

Newark United Methodist Church  
Church Council Meeting Minutes  
Monday March 31, 2008

Present: Mark Werrell, Michelle Koch, Betsy Kent, Dr. Jim Faltot, Mary Hudson, Kathy Werrell, Roland Sharp, Jacob Sackett-Sanders, Tom Bailey, Ruth Oatman, Jane Savino, Donna Hitchner, Mary Bell, Dayle Thorpe, Brian Everett, Chuck Mason, Deede Cataldi, Diane Brahy, Don Founds, Wil Hammond

Devotion – Mark Werrell

Approval of 2/25/08 Church Council Meeting Minutes: The Church Council minutes were approved. (Kathy Werrell moved; Mary Hudson seconded)

**The Healthy Church Initiative – Don Founds:**

Don started by reading from Unity of the Spirit by Ruth Ruibal. The book is Ruth's first hand account of the movement of God in Cali, Colombia. Ruth and her husband were missionaries in Colombia, South America. The book is about their life and what they were able to do with the help and power of the Holy Spirit. Part of the book spoke specifically of unity where she notes, "Nothing they planned to do was impossible through unity". If we could work in unity as Christians think of what could be accomplished.

Don came to NUMC as a representative of the Methodist Church Conference. Denise Founds is the Associate Pastor of St. Paul's United Methodist Church. Denise and Don will be our liaisons for the Healthy Church Initiative program.

The Bishop Marcus Matthews introduced The Healthy Church Initiative program at the Conference last year. The program's covenant ministry plan is a covenant between the local churches of the Peninsula-Delaware Conference and the Conference Vision Team. The Vision Team has a desire to help local churches be vibrant, healthy, fruit-bearing, disciple making communities of faith. The plan is to:

- use 12 pathways to make disciples as a guide to growing healthy churches which include train leaders, hospitality, equip & send, small groups, care for one another, prayer, inspiring worship, share Christ, gifts discovery, stewardship, know the neighborhood, and connect with the community.
- Create focused resources that will help train and support clergy and laity to be fruit-bearing disciples.
- Identify the passions of the leadership, clergy & lay, throughout the conference
- Use the passions and gifts of the members of the conference to server one another on resource teams.

- Develop assessment tools to help local churches identify ways that can most effectively make disciples. Starting at their place of greatest need.

In the past, the pastors would initiate these types of programs. This time they are identifying ambassadors who will go out and meet with the churches. The program will last 3–4 years. The first thing they would like to do is to get to know more about the members of this church. There is data they would like to collect in various areas. What are your missions? What makes your church unique, or what has kept this church alive for so long? What are our unique gifts? What does this church need to make it a healthier church?

The Conference is creating a database of members' names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses as well as what their passions or gifts include. The Church Conference website is being updated everyday with this information. This will be a tool that people can use to reach out to others in other churches.

The site is public. It is accessible to everyone. No user id or password is required.

Kathy asked if the church could be the point of contact for the members. The church can then reach out to members if their talents are being requested. Don said that that approach was fine.

The whole idea is to build relationships between Methodist churches.

#### **Steeple Repair – Deede Cataldi:**

Steeple repair begins next week. The steeplejack will be coming from New England.

#### **Pastor's Comments – Jim Faltot:**

The pastoral team met with Denise Founds. David and Jim talked with the district superintendent and the district superintendent understands NUMC's approach to becoming a healthy church is found in the Natural Church Development program, that we are already involved in. That will continue to be our focus. The opportunity that Don Founds spoke of will be made available to the congregation to enable them to share their passions. We as a church will proceed with Natural Church Development where our focus is on Needs-based Evangelism moving into Passionate Spirituality because we've already gone through the process to figured out where we needed to start. We have started and will continue to work on it.

We completed the Season of Lent.

David is participating in Effective Pastor's training. Mary is on the Wesley Foundation Mission Trip.

**Higher Ground Academy – Donna Hitchner:**

Donna amended the proposal. Changes were made to some of the concepts and to the structure of the board.

As a council we need to decide whether or not this school should be housed at and sponsored by NUMC. One concern Mark noted was the make up of the board which were specific offices in this church. Mark suggested to Donna that she model it after the Pre-school which does include members of the church but not specific offices. Donna acknowledged that she did modify the structure to model it after the Pre-school.

