

New Mt. Vernon United Methodist Church
Council Meeting Minutes
May 21, 2009

A Council meeting was held on Thursday, May 21, 2009, with the following in attendance: Reverend Sharon Lee, Council Chairperson Donna Smith, Jerold Teague, Renee Taylor, Jewel Amos, Ollie Taylor, Jim Taylor, Bobbie Lawrence, Sharon Wagoner, Barbara Ruark, Amy Collins, Xenia Ferris, Edsel Ferris, Megan Collins, Howard Ruark, Mary Roberts, Joshua Lee, Kelly Porter, Eddie Cooley, Terri Cooley and Elaine Teague.

Chairperson Donna Smith welcomed everyone to the meeting and opened the meeting with prayer. Meeting agenda and related meeting material was distributed of which are attached to and made a part of these minutes. (Addendum I) Elaine Teague called for approval of the minutes from the February, 2009 meeting and being no changes the minutes were approved.

At this point, Sharon Lee covered the topic of *Rethink Church* and showed a video. Sharon noted there are several things that we have already started, and we are just on the front end of “open hearts, minds, and doors.” *Rethink Church* is an ongoing conversation about who United Methodists want to be as a community of faith. This is not a media campaign. What does it mean to live as a disciple of Jesus Christ? We have to think beyond Sundays. The 10,000 Door Campaign has primary target of 18 – 34 year olds. There is a web site and tools to assist the church in this mission.

Sharon mentioned further that there’s tremendous free material as resources and, of course, there are some things available for a fee. The May/June 2009 Interpreter has information regarding the 10,000 Door Campaign. This endeavor will take the Council coming together to decide actions for New Mt. Vernon. Sharon also shared with the group of recent visitors who found our church “welcoming”. We need to pray for this effort and how we can update ourselves – noting this will be a process. Donna Smith added that she receives Interpreter and willing to pass along since there is a lot of information on the subject.

Ollie Taylor, SPRC Chair was called upon to report for her committee. Ollie reported that the following goals were provided to Pastor Sharon by SPRC at their March 26th meeting. These goals were reflective of the Natural Church Survey results that indicated that the areas New Mt. Vernon needed improvement were lack of structure, organization as well as development of leadership and teams. To date, each ministry leader and team has been provided a copy of the United Methodist Guidelines for their specific ministry area. Each team has also been provided a sample mock-up of a short one page ministry description to be used as a guideline as they define their own ministry description. Other reference material has also been provided when there were no UMC guidelines. Ollie stated it is vitally important for each ministry team to discuss, research and collaboratively write their own ministry description. Support from an assigned member of the Lay Leadership team is available to assist each ministry leader/team in accomplishing this goal. While progress is being achieved, support is also needed from SPR to expedite the accomplishment of all ministry descriptions being completed prior to Nomination and Lay Leadership beginning to meet and look at Leadership for 2010. Depending on where a ministry team is in completing their written ministry description, a member of the SPR team will be identified at the next SPR meeting on May 28th to assist those ministry teams completing their written ministry description. Ollie further pointed out that these written ministry descriptions will be used by Lay Leadership committee as an initial hand out to a nominee who is being considered to serve on a particular ministry team. It begins the dialogue of answering questions of nominee “what does this committee do” and/or “what will I be doing”, etc.

Ollie reported that the review, re-writing and updating of all salaried church staff's job descriptions has been completed by SPRC. The descriptions have been reviewed with staff and each person to whom they are accountable. Approved copies of job descriptions are on file in the church office. The SPRC would like to thank all who contributed to the completion of this annual accountability of the SPRC.

At this point, Ollie shared that at the 2009 District Leadership Conference in January, it was strongly recommended that SPRC write a covenant, and reported that the Committee is in the process of collaboratively writing a covenant and hope to have complete at the May meeting. The group will be presenting to the Council upon completion. Ollie also commented on the spiritual gifts assessment that are being completed and also noted that the administrative assistant position has been posted.

Donna noted that Ollie's team is working on things that are related to *Rethink Church*.

In the absence of Ralph Amos, Sharon Lee covered Missions/Outreach. She covered Project Garden of which the youth will be at this weekend. She also pointed out that there's interest in mission trips, prison ministry, ministry to soldiers, etc. Sharon stressed that some things happen over time – often not our time, but God's time. There are some things that are church-wide while others on an individual basis. The main thing is visibility in community and beyond. At this point, Jim Taylor discussed the recent cherry picking.

