

St. Luke's United Methodist Church

Our Vision Statement

"Christian disciples called to transform our community and world through God's love."

Our Mission Statement

"We, the members of St. Luke's United Methodist Church, are an inclusive, Christ-centered community of faith seeking through worship, prayer, service, education and fellowship to respond creatively to God's call to welcome, love, and care for others."

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes

December 8, 2009

7:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 p.m. There were 24 members present.

HOUSEKEEPING MATTERS

1. Members were asked to sign in on the Attendance Roster and to sign up to lead devotions or provide refreshments for 2010 meetings.
2. **Next Church Council meeting:** Tuesday, January 13, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. The purpose of this meeting will be for 2010 Calendar Deconfliction. All Committee Chairs need to come prepared (to the best of their ability) to discuss their recurring meetings and activities across 2010.
3. Our **regular Church Council meetings will begin Tuesday, February 9** on an every other month basis.

DEVOTION

Kathryn Budzik offered a devotion about change. In my preparations for this devotion I looked at a *Reader's Digest* article about how to survive worries around the world such as money and family. The *Guide Post* offered an article about dealing with change which said the thing to do is to do something for someone else and that it takes you out of your head and into your heart. You will stop feeling sorry for yourself and begin feeling powerful again. In *Strength for the Journey* the article "Learning from Joseph" focuses on Malachi 3:6. When Joseph found out he was to be a father he faced some big changes. At some point in our lives we may face big changes to but like Joseph we need to look to God for strength and remember that God does not change and neither does his faithfulness. Lean on him. Rely on him and trust Him to lead the way. Kathryn closed with prayer.

VISION CASTING BY THE PASTORS

1. **Subpoena Update:** This is a follow up to an issue I raised a few months ago. We were subpoenaed to produce the financial giving and attendance records of one of our members. The only statute in Virginia that came remotely close to addressing this is the Pastor/Penitent one, and it is narrowly written (and interpreted) to include only those things divulged in a counseling session. We fought the subpoena, and lost initially, but the judge gave us 14 days to change his mind. I found a 1952 Supreme Court ruling that

DRAFT: February

clarified the matter. The Court ruled that religious freedom includes the right of religious bodies “to decide for themselves, free from state interference, matters of church government as well as those of faith and doctrine.” The court concluded that if the application of a state law would conflict with the “doctrine, polity, or practice” of a church, then the law cannot be applied to the church without a showing of a “compelling state interest.” I included a letter from a long time member that expressed his dismay that these records were sought, and his belief that they were always confidential, and also a letter from our Financial Secretary, which said the same thing. We established that our “practice” was that all giving records were confidential, and not released to anyone. Since the other attorney could not provide a “compelling interest,” we ultimately prevailed. I would like the council to send a letter to Jim Elliott, thanking him for his free legal representation of Saint Luke’s. See Action Item #3.

2. **Judicial Council Update:** After all the work on this issue it was very upsetting when the council ruled against us. However, the council was correct and had they ruled in our favor it would have caused an upset in the conference. Pastor Doug made documents public domain and now other churches can pursue this issue individually as it will surely come up again someday. Doug thanked everyone for their support.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Blair Ellis

The minutes from **October 13, 2009** were **APPROVED with the following change:** On page 11 under Senior Pastor item #1 should read. . . one big *Christmas Miracle*.

The minutes from the **November 3, 2009** Annual Charge Conference were **APPROVED** as submitted.

BUSINESS CONDUCTED OVER E-MAIL

1. **Motion from the United Methodist Women/Stop Hunger Now: Request approval to conduct the following fundraiser events, similar to those in previous years, to benefit Stop Hunger Now:**
 - a) Bake Sale hosted by the fourth grade Sunday School class on Valentine's Day (Sunday February 14) at the T-intersection
 - b) Distribution of Lenten Prayer Calendars by UMW Sisters in the Narthex on Sunday, February 7 and 14. Donations received in response to the calendars will be collected in the Narthex on Sunday, April 11 and 18

Motion was unanimously APPROVED

ITEMS REQUIRING DISCUSSION FOR ACTION / APPROVAL

1. **Motion from the Board of Trustees: Request approval of the SLUMC off-site storage policy.**
 - a) Purpose: This policy provides the guidance for storing equipment and property belonging to St. Luke’s United Methodist Church (SLUMC), affiliated ministries, organizations and functions to include Vacation Bible School, Boy Scout Troop 200, Drive- through nativity project props and equipment, Preschool, and all other ministries and functions (current and future) supported by SLUMC.