Mark asked that Donna present it to the Trustees to evaluate space availability.

It was also suggested that Donna present this to SPR, since Donna is part of the staff here. Donna clarified that she would not be associated with her current responsibilities. It would be similar to Donna's work at Meeting Ground which is in addition to her position at the church.

It was noted that the proposal should incorporate the policy of Safe Sanctuaries.

Will there be pc(s) in the classrooms? It may be possible for the DCDAL (Delaware Center for Distant Adult Learning) to provide us 2 computers in the first year and up to 5 the 2nd year. We would request wireless access from the church. NUMC is close to having wireless access.

It appears that there is more work to be done

This body needs to determine if this fits the mission of the church.

Does the tuition pay expense to the church? The model is similar to the pre-school. They do not pay the church anything. Pre-school gives a gift to the church for improvements.

This is designed to address needs-based evangelism. There is the possibility of getting new members through this initiative. Churches that have a school associated with it, gains members. This program could meet the needs of families who cannot get their educational needs met elsewhere.

Home school programs usually support children with special needs. There is a wide range of special needs. How do you determine which special needs children will be admitted. Those details should be part of the proposal.

Kathy W. moved to table the decision on the Higher Ground Academy for a future council meeting when the questions are addressed.

Will Hammond 2nd the motion.

Donna requested that the people provide the questions they want answers to. The questions can be sent to Mark W. by 4/8.

If we are to attempt to start this program in 2008, we need to readdress this at next the Church Council meeting. People are starting to make decisions for next year. In order to compete with other programs out there, we need to be communicating in May. We need 6 students to start the program.

This is for parents who want an alternate setting but do not feel like they can home school their own children. Nor can they afford the tuition of a full-time private school. They have the time to spend with their children outside the 4 hrs a day. However, they need help because they do not have the education or expertise to help the children learn properly. This would be an umbrella home school. There is a clause in the state of DE that states if you are in an umbrella home school, you can go to school for certain classes. The instructor would be responsible for assessing the children and making sure the students are making progress.

Donna changed the name of the program to be Higher Ground Academy at Newark United Methodist Church. The program would like to use NUMC's non-profit status until the program could get their own. The pre-school operates under the church's non-profit status because they are a part of the church.

**Decision:**

The motion passed to table the decision on the Higher Ground Academy until the questions that are to be submitted are answered. There was one abstention.

**Newark's 250th Anniversary – Update – Jim Faltot:**

The Inter-faith service will be at NUMC on Thursday April 10. There will be displays of the various churches history. We will need plenty of refreshments for the reception following. All of the Adult Education study groups are asked to contribute to the refreshments. The participating churches will bring food. We are asked to do all the beverages.

The parade is on Saturday, April 12. Parade participants will gather around 2:15pm at George Reed park across the street from Newark High School. Everyone is asked to wear a church-related shirt or t-shirt. We will be carrying three banners and playing Amazing Grace on kazoos. The parade kicks off at 3pm.

We will end the 11am Sunday service in enough time for everyone to attend the Proclamation on 4/13.

The planning team consists of Betsy, Donna, Mary and Dayle.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Trustees – Wil Hammond:**

The microphones went out during one of the services. There is a software upgrade for that problem.

We had a laptop donated to support the security cameras.

The church storage plan is underway. Committee reps are needed. A walk-around was done on 3/1.

Signs will be made to remind people to not put yard waste in the dumpster.

We have a team working on “Renewing the Foundation”, capital campaign. We will need a project manager for that.

Our goals are prioritized as Church Facility Assessment; the Heating System, Storage, Parking Lot repair, and the Steeple repair.

#### **Music – Betsy Kent:**

There will be a Festival Choir at the Inter-faith service. Anyone who wants to participate can come at 5:45pm to learn the music. There will also be a practice session on 4/5 from 11-12.

The Wilmington Children’s Chorus will be performing on April 27th at 3pm with a reception following in Heritage Hall.

#### **Congregational Care – Ruth Oatman:**

There are 5 new Stephen ministers instead of 4.

#### **BIA – Bryan Everett:**

Mark volunteered to do a Minute for Mission regarding the Economic Stimulus check & tithing a portion of that check. This is a great way to get people to practice tithing.

