

# *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."*

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## **CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING**

### **Minutes**

**June 9, 2009**

**7:30 p.m.**

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### **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Bo Walkley who substituted for Church Council Chair Tom Lyon who was traveling and unable to make the meeting. There were 17 members present.

### **HOUSEKEEPING MATTERS**

1. Members were asked to sign in on the Attendance Roster.
2. **Next Church Council meeting:** Tuesday, August 11, 2009 at 7:30 p.m.  
Devotions: Blair Ellis  
Refreshments: Jason Houser

### **DEVOTION**

Theresa Butler shared a devotion from the book *"More Ready Than You Realize."* The excerpt *"Bringing God into Everyday Life"* told about a pastor who received a phone call from a woman he did not know. The woman began the conversation by saying "You don't know me and I don't go to church but if I did I would go to yours." The woman told the pastor of the actions and good deeds of a family in her neighborhood and what a fine example they were to others. She went on to say that if this is what it meant to go to church and be a Christian that maybe it was worth consideration. As Christians we go to church because of God's love but this story reminds us how important it is to live God's love when we leave the church. Theresa closed with prayer.

### **VISION CASTING BY THE PASTORS**

United Methodists believe in conferencing – not giving all the information to one person – but rather giving a little to individuals and then gathering to share and discuss. At this year's Annual Conference there will be 32 Amendments to vote on and with a 2/3 vote they will become part of the church discipline. Of all the amendments that will be voted on this year Amendment 1 will be by far the most controversial. Amendment 1 will address the issue of membership refusal and is in response to a previous case in which a pastor from South Hill UMC refused membership to a man because he was gay. This issue was taken to the Judicial Council which ruled that United Methodist pastors have the authority to determine a person's membership eligibility. The United Methodists stance on homosexuality is that every person

**APPROVED: August 11, 2009**

is a person of sacred worth and should not be excluded from membership. If this amendment receives the 2/3 vote it will overturn the Judicial Council's decision giving pastors the authority to refuse membership.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes from the **June 9, 2009 Church Council meeting** were **APPROVED** as submitted.

## **ITEMS REQUIRING DISCUSSION FOR ACTION / APPROVAL**

**1. Motion from the Board of Trustees (Election to Replace Trustee Vacancy): The Board of Trustees request that, with the approval of senior pastor Doug Gestwick, Wanda Sills be elected by the Church Council to replace Carol Comstock on the board.**

- a) Regretfully, Carol will be leaving us in mid-July. Carol has contributed above and beyond what is expected to make our church and parsonage wonderful facilities. It will be a daunting task to replace Carol in all the projects she has done for God and church. Her talent, endless energy, consistent participation and creativity will be sorely missed.

**Motion was unanimously APPROVED**

**2. Motion from the Outreach Ministry: Request approval to appoint Pastor Clara, Gestwick, Business Manager, Bill Boyer and Outreach Ministry Co-Chair, Mary Ellis as a sub-committee of Church Council to look further into the "Vision for Expansion" proposal of the Outreach Ministry.**

- a) At the Outreach Ministry meeting on Monday, June 1, Pastor Clara presented and exciting idea and the discussion that ensued addressed the following question: *"In addition to the expansion of our current property on Ella Taylor Road, what if we were to incorporate possibilities for a property on Route 17 into the vision and mission of St. Luke's?"*
- b) With our Building Program for the property on Ella Taylor Road, St. Luke's is providing more space in our current facility to continue to grow the ministry we offer both to our congregation and to our community. Many of the improvements or additions to the facility we now have are long overdue – an updated adequate kitchen, a Food Closet with better access for clients and workers, more classroom space for intentional faith development, office space that enhances the ministry that our pastors and staff do every day, and music space that provides the area needed for our choirs and bells to do great music ministry. Other parts of the plan incorporated into the building vision such as the new Worship Center, although not as long overdue, are just as necessary for our calling to be a *fruitful* congregation. This "large space" will have a multi-purpose design that will include athletic and theatrical use, and can serve as an area for housing crews who come to help with disaster-relief efforts. The new Worship Center is to be a hospitable place for the central ministry of worship in a format that will be different from our tradition services, with the purpose of attraction the young people who will be essential to the survival of the church. This is VISION.
- c) What is our vision went further? What if our vision for "expansion" included a second site – just around the corner on Route 17 – that could provide a highly visible and very accessible place for our church to be in ministry to those in our

community who are in need of practical love? What if we considered rounding out our vision of ministry with a building that would enable us to reach out to the community with a variety of programs that would converge in one central location – classes on parenting, resume writing, job seeking, affordable housing, and computer skills to name a few? What if we could offer meeting space for groups such as AA, NA, and OEA? What if our vision included a central location for services for the needy in our community – perhaps an alternative place for the Food Closet, plus a clothing closet, and the eventual possibility of medical and legal office space for pro bono services?