- b) Guidance: The following guidelines and the storage process will be administered by the Board of Trustees and the SLUMC Administrative Coordinator.
- 1) Each organization or project needing space will be allocated a section of the facility or their use. Each space will be marked off by tape and/or a sign with the organization name. Notify the administrator or a trustee when a space allocation is needed. When requesting space, provide the approximate square footage and other requirements needed for your function.
 - 2) Keys for entry will be signed out by the user when access is needed. Keys can be checked out from the administrator during working hours for use after hours or on weekends. The keys will be returned each day during working hours or the first workday after and evening or weekend/holiday use.
 - 3) Cleanliness and neatness for each space will be the responsibility of each user. Also, each user will use extreme caution and adequate safety precautions when storing or removing items from the facility.
 - 4) The space has heat, but no air conditioning. Each user will ensure the heat is set at 60 degrees when they leave the facility.
 - 5) Each user shall be responsible for properly securing the facility and turning off the light before departure.

Motion was unanimously APPROVED

2. Motion from Gayle Stortz, Transition Resource Teacher, York County Schools: Request approval for the use of the church facility (a classroom and potentially other areas if job opportunities should avail themselves) for students with disabilities to do prevocational training.

- a) At this point, it is unclear how often or even if this might occur, (approval at the SBO is still pending) but eventually, I would like to see it on a daily basis for perhaps several hours at a time. This would be a step in students transitioning from their school site to eventually a community based training site, and hopefully, finally obtaining competitive employment. This is currently being done with WJCC schools at Williamsburg United Methodist Church with much success.
- b) St. Luke's provides a prime location for students from the high schools at the lower end of the county, as well as housing the food bank where students could potentially work in "warehousing" before moving to a more competitive setting.
- c) I anticipate numerous other training opportunities that could assist the church while students develop job behaviors and skills. I would be delighted to discuss them with the council members if they have questions.
- d) There would certainly be no pay expected as students would be training and volunteering as allowed through labor laws and the county would be responsible for transportation, supervision, etc.
- e) I believe this has real potential for students with disabilities, while providing SLUMC with a wonderful cost free chance for outreach.
- f) I understand that the council does not meet again until February and hope that, with the approval of the council during the December meeting and further administrative approval from the school division, I can have a plan in place by the February meeting.
- g) I did not want to wait until then to request approval since it is so far out and I would like to perhaps start implementing plans after the first semester ends late in January.

- h) If there is anything that I can do to facilitate the approval of this plan or if council members have suggestions for possible prevocational activities for students, please do not hesitate calling me, either on my cell, at work or at home. Thank you for your consideration!

Motion will be brought before the Board of Trustees at their next meeting for approval of building use and other issues.

3. **Motion from Senior Pastor Doug Gestwick: Request that a letter be sent Jim Elliott from Chair, Tom Lyon on behalf of the Church Council thanking him for his free legal representation of Saint Luke's.**

Motion was unanimously APPROVED

4. **Motion from the Service Ministry/Relay for Life: Request approval to advertise and sell Superbowl Subs. Sales will begin 3 Sundays prior to Superbowl Sunday at the T-intersection and cost \$6.00 each. Subs will be picked up in the kitchen/fellowship room area on Sunday, February 7, 2010.**

Motion was unanimously APPROVED subject to date availability.

REPORTS / ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Outreach Ministry (Ginny Potts and Mary Ellis)

1. **St. Luke's Victorian Carolers** – Singing at Patrick Henry Mall, Friday, December 4 at 6 p.m. to advertise Drive-through Nativity.
2. **Cookies due for Drive-through Nativity** – Wednesday, December 9. The Discovery Kids will package them.
3. **Begin set-up of Fellowship Hall for Drive-through Nativity** – Thursday, December 10 – 9:30 p.m., (costumes and actor props, hospitality materials, etc.)
4. **Drive-through Nativity** - December 11 and 12, 5:30 – 8:00 p.m.
5. **TV/Ad - Commercial** will run December 16 – 26 /Wednesday through Saturday/ 6 p.m. – 12 p.m. / ABC Family, Discovery, TLC, and TBS with a special Christmas theme advertisement. (Go to www.rethinkchurch.org - Click on Advertising /TV spots/ "Rethink Church this Christmas.")
6. **A Day of Radical Hospitality** – January 30, 2010, 9:00 am – 12 noon, Williamsburg UMC, Featuring Dr. Amy Oden, Dean at Wesley Theological Seminary. This event will help congregations go deeper in their understanding and performance of this practice of fruitful congregations.