Reporting for the Trustees in the absence of James Wright, Elaine reviewed the parsonage updates of which expenses will be borne by UMM and UMW. Sharon Wagoner discussed the church signage project. Sharon noted they are in the process of securing pricing, and must also check ordinances regarding placement of directional road signs. In order to get pricing of the electronic sign, we need to determine exact size. She covered the plans for indoor signage as well. Sharon Lee stated that the group will gather information and then come to Council with estimates and recommendations.

Amy Collins spoke on behalf of the Witness Team reviewing items that had been put in place such as greeters, usher signage, visitation team, welcome packets and pew registers to name a few. In the works are plans for neighborhood canvassing noting that the Bishop had stated that approximately 75% of people within a 5 mile radius are unchurched. She stated Sharon Lee had suggested soliciting assistance from sheriff's office in determining safety of areas selected for canvassing. A new church brochure is also in the works with the open hearts, minds and doors focus. She also stated interior signage had been an issue for sometime and glad that is being addressed by Trustees. She continues to see the need to be more welcoming and hands on in community with functions such as Trunk or Treat. Amy stated initially 15 -20 people in the group, but now have approximately 5 to 8 core group noting that a homebound group is also involved.

At this time, Sharon Lee added that she is considering a time period of September for a "welcome" emphasis for the congregation – that is inviting others to come. She will be looking at *Rethink Church* information for ideas. If this is not done in September, she mentioned Advent as being a possibility.

Speaking for Nominations/Leadership Sharon Lee mentioned that SPRC charged to get job descriptions as touched on by Ollie. She had samples on hand as well as those job descriptions that had been completed. Sharon also discussed the spiritual gift assessments noting they were included in each agenda packet as they are not secret. She had forms available for those who

have not completed. Sharon stated this is a tool for nominations to have to assist in filling openings on committees as folks rotate off.

Renee Taylor, treasurer, reported a negative working balance of \$7,917.48. She stated there will be a sales tax refund of \$3,200.86 which will reduce the negative balance. At this point, Mary Roberts spoke on behalf of the Finance Committee. She stated Sharon was planning a pledge campaign at some point. Mary further stated that this is a critical time and we must watch all expenses. She has alerted UMW and UMM that the groups may be called upon later in the year for assistance. Mary stated she will be writing an article for the newsletter targeting all heads of areas to be mindful of all spending. There may be a need for a church-wide fund raiser. Bottom line, don't hit the panic button, but we must eliminate unnecessary spending at this time. Ollie asked if the filling of the administrative assistant position should be placed on hold and continuing the use of those willing to volunteer. Mary stated that should be considered but only if Sharon is not the one being bogged down with administrative tasks and taking away from her ministry. Discussion was tabled.

Sharon Lee discussed stewardship and stressed that stewardship is a commitment -- it's part of the walk with Christ. Most people don't understand the difference between funding ministry and fundraising. Sharon emphasized that the Council (and church) has to buy into. Sharon also reviewed with the group several programs of study to address biblically based financial giving. She is looking to establish a group to help define the best way to address at our church and come prepared to make recommendation at the next meeting.

At this point, Donna Smith asked the group for recommendation on placing the filling of administrative assistant on hold. Sharon stated that the work is getting done by volunteers. Mary Roberts made a motion to table the hiring of administrative assistant for six months and the motion was seconded by Jerold Teague. The motion carried.

Amy Collins gave an update on Youth. The group heard back from their World Vision contact (they had previously written) noting the different language and interpreters. The group will be planting pumpkin seed at 8:00 Saturday morning (May 23rd) and then back to the church for a car wash. They will also be doing window painting for Pentecost. She further reported the group is gearing up for Spiritus with a total of 22 planning to attend of which 18 are teens. Jim Taylor questioned if the group had received sponsors to which Amy responded that the UMW had contributed along with another individual or two. There is a need for additional funds since another van will need to be rented.

Jewel Amos commented on the impression that the 3:16 Bible study had on the children and informed the group that there has been a volunteer for 4th Sunday teaching in that group. Donna advised that material will be available for Children's Church.

At this time Sharon was called upon for ending prayer. She requested everyone to keep those hospitalized - Barb Stark and Frances Glascoe along with their families – in prayer.

Following the closing prayer, the meeting was adjourned.

Elaine Teague, Recording Secretary