- d) At 4300 George Washington Highway/Route 17, a property is available at the main entrance to the Heritage Square shopping center. The property is at a signaled intersection into the shopping area and is across the highway from the entrance to the new York County Baseball and Soccer Complex. It is on 1.78 acres with 100 feet of frontage on Route 17 and includes three buildings. The main building was built in 1985 and has recently been remodeled. It is two stories. There is also a warehouse and a shed located at the back of the property. The assessed value of the property is \$674,100, with county taxes set at \$4,853.52. The warehouse could bring in a monthly rent of \$1,200-\$1,500, and there is currently a third party interested in leasing it. In addition, owners receive \$500 monthly rent from a cell phone company for a tower on the power lines on the property. Might this particular property be worth considering?
- e) Any structure that is part of the church is important because it is the home base not only for what the church *is*, but for what the church *does*, for its faith in action. In the book *“Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations”*, the adjectives that Bishop Robert Schnase attaches to “hospitality” and “mission and service” are “RADICAL” and “RISK-TAKING.” By now we have a sensing of what these words can mean to us as a congregation. The reality of taking these practices to heart comes closer with the thought of stepping out further in our vision and giving serious consideration to a highly visible, accessible presence on Route 17.
- f) Besides practicing the radical hospitality and risk-taking mission and service that have been part of our call in 2009, by envisioning ourselves in ministry and service in the type of outreach center we could have on Route 17, St. Luke’s would be merging into the mindset of the hands-on, upbeat, practical ways of extending and receiving God’s love that mark the brand new **“Rethink Church”** campaign of the larger denomination of the United Methodist Church. Designed with the primary goal of reaching the 18-34 year-old age group, the campaign’s central message comes in the form of this question: **“What if church were a verb? What would it look like?”** There are many more “What if. . .” questions such as, “What if church wasn’t just a place to go on Sunday, but helped you have a place to go on Monday?” (Thousands of Job Training Programs) / “What if church wasn’t a building but thousands of doors? . . . How could we help other step through them?” These questions are threaded throughout the language of “rethinking”, and are meant to stimulate a broader vision of Church – one that speaks particularly to younger people, but a vision that is unmistakably relevant for all generation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Quoting from the website: “The campaign seeks to offer the church, not as a place to come to and stay within, but as a base of operation for expressing faith by moving out into communities and around the globe to become part of God’s plan for world transformation.” (Please visit St. Luke’s website for links to [www.RethinkChurch.org](http://www.RethinkChurch.org) and its accompanying website, [www.10ThousandDoors.org](http://www.10ThousandDoors.org).)

- g) A final thought from Rethink Church: “The campaign will challenge (people) to think of church not as a static institution, but as a movement of people empowered to transform the world . . . a movement of people seeking to make disciples of Jesus Christ by gathering in buildings on Sunday, seeing the world as its parish and doing faithful things in it. . . At the same time, the campaign will speak to the people in the pews of the United Methodist Church. It will call us to see our local church in a much broader way – not solely as a building in which we worship, but as a conduit into our communities through which we may live out our faith by touching people’s lives.”
- h) Extending and receiving Good’s love – we do this as a church every day in both spiritual and practical way too numerous to count. And what a blessing St. Luke’s already is for our community as we open our doors to the many group who meet at our Ella Taylor site. How much more of a blessing could we be if we provided an outreach center that could meet even more needs, especially needs of the people who are hurting? Could we take a step further in our vision and live even more into what “church” means right here in our community?

**Motion was unanimously APPROVED**

## **REPORTS / ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

### **Worship Ministry** (Brenda Ramsey and Kamela Verry)

1. **Acolytes will now assist with Communion.** They will stand by to assist the Pastors if they run out of bread.
2. **Special Services coming up:**
  - a) Recognition of Graduates June 14
  - b) Father’s Day June 21
3. **New linens for the communion table** will be purchased with donations made in memory of Esther Balser since this ministry area was her passion.