Worship Ministry (Brenda Ramsey and Kamela Verry)

1. **Recruiting for Ushers and Communion Helpers** for all four Christmas Eve Services
2. **"The Hanging of the Green Service" was a huge success.** 161 people attended and over 40 people help transform the Church. What a transformation! Many comments on having this service again next year.
3. **Upcoming Worship Services:**
 - a) Sunday Evening, December 20, Blue Christmas Service
 - b) Four Christmas Eve Services: 5:00 7:00 9:00 11:00
4. **Baptismal Towels** have been purchased. Debbie Frecker will stitch the names of those baptized and they will be given as a gift from the church.

Education Ministry (Theresa Butler and Eric Cooper)

1. **November Mystery Dinner and Movie** – was held the Saturday before Thanksgiving (November 21) and by all counts was great success! There was a large turnout for this time of visiting and fellowship (and enjoying the 1960's classic "Swiss Family Robinson"). In fact, this event was such a success that we are planning to repeat this again in late January or early February.
2. **New Education Committee Co-Chair** – Liz Rowe will begin serving as the education committee co-chair in January.
3. **Considering new timeframes for small group studies** – James is currently looking into scheduling small group studies in parallel with Sunday evening youth group and possibly weekday morning preschool.
4. **Looking toward summer 2010** – We expect to receive our Vacation Bible School Egypt theme materials in January.

Military Ministry (Pete Prindle)

1. The Prindles represented St. Luke's at the **Military Missions Network conference** in Norfolk 26-28 October, and led a small group on partnerships. In 2010, plans are developing for a partnership in Newport News for ministry to sailors attached to the carriers in the shipyard.
2. We also attended the **Veteran's Day service at Regent University** on 11 November.
3. **Xerox is sponsoring "Thank You" cards for deployed military personnel.** Go to their website at www.LetsSayThanks.com, select a card and add your "Thank You" message. Xerox will send it on to a deployed member of the armed forces.
4. A bill has been introduced to congress to approve the **Honor and Remember flag**, similar to the POW/MIA, flag to fly whenever the nation's flag is flown.

Board of Trustees (Tom Sayre)

1. The **flat roofs are still leaking** during heavy rain and windy conditions. We are still trying to get this 20-year- old issue resolved.
2. Our **Boy Scout troop 200 cleaned up around the church** and put mulch in our flower beds for the Holidays.
3. Under Joel Church's able leadership, he and a crew of eight helpers **cleaned the sanctuary chandeliers.** They look really nice.
4. Ron Dorenbush and son along with John Knabe **cut down and removed the Bradford pear tree that blew down during the recent Nor'easter.** Ron and son also repaired our neighbor's fence that was damaged from the fallen tree.
5. **Barb Ripley is the on-site manager of the off-site storage unit.** Off-site storage keys will be logged out from and returned to the church office, in accordance with church policy for the off-sight storage facility.
6. Tom encouraged everyone to **take a moment to look at the Board of Trustees bulletin board** and see the ongoing activities and all the people that help out around the church.

Communications Ministry (Ken Engebretson)

1. January newsletter deadline: Tuesday, December 15

Nurture Ministry (Della Shelton and Betty Brummer)

1. All areas are doing great.

United Methodist Men (UMM) (William Sutton)

Local Church:

1. The **UMMen Fellowship Breakfast** was held on Sunday, November 15 in the Fellowship Hall and everyone enjoyed a time of food, fellowship and a business meeting followed. There was an election of officers for 2010 and discussions on ways to spend mission money collected during the year. **The officers for 2010 are:**
 - President - Dave Campbell
 - Vice President – Joe Posey
 - Chaplain – George Leftwich
 - Treasurer – Ron Dorenbush
 - Secretary – TBDThanks to each one of these men for being a vital part of the UMMen at St. Luke's.
2. We continue our focus on **“Men in Ministry”** with an emphasis on spiritual growth, building relationships, making disciples, and mission support.
3. Our **next Fellowship Breakfast** will be December 20. There will be a program and we will share information on upcoming events for the UMMen.

