had a great opening Sunday and there were many new people visiting our church on a very exciting day. Rev. Tim said that the confirmation class will have their first meeting on September 25<sup>th</sup>. Tim is excited to work with Allyson Glass this year and she is ready to get involved with the life of the church. The Blessing of Animals will be on Oct. 1<sup>st</sup> at 9:30am and other October events include a Healing Service and Walking Tour of Fountain Hill Cemetery. Rev. Haut wanted to mention and give an appreciation of thanks to Reverend Captain Jane Viera, US Naval Chaplain. She gave the sermon this past Sunday, 9/11/2011 - she was at the Pentagon on 9/11/2001.

**Director Christian Education** – Sybil Higgins said that Children’s Sunday this past June was again successful and she thanked the teachers and children for their hard work and great presentations of what they learned the past year. The yearly Vacation Bible School Block Party was also successful with funds supporting the free summer program. She will give a report on the Heifer Project proceeds in October as well as the Mission Fair. Over the summer 34 children attended VBS’s *Jonah’s Overboard Adventure*. The after-care program had 14 children and was a way for our teens to raise money for mission trips they were going on. Sybil is happy to report that the new VBS Director is Chelsea Chiappa. Amanda Higgins needed to “retire” as she is the process of obtaining her Pharmacist degree. Amanda wanted to give a huge thanks to all the guides and teachers of VBS and knows the program will continue to be strong with Chelsea at the helm. Sybil said she went on the NOLA mission trip and had a fantastic week. She also continues work with Boy Scoutson their religious award. This summer she did a lot of office cleaning and she is happy to report that all 20 teaching positions have been filled. There was a great turnout for the teacher training in August and advanced Sunday school registration night went well. The Board of CEd will be collecting registration forms the next two Sundays. The 1<sup>st</sup> day of Sunday school we had 146 children/teens of which several were new families. There were 48 kids in Teen Issues (9-12) but that number tapers off. CWS collections for school kits are still on-going and the Sunday school calendar was completed in June.

**Director of Youth & Family Ministry**–Emily Bjornberg thanked Heidi Lee and the Deacons for their help this summer as well as Kris Lindner and the Stephen’s Ministers. Several women of the church are trying to revitalize Women’s Fellowship (see report under that group).

The following are reports from Youth Groups:

Bess Ensinger is again heading up Joy Fellowship along with Liz Tracy and Heather Mudge. They are kicking off the group with a pizza party on Oct. 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Kelley Frazier and Allyson Glass will head up Jr. Pilgrim Fellowship. Senior Pilgrim Fellowship is relying on parent volunteers for specific events planned. Contacts for the group are Andrea Chiappa, Gina Sopneski, Pam Visel,

Danielle Thompson and Jane Moen. Both groups are participating in the nationally recognized “Day of Service” program held on October 15<sup>th</sup>.

Mission Trips – Emily mentioned that teens were given two possible summer 2012 mission trip ideas to Appalachia with the directive that they get back to her with their interest. More information about the trip and final budget will be presented once trip choice is decided. A future mission trip has been discussed with the program Simply Smiles, in which Emma Russell has participated in the last few years in South Dakota. The organization is possibly having a program in Bridgeport so this gives the church an opportunity to see the program in action without going very far. On Sunday, September 18<sup>th</sup> church service will be coordinated and given by participants of the three trips this summer; Dominican Republic, El Salvador, New Orleans.

The following are reports from mission trips taken in the summer:

El Salvador Trip – Jane Moen and Pam Visel gave the final report. Their budget balance is at \$0. There were 10 teens and 3 adults on the July 2<sup>nd</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> trip. Jane noted that Project Fiat has a very well-run program and blends mission work with history, culture, people, and food. They worked 7 days in various locations including an orphanage, small playground area, daycare building, and a villagers house just to name a few. Sign-ups were every day and one option was going with a nurse to visit villagers; Jane said this was an amazing opportunity. The participants of the trip will have a video and trip forum between church services on September 25<sup>th</sup> in the upper room and all are welcome. They are looking to go to El Salvador again and would like Council to discuss the option of a sponsorship.

