

First United Methodist Church of Tucker

Church Council

January 23, 2011

**Members present:** Don Andersen, Alan Banks, Lauren Ledford, Jane McCombs, Edgar Torbert, Bob Haley, Sarah Becker, Sam Frihart, Sam Weir, Charlie Burson, Jim Dillard, Gloria Jones, Shirley Pollard, Peggy Honein, Carolyn Matthews, Neil Duggan, Joe Ownbey, Jimmy Moor

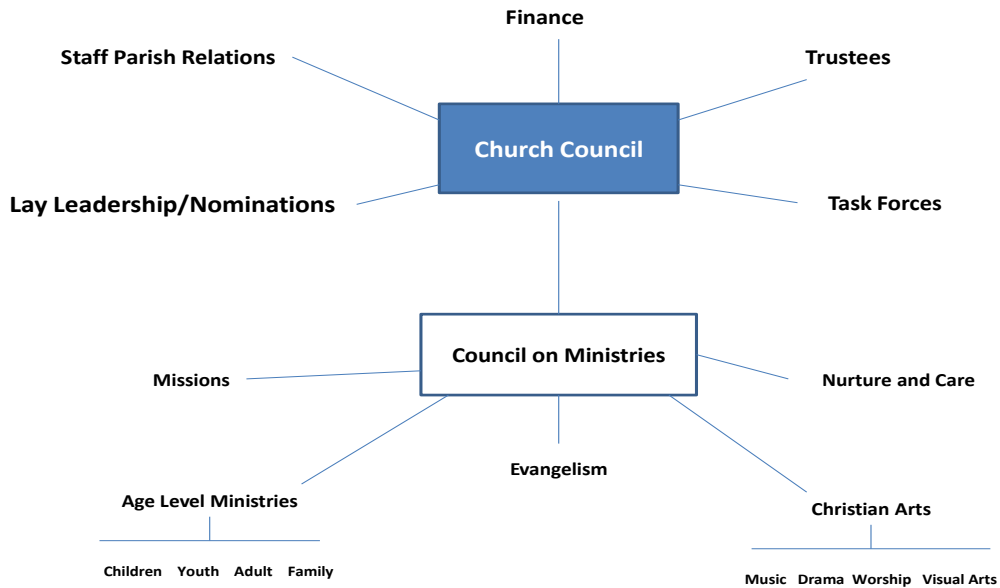
**Non-Members present:** Evelyn Burkett, Katherine Griffith, Leigh Andersen, Jean Gunter, Richard Robinson, Barbara Nipp

Meeting started at 6:30 with a sandwich dinner and introductions. Jimmy Moor read, starting from 1 Corinthians 12:4, about receiving gifts from God and being part of one body and challenged the attendees to consider what it says to us as a church.

Don Andersen distributed pages 6-7, 9-10 from Guidelines for Leading Your Congregation which outline the mission of the Church Council: "The church council exists to create and supervise the strategic plan for your local congregation so that the congregation fulfills its mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ. This twofold function includes both leadership and management." Don equated transformation with becoming fishers of men. This council establishes the vision for the church and sets overall direction, the first and last word. There is a specific Vision committee which is in progress for the year. This council provides the larger overview, leadership, for the specific committees. Don also distributed a list of the Council members and their contact information. There were a few updates: Don's email is [DAndersen@stites.com](mailto:DAndersen@stites.com) (missing the n after the A); Lauren Ledford's email is [ledford@earthlink.net](mailto:ledford@earthlink.net); Jane McCombs' email has no space between her first and last name, and Butch Nall recently accepted the role of the Trustees Chair. His email and phone will be provided later.

Jimmy Moor noted that the Church Conference can be attended by anyone in the congregation. Jimmy shared an organization chart he drafted which outlines the relationship of the Council to other church committees (below).

The Finance committee develops the budget, raises funds, and manages funds. The Trustees are responsible for property management. Task Forces are appointed as needed. Lay Leadership handles elections and nominations and training for leaders. The Council on Ministries (COM) is the programming arm of the church to which the other committees report. In other congregations, the COM doesn't exist and is part of the Church Council. We have no overall Christian Education group; issues get addressed at the Age Level education groups. There is no Social Concerns area or an Historian. Even Stewardship may be identified separately in some congregations. This structure may be changed by the Church Council, although no changes were recommended at this time. Don Andersen recommended that At-Large members may want to consider aligning with a particular committee in an ad hoc liaison role to represent their interests at this meeting.



Don reminded the Council of the importance of the laity. We are responsible for church growth; it is not solely the responsibility of the minister. Our job is to be good stewards. Don also distributed some thoughts from Bishop Rueben Job's "Three Simple Rules: A Wesleyan Way of Living" about how the Council members should behave as church leaders – do no harm, do good, and stay in a loving relationship with God. Communication is a constant theme in these thoughts. He shared some steps in proactive communication. Bob Haley mentioned that doing a better job of communication was a topic at the October COM meeting, putting committee reports on the web site. Don asked that the Council review the three rules and offered them for consideration as a covenant of what is expected of the Council as lay leaders.