Peninsula District:

1. The **Heart Haven's “Morrison Home”** in Newport News now has five residents living in the home with the newest one moving in on December 1. Thanks goes to the staff members for helping the residents live as full a life as possible. The District UMMen continue to schedule the maintenance of the grounds around the property with those fellowships that feel a connection and a desire to help. We recently had a work day in which we built a bridge/walkway between Morrison UMC and the Morrison Home to allow the residents easier access to the church for events. We also built a patio with the bricks that were purchased during a fundraiser for the home. Anyone that purchased bricks can come by the home and see the results and spend time on the patio, it is a good retreat area. We encourage all District UM Churches to participate in welcoming the new residents and help them feel like they are part of our family.
2. The **next General Meeting** for the District UMMen for 2010 will be on January 25 at First UMC, Hampton. This will be the Installation of Officers for the District and all men and pastors are encouraged to attend.

Building Ministry (Blair Ellis)

1. As mentioned in the October report to CC, the Building Committee (BC) planned and **held a meeting on the 19 of October at 7 p.m.** The purpose of this meeting was to review changes to our drawings and to prepare for a visit from Myler (the design-build company) to make changes to the drawings in preparation for the upcoming Feasibility Study presentations to the SLUMC laity.
2. **Members of the BC, met on the afternoon of 11 Nov.** with Steve Retorick, a program manager for Myler who is our point of contact. The meeting's primary objectives were to have a review of the building plans, make changes before the church begins its 4 week long feasibility study (lead by Klote) on January 11, 2010, and ask Myler to provide updated drawings suitable for the presentations to the St. Luke's laity during the feasibility study.
3. During our discussion of the outside site planning, Duane Potts asked if the footprint of the building would change. If not, **he recommended that we begin to draw the site plans as soon as possible** due to the fact that the York County Storm Water Management regulations would be changing effective July 1, 2010 and that the new regulations would

require more detention area - approximately 50% more. One of the questions that Duane is going to ask the county is - if the church submitted plans and they were under review prior to July 1, 2010, would St. Luke's be "grandfathered" under the old regulations. Duane will check, but mentioned that he would need to be approved soon by the church to begin plan preparation to meet deadlines. Additionally, as part of the site discussion, we reviewed the idea that perhaps we could get two neighboring property owners just behind the boy scout storage shed area to consider a boundary line adjustment in the power line area, to enable us to move the detention pond off the current church property which would enable us to build additional parking slots under the power lines. We're investigating that possibility.

4. Finally, the **Klote-lead Feasibility Study is scheduled to begin on January 11, 2010**. There will be a Klote consultant here for a month who will assist us as we conduct a feasibility study and have focus groups which will discuss our building plans in detail (much as we did last Dec / Jan / Feb) and continue to solicit feedback from SLUMC laity. The big differences are that we will have a church-wide vote in early to mid February 2010 on whether or not we move forward with the building planning and also we will be asking attendees of our focus group meetings to let us know who will be active participants in the upcoming Capital Campaign and also in the future building planning and building project.

United Methodist Women (UMW) (Katy Jones)

1. **Executive Board met on December 1** and reviewed nominations for the Mission Recognition Pins. Five individuals will receive the pins next month in worship service (date to be determined).
2. **Our circles are busy** preparing gift stockings for the Salvation Army, planning meal support for a needy family, creating gift bags and selecting books for the 23 children of The Agape Christian Children's Center on the Eastern Shore (Conference supported as one of our Healing the Hurts of Virginia focuses).
3. On December 10, **Betty Brummer will present a program** to the LIFT circle and guests on the Brazil Mission trip last summer. All members are invited.
4. **Mission Book studies will resume** in January.
5. **Outgoing Officers were presented with Mission Gift Cards** in recognition of their service to UMW in November (DeAnn Posey, Debbie Frecker and Faye Keenan). Officers for 2010 will be installed in January.

