

New Mt. Vernon United Methodist Church
Council Meeting Minutes
March 23, 2010

A Council meeting was held Tuesday, March 23, 2010, with the following in attendance: Reverend Sharon Lee; Council Chairperson Donna Smith; Paul Ferris; Xenia Ferris; John Wagoner; Jerold Teague; Bobbie Lawrence; Jewel Amos; Ralph Amos and Elaine Teague.

An agenda for the meeting was distributed to all attendees and is attached to and made a part of these minutes. (Addendum I)

Chairperson Donna Smith welcomed everyone to the meeting, read a devotional entitled “You are Blessed” and followed with prayer. The meeting was called to order and Donna called upon Elaine Teague for review of the minutes from the last meeting. (The minutes from the November 19, 2009 meeting had been made available for review prior to meeting commencement in the interest of time.) Being no corrections or additions to the minutes, a motion was made, seconded and the minutes were approved.

The next item on the agenda was to review the Bishop’s meeting with laity in the Lexington District and Donna called upon Lay Leader Paul Ferris. A copy of the minutes from the Bishop’s meeting is attached to and made a part of these minutes. (Addendum II) In Paul’s review he pointed out that in his opinion the message was “buried fruit” measured by the Power of 3. Sharon Lee commented that she listened as laity – not clergy. Paul noted that all should be reaching out to young adults pointing out that the average age of a Christian in the U.S. is 59 and unless the church finds something for the younger age group it will be difficult to survive. Churches need to be in the right place as Paul further noted that 74% are located in 16% of where the population lives which is why the plans to build 30 new churches.. He also pointed out that 1/3 of churches have less than 50 in worship and on average 125 is needed in worship to sustain itself.

At this point, there were questions and discussion regarding the statistics. Sharon pointed out the need to think going forward with great respect for the past. She also stated she hopes others will attend meetings with her in the future so others can hear what is being said throughout the district and conference as opposed to her always delivering a message.

Are we a church that bears fruit? Are we out knocking on doors – continuing to reach out? Paul stated the church as a whole is experiencing problems; nothing unique to New Mt. Vernon. The Bishop also invited laity to the August 13-15 Gathering of the Laity at Lake Junaluska to which Paul announced that he will be attending.

Donna called upon Xenia Ferris for the financial report but beforehand wanted to note that we had paid 2009 apportionment and stated we had received a word of thanks from the conference also stating that she noticed in the Bishop’s message to laity that a number of churches were unable to pay all of their apportionments.

Xenia stated an audit of 2009 records had been conducted and pleased to report that all in order with exception of a few small details emphasizing, however, nothing that affects bottom line. She further stated future audits will be conducted on a semi-annual basis as opposed to annual. Xenia reported that for the period ended February 28th, receipts in excess of \$9,300 greater than for the same period last year. Expenses paid out greater and noted a greater amount spent on the apportionment than for same period last year. She noted a working balance of \$8,478 further noting that property insurance as well as the workers' comp installment payments both pending as well as routine monthly payments, but stated it still looks like we are coming out slightly ahead. Xenia also reported that the sign fund balance is up \$500 and currently totals \$17,883.

John Wagoner reported that the SPRC had one meeting to date and starting out anew and stated he is excited about the positive things in the church and the pastor's energy. He further reported that he attended the District Leadership Conference where he noted the SPRC at New Mt. Vernon is already doing so many things that were mentioned at the conference – accountability; having honest conversations in the review process, etc. John stated expectations of pastor and vice versa were pointed out and reported we are fulfilling. He further stated he is proud of New Mt. Vernon adding that while there may be some problems we do have a lot of positive things taking place.

In the absence of the Trustee chair or other Trustee member, Elaine Teague reported to her knowledge the primary area of current business is the property insurance evaluation to which Sharon advised a meeting had been scheduled for Thursday evening (March 25th) for a review.

Jewel Amos gave the Nurture report. Jewel reported that Rhetta Anderson oversees the prayer team and advised there will be a "prayer walk" on Sunday, March 28th which includes different stations, anointing with oil as well as communion expressing her own excitement about the event. Sharon interjected that a lot of work was involved and urged everyone to attend. Also, Donna Smith reported that the kids who attend KidZone will be participating as well. Donna also advised that KidZone will end the last Sunday in April until the fall but will be starting a "Tweens Street Ministry." This will consist of preparing bags with non-perishable items to be given out to church members to have in their cars to hand out when appropriate to those homeless/on the streets. This is another way for the group to tie into "*Change the World.*"

Jewel also reported that Sharon is working to get additional people to help out with Children's Church. She also reported on the Confirmation Class and of her involvement as a "faith partner." In so far as the Kidz Design Team, Jewel reported that VBS will be June 20 – 25 with a light meal each evening.