NOLA – Deb Van Wyngaarden gave a “mission accomplished” check list of their trip to NOLA on behalf of Amanda Higgins and Marjorie Russell, Trip Leaders. She indicated that final expenses are not tallied as the Stock Holders meeting is on Friday, September 25<sup>th</sup> but the group raised a total of \$32,400 of which \$17,000 was participant fees and over \$15,300 raised with their fundraising efforts. She felt that fundraising for mission trips is essential as it gives an opportunity to offset costs for families that might not be able to afford a higher cost trip. Deb mentioned the trip to NOLA was a great experience for both teens and adults. A full report of the trip will be included in the annual report of the church.

Emily thanked all the leaders.

**Nominating**—Emily Bjornberg had nothing to report.

**Stewardship**—Deb Van Wyngaarden explained the challenges of the group. They will be meeting on Sunday, September 18<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> and October 4<sup>th</sup>. They have their 2012 campaign – Sustaining God’s Family, which is “building” on last year’s Building God’s Family campaign. Statements should be going out next week with a letter from Stewardship included.

**Trustees** – The Trustees could not attend as they were holding a special meeting. A Trustee will report at the next Council meeting.

**Women’s Fellowship** – Deb V.W. and Emily B. told about the movie night on Saturday, October 22nd. There will be an “invitation” in the October Messenger. The group will be watching “Soul Surfer” and discussing the possibility of holding a retreat in the spring.

**Annual Fundraising Events**—No representatives. Rev. Haut mentioned that the Flea market was extremely successful and the spaces were sold out. There was a discussion regarding Rummage Sale proceeds that were collected during the Flea Market. Emily B. was directed that since monies collected from the Flea Market is budgeted for the General Fund she needs to go through the Trustees.

**Pastoral Relations**—Heidi Lee had no report

**Personnel**— Jon Hardy said that they finished meeting with staff with the exception of the Senior Minister. After that meeting, Personnel will prepare a report for the October Council Meeting.

**Outdoor Ministry** – Tim said the Men’s Hike held the 2<sup>nd</sup> weekend in August had 14 participants and was a great time. They took out time to honor Jim Macgregor the long-time head of this program. He thanked Bill Krick who stepped up as organizer and did a great job.

**Old Business** – None.

**NEW BIZ**

Gerry Nolin talked about church families who may be in need of assistance but would like to remain anonymous. Rev. Haut and a small committee had planned to identify anyone in need and find the best way to help. Christian Service could ask for donations of furniture for example, or Rev Haut could direct the person to the town for the appropriate assistance. The town no longer has a visiting nurse who would coordinate these efforts. Someone on Christian Service is working with the town to try to coordinate their resources and she suggested that Rev. Haut's committee should include someone from the town who would be aware of what the town has to offer and could report to the town about various needs. Gerry also sees Christian Service involvement as a way to not only help keep things anonymous but to be aware if there are several families in need and have some kind of equal response.

Thula Sizwe will be using Deep River as a “home base” from Oct. 31<sup>st</sup> – Nov. 6<sup>th</sup> for their various concerts in the area. Pam Visel is looking for a few households to house the members of the group during this time period. You will be responsible for making sure your guests get to and from the church. **MOTION:** Pam Visel made a motion to allow the group to hold a free-will offering concert at the church on November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011 with the group joining DRCC’s November 6<sup>th</sup> service. It was seconded by Emily B, which passed by numinous vote. Pam thanked the Board of Christian Service who volunteered to organize the reception after the November 5<sup>th</sup> performance.

By-Laws –Deb V.W. noted that she, Bob Butkus, and Jayne Mather held their first meeting. Val Nucci was not able to attend. They reviewed page by page the current by-laws, which were last revised in 2004. They anticipate a review by Council in December and comments returned at the February Church Council meeting. It is hoped that the revisions can be made and posted so the document can be presented at the March Church Meeting for member approval. There is a lot of work to be done so the timeline may need to be adjusted.

Rev. Haut gave the closing prayer asking everyone to keep Francis and Fred Phinney in their thoughts and prayers.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Deb Van Wyngaarden  
Church Council Clerk