Service Ministry (Susie Small and Kathryn Budzik)

2. **Link/PORT is underway** with the leadership of Rich Zeimet. December 13 is hosted by Warwick UMC.
3. **Georgia Mission Trip planned** for December 28 to January 2. Douglasville is about 25 miles west of Atlanta.
4. **ASP – Early Spring 2010 Trip**, seeking adult volunteers for a week of service February 21-27 at the Guyan Valley Center in Brenton, WV.
5. The **Easter Egg Fund Committee** has a qualifying applicant.

Youth Ministry (Nate DeHart)

1. In October, we attended the **Middle School Mission Weekend** (Jeremiah Project) which went very well. Middle School youth built stairs, removed years of built-up bathroom scum and refinished and painted a ceiling.
2. Also in October, we went on a **trip to the Corn Maze at Renwood Fields**.
3. In November, the youth group went **“Pirate Bowling” dressed as pirates** in anticipation and support of the church’s Mystery Dinner.
4. This month was the **Va. UMC High School Retreat at Eagle Eyre**. Our “scouting party” went well and I expect to take many more youth next year. (We canceled the Middle School Retreat in Nov. due to a lack of interest.
5. Sunday, December 20 is **Youth Caroling**. We will be visiting shut-in members during the scheduled youth time.
6. December 22 is the **Youth Christmas Party**. We will be exchanging white-elephant gifts and sharing a pot-luck supper.
7. January 8 and 9 is the **High School Lock-In** here at St. Luke’s.
8. January 31 we will be attending **WINTER JAM 2010** (a Christian Concert)
9. The **Ski-trip that was scheduled for that weekend has now been cancelled** because York County Schools have now made those days make-up days for the rain cancellations.

Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) (Jason Houser)

1. Three people attended the district training.

Green Church Initiative (Joe Posey)

Financial Report (Bill Boyer, Business Manager)

1. **The Financial Report through the end of November was provided as information.**
2. Bill Boyer commented that **St. Luke’s had a very good year**. The generosity of the congregation is tremendous.
3. **Currently the budget** is at 82% receipts and 84.2% expenses.
4. **Overages occurred** on line items #215-Special Events and #204-Library (new shelving)

The Financial Report was **APPROVED** as submitted.

Finance Ministry (Bo Walkley)

1. In 2010 we will undertake a capital campaign and building plan and a million dollar budget.
2. We will be looking closely at the percentages spent on budget line items. We will send notice to ministry leaders to project any additional expenses, to determine if line items that are under budget will be spent and if not use those funds to manage other line items.

Director of Discipleship Ministries (DDM) (James Pace)

1. The **Breakfast with St. Nicholas was a huge success** with 65 in attendance. The St. Nicholas center will be displayed for another week. James encouraged all to take a look at the information about how St. Nicholas came to be the Santa Claus we know today.

Associate Pastor (Clara Gestwick)

1. On December 20 we will have the **Blue Christmas Service**. Approximately half of those who will attend are people from the community. This is a good outreach for the community.

2. The **College Christmas Party at the parsonage** will be on December 21. Doug is cooking Lasagna. This helps us to reconnect with those we have not seen in a while. We had 24 to attend last year and we encourage students to attend.
3. I attended an **8-day event in Florida for rest and renewal**. It gave ministers time to rest and take a look at life and their calling. This is a program for clergy wellness through the Virginia Annual Conference. It was a very rewarding experience.

Senior Pastor (Doug Gestwick)

1. There will be **four services for Christmas Eve**. The 5:00 p.m. is the children/family service. The 7:00 and 11:00 p.m. is the Lesson and Carols services and the 9:00 is a more traditional service.
2. We need to take our **hats off to the Boy Scouts**. They laid mulch in the cold and rain and did a fantastic job. Please thank them when you see them.
3. There are several **open positions on Church Council** that we are working to fill.
4. The Council of Bishops recommended that the **pastoral letter entitled, *Gods Renewed Creation: Call to Hope*** be read aloud in worship during the Advent Season. The 5-page letter will be available at the Hospitality Center for those who wish to read it.
5. Doug **thanked leaders not returning** to Council for their service.

ADJOURNMENT

1. Church Council members **lifted up praises and concerns** and the meeting was closed with prayer.
2. The **meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:10 p.m.**

Submitted by Debbie Fullhart, Church Council Secretary