The Visitation Team now consists of Sharon, Jerold, Sandra and Jewel as others who were on the team could no longer continue. Jewel reported they are in the process of arranging to have communion in the homes of shut-ins which is felt to be well received.

The Boy Scouts will have a BBQ supper with pre-order for April 10th. The Girl Scouts were invited to sale cookies at the Shrove Tuesday event and then had their candle service during worship service on March 14th. Jewel mentioned the Greg Carpenter family in our neighborhood who attended the service since their daughter is a Girl Scout and encouraged everyone to welcome them back.

Ralph Amos stated the UMM help the Boy Scouts and feel we need to come up with a group to help the Girl Scouts. Sharon interjected that she has been praying for a group to help out.

Jewel then reported for Seed-n-Feed project for last year. The total amount received was \$95.00 however; expenses for fertilizer, seed, etc. exceeded that amount by \$48.95 which she and Ralph absorbed. A copy of the report is attached to and made a part of these minutes. (Addendum III) Due to the lack of water supply on the property, they will now be taking a different approach. Jewel along with Ralph, Ollie and Jim Taylor and John Wagoner recently planted potatoes for the Pastor's Pantry.

There was no one present to give reports for the Youth or the UMM.

Bobbie Lawrence was called on for the UMW report and Bobbie requested Jewel to speak. Jewel reported 7 Prayer Shawls had been sent to New York per request noted in *Response Magazine*.

At this time John stated he failed to mention earlier that Sharon had passed the ordination process which took a great deal of effort and hard work and he further stated there will be a formal recognition at some point when Sharon returns from conference.

Ralph Amos reported that 14 people went to MRC to help pack the health kits for Haiti. He also informed the group that the Disaster Response Team will be going to work in Clyde on April 4 through April 9 which is due to the flooding two years ago. Ralph and Eddie Cooley will be attending from our church, but in total there will be 12 to 14 attending.

Donna pointed out the events for Holy Week (Addendum IV) and turned the meeting over to Sharon. Sharon also commented on Holy Week events stating that the drama on Maundy Thursday entitled "Take This Cup from Me" will be performed by women noting the drama was performed by men last year. She urged everyone to invite people to come.

Sharon then reported on the Power of 3 challenge (Addendum V) stating we are on target with our goals. She commented on the target number of Professions of Faith as 7 and advised the Confirmation Class consists of 9. She invited everyone to visit the classroom to see all the work of the Confirmands. They still have April to go and then Confirmation Sunday will be in May. At the end of 2009 current membership was 228 with the end of 2010 goal set at 240. The September 2009 average attendance was 91 and at year end was 97. The averages can include attendance at special services such as Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday. The average now is at 98 which is close to our vision goal of 100 by the end of 2010. Sharon also reviewed the Professions of Faith chart (reverse side of Addendum V.)

At this time, Sharon pointed out the bulletin board prepared for *Impact Community/Change The World*. She commented on the Adopt-A-Highway kickoff April 24th noting the required 20 minute training that occurred this past Sunday (3/21). She further advised that a group that will accompany those cleaning up that day in order to place *Impact Community* information inviting neighbors to help serve at the June 5th event.

Sharon informed the group that 87 nets had been purchased as result of "Nothing But Nets" campaign.

Sharon also reviewed the *Rethink Church* brochure (Addendum VI) stating this happens seven days a week – not just in church on Sunday. She stated that while at training for *Rethink Church*, a request came up to take business cards (printed with church information, etc.) out and leave with a tip when dining out or give out when you run in to someone in the community. Cards with our church information were distributed to the group.

At this time, Sharon reported that we have 12 on role who fall in the age group of 19 to 35 not currently attending our church and to which she has made contact regarding interest in getting together and has received favorable response. The meeting will be in Winston-Salem (date TBD) to hear what their needs may be. Sharon stated this is a form of planting seeds also stating this group not so much interested in coming back into church but rather meeting in coffee houses, etc. There is no agenda – it will move at their pace. It has been advised to not force or place any boundaries. Right or wrong this is what this group is like and we must be open. Sharon told of a group that is currently meeting at a bar in Greensboro with very favorable response and attendance. She requested that we be in prayer for the group and be open. At this time, she has no idea when she will be able to give another report.

While very busy times, she is excited about April 24th and 25th as well as all other upcoming events and is singing our church praises.

Being no further business, motion made and seconded for adjournment.

Elaine Teague, Recording Secretary