#### **United Methodist Women – Jane Savino:**

Thanks to everyone for supporting the soup sale.

#### **Children & Family Ministry – Diane Brahy:**

Working on Vacation Bible School.

**Sunday School – Mary Bell:**

Easter went really well. There were many new children at the service.

**Adult Ministry – Jane Savino:**

Chick Flix was very successful. There were about 18 people there. There were even two people from outside the church there. Communications did a press release in 55 hours.

The Singles Ministry is not getting any traction. We have 22 names. The last two events got rained out. There are ideas for activities and but not enough participation. The initial idea was to encourage interaction within the church. The group wants to do things outside of the church but there is not a lot of participation.

Adult Education has decided that it wants to participate in the discussion on Homosexuality from an educational standpoint. We want to make an effort to educate the church. Our purpose is to educate and we feel that there are a number of people who would not be educated about the process, the circumstances and what the issues are. There is a concern that what is being presented is being presented from one standpoint. We are concerned that there are many that are not aware of the issues and that not all views will be represented. There is a fear that people believe that the representation from the committee is one-sided. The class that David is leading presents 6 different views.

The Education team feels that there needs to be an educational process. We want to share what the United Methodist Church's position is on the topic. People who are not supportive of Reconciling Ministries do not feel comfortable attending the meetings because they feel they are in the minority. Some do not want to face people who are openly gay and have to say that they feel they are wrong or bad. Some are concerned that the church will take a vote and if the majority is in favor the Church will align with Reconciling Ministries. Some feel that this has already been decided.

Dayle asked what would be different about our church if we were affiliated with Reconciliation Ministries? We are already an open church so what would be different? Ruth explained that it is required that we make a statement that we accept people of all ages, races, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and levels of ability. We do not say that now. There are churches who limit the participation of the members based on their sexual orientation. The United Methodist Church already ordains gay pastors as long as they are celibate.

**Communications – Donna Hitchner:**

We are planning training on how to edit the cds. We have identified the software package to use to create duplicates. We are still working on the logistics for distributing the cds.

We are replacing two of the Taize signs that had been damaged.

Liz has been getting Press Releases out in a timely manner. We actually had 2 people attend Chick Flix who saw the Press Release in 55 hours.

We plan on keeping the sermons on the website for 6 months.

Lenten pictures are done. They just need to be put up on the website.

Jim's sermon from Easter is available on the website.

Kathy W. moved to keep Jim's Easter sermon up on the web and not archive it. Mary H. 2nd the motion.

**Decision:**

Jim's Easter sermon will be kept on the website. The motion passed with 1 abstention.

**Worship – Roland Sharp:**

There was a lot of positive feedback on the Lenten services.

Taize will be held the first Wednesday in April.

There will not be an 11am service during the summer. The 11am attendees voted 4 to 1 against having an 11am traditional service during the summer. It will resume the first Sunday after Labor Day.

**Membership – Dayle Thorpe:**

We have 14 new members. Twelve joined on Easter. Two more will join on 4/13. All have shepards.

We began the Membership Recognition activities. Harriet Brown will be the first member to be recognized. You will see that in Parish Notes.

Congregational Connections has a process in place for calling those members who are absent.

**Outreach – Mary Hudson:**

We collected over \$5000 in the Lenten offering. We made our 3rd payment to the Habitat House. We have two more to go.

There will be a special meeting for the Empowerment Center at Calvary Baptist Church on April 22 at 6pm. The focus will be on discussing what we've done and where we want to go.

The Empowerment Center is 1 year old and has served over a 1000 clients

A collection is being taken for a gift of appreciation for Bill and Mark. It will be presented to them at the meeting on 4/22.

**Outreach presented two motions...**

- 1) Newark United Methodist Church will continue to host the Newark Empowerment Center in the Wilson Room through March 2009.
- 2) Newark United Methodist Church will host Code Purple sanctuary in rotation with other participating faith communities November 2008 through March 2009.

We want to vote on these motions in the April Church Council meeting.

**Closing Prayer – Ruth Oatman**

Committee Representation at Church Council Meetings: Please be sure to send a representative in the event that Committee Chairpersons cannot attend.

Next Meeting: The next meeting is Monday, April 28, 2008 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Michelle Koch  
NUMC Council Secretary