Evelyn Burkett distributed "A Quick Reference Guide to TFUMC Communications" document which outlines how groups can leverage the Communications committee – deadlines for various communication modes and what specific information is necessary. Their purpose is to help other groups.

There was a brief remark about the agenda item Current Reality and Vision. There are many existing good programs that are not thought about daily. The Vision should build on them. Since there is no representative from the Vision committee and to keep the meeting moving, this topic was addressed no further.

**Business**

Jimmy brought a motion from the committee on Lay Leaders recommending John Lukens to fill a resignation on the committee that occurred late last year. John would serve for one year. The motion was seconded and carried.

**Committee Reports**

**COM** – Bob Haley reported that the committee will first meet in February and had nothing to report today.

**SPR** – Jim Dillard noted that this committee also had a January furlough and would convene in February.

**Trustees** – there was no representative; however, there was a question about the status of the parsonage. Jimmy reported that there was an offer on the property which was expected to close on Thursday, January 27, 2011. The minutes of the May Church Conference authorizing the sale of the property had not been located, although the ballots

were present. The minutes were reconstructed with the authorization of District Superintendent Jim Cantrell. The recreated minutes were provided to the attorneys at the closing. The sale price is \$212K, and after paying closing costs, the church expects to net \$207K.

Butch Nall, Chairperson for Trustees, provided the following report after the meeting to be incorporated into the minutes:

Responding to a directive from a Charge Conference on May 16, 2010, the trustees have sold the Tucker First United Methodist Church parsonage at 4788 Westhampton Drive, Tucker, GA. After being on the market for several months and after a contract for \$200,000 fell through, the property sold for \$212,500 (97% of asking price). The net proceeds from sale were \$193,922.45 after 6% real estate commission, \$424 home warranty, \$5,000 closing costs, \$400 in title clearance fees and property tax prorated charges. The proceeds from sale will be used to pay down and possibly refinance the existing mortgage on the sanctuary and/or other buildings. This is in accordance with the Discipline concerning the sale of church property.

**Social Concerns** – Leigh Andersen reported that Bevel Jones, retired bishop, will speak next week for the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday program at 9:45. She thanked Jimmy for providing the personal contact to secure this speaker.

### **Church Policies**

Bob Haley raised a question about the policy on the church's availability. There was a decision last year to close the building from 5pm Thursday evening to 7am Sunday morning. This decision was based on budget reasons to eliminate janitorial costs. Groups wanting to use the facilities during this period currently contact Sarah Cann who checks with a Trustee member. Requesters are having difficulty getting a response and explaining the policy to them is difficult. There was a gap in the Trustee chairperson role that was recently filled and that also may have increased the delay in receiving permission. Bob Haley made the motion that all church properties may be scheduled for use by church groups at any time subject to availability of desired space for the time required, that requests by members or staff to schedule the time and facility space will be coordinated by the church office staff, and that all facilities used must be returned in same or better condition as found. Joe Ownbey seconded, and the motion was carried.

### **Finance**

Charlie Burson presented the Finance report on the 2010 year end and 2011 budget. The church was able to pay a little over 50% of our apportionments last year although none was budgeted. For the year, the budget ran a surplus of \$22,608. As of 12/31 unrestricted cash was \$157,702, which is close to the target of about two months of budgeted annual expenses. Our 2010 stewardship campaign resulted in a pledge increase from the 2009 campaign. The 2011 projected total contributions estimate non-pledged giving at about 17% of total giving; 2010 total contributions were unusual in that 30% came from non-pledged funds. The Finance committee is considering a second stewardship campaign to get additional pledges and funds for specific programs by identifying what else could be done, such as get an assistant pastor and pay our full share of apportionments. All departments that requested an increase received an increase albeit not as much of an increase as requested. There were some department requests at the same level as 2010, and these requests were met. The budget restores all salary cuts and includes the housing allowance for Jimmy.

The parsonage sale can be used to pay down the mortgage and refinance our loan. Current estimates are a savings of \$18-19K per year. The funds are restricted in their usage. Our current mortgage rate is 6.65%. The Committee is considering researching the possibility of getting a line of credit for the Trustees to use in emergencies.

The Finance committee was approached with regard to providing a scholarship for one student to attend Emory next fall. If the church provides \$1000, the conference will match with \$2000 for any undergrad or graduate student attending a United Methodist college. The program is called United Methodist Dollars for Scholars. Options suggested were raising the deficit or changing a line item to accommodate. There was also discussion about Servant Award CD funding a youth award but without sufficient funds to address this request. Memorial funds which are not designated go to the capital fund and are not available, either. There were questions about the expectation of receiving this scholarship for four subsequent years, who else in the church may qualify, and what our criteria are for this type of program. The Council agreed that while the idea of a scholarship was valuable, there is not enough time before the application deadline to put a formal program in place, so we will table the discussion and possibly consider it as part of our vision issue.

The 2011 budget as presented was approved.

Don thanked Jimmy for coordinating the dinner and reminded the Council that the next meeting will be the second Sunday in March.

Jimmy Moor closed the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren L. Ledford  
Recording Secretary