### **Finance Ministry** (Bo Walkley)

1. Finance meetings are becoming boring due to **everything running so smoothly**. We are blessed that the congregation is so giving.

### **Financial Report** (Bill Boyer, Business Manager)

1. The **Financial Reports for April and May** were provided as information.
2. **It has been a good two months.** We are currently at 36.9% expenses and 37.8% income, giving us \$8,500 more income than expenses.
3. There has been **\$2,100 for Annual Conference** collected to date.
4. The **congregation is to be well congratulated for their support and commitment** during these hard economic times.

### **Staff Parish Relations Committee** (SPRC) (Jason Houser)

1. Tom Sayre completed the **parsonage home inspection**
2. **Theresa Butler has expressed interest in going into the ministry.** SPRC met with her to discuss her interests and the committee unanimously approved that she should move forward.

## United Methodist Men (UMM) (William Sutton)

### *Local Church:*

1. The UMMen Fellowship Breakfast was held on Sunday, May 17 in the Fellowship Hall and everyone enjoyed a time of food, fellowship and updates on future events. We continue our focus on “**Men in Ministry**” with an emphasis on spiritual growth, building relationships, making disciples, and mission support. Men are asked to share information about the ministry area they are interested in and outline ways others may help. Tom Sayre of the Church Trustees explained the upcoming projects and requested additional helpers were needed.
2. The **3<sup>rd</sup> Annual St. Lukes UMMen Spiritual Retreat** was held on Saturday, May 23 at Sandy Bottom Nature Park. Sixteen men attended this event and were blessed by spiritual renewal, great presentations by leaders, good fellowship and food, and time to refocus from the world. Our theme was “Oh, Brother! Walking Together in Faith”, and these type of events help build lasting relationships for the men. The money collected from this event was donated to the missions of the UMMen.
3. The UMMen will not meet on June 21 since that is Father’s Day.
4. Our next Fellowship Breakfast will be July 19 with a program.

### *Peninsula District:*

1. The **Heart Haven’s “Morrison Home”** in Newport News is now completed and the keys to the home have been given to Heart Havens. The District UMMen have been collecting donations of furnishing for the home and are preparing the home for the new residents to start moving in about June 15. 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 UMMen’s General Meeting** is scheduled for July 27 at Zion UMC, Yorktown. This meeting is open to all men and it is a great time to fellowship with men from other churches on this district. There is a dinner at 6:30 p.m. followed by a program.
3. The **Wesleyan Building Brothers “Male Leadership Experience”** took place in Blackstone, April 28-30. There were 45 men in attendance for this event. This event was lead by Dan Schaffer, the author of the book, “Spiritual Fathers”. The men left feeling excited about this process to help men grow in Christ and share the love of Christ to other men in their community. This process is all about building relationships and sharing Christ with others and inviting men into a deeper relationship with Christ. There will be other events scheduled in the near future for more men to come and hear about this process and to be a part of this.

## United Methodist Women (UMW) (Katy Jones)

1. We raised \$4,139.54 for **STOP HUNGER NOW** to package 16,558 Meals in Early May - (this includes the money the 5<sup>th</sup> graders made from candy & Valentines). Thank you to the very generous and loving membership of St. Luke's.
2. The UMW will host a **Graduation Reception** after church on June 14 at noon.
3. We enjoyed our Second **Quarterly Unit Meeting** on Thursday, May 14, 12 noon, with Deanne Posey providing a program on the UMW Reading Program.
4. Circles are concluding their June meetings with their book studies, preparation of Kits for Conference, and luncheons out. Circles and the Book Club will not meet in July and August.

5. The UMW gave a \$50 love offering through the Peninsula District to the **Healing Eagle Clinic** for Native American families near West Point, VA and \$50 to two United Methodist Churches in Alaska who are struggling to make repairs and asked for help.
6. We sent a donation to the Wesley Foundation at the College of William & Mary for their annual taco fundraiser.
7. **Intergenerational Women's Retreat:** Ladies, young and old, are invited to this year's spring day retreat. St. Luke's hosts this event from 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM on June 6, 2009. Daughters are encouraged to bring their Mothers, Grandmothers their Granddaughters. If you don't have a blood relative, bring a female friend. Sign up to participate on Pastor Clara's door.
8. Conference **School of Christian Mission**, VUMAC/Blackstone, July 24-26, July 27-30. We have scholarships available for any mother daughter team who would like to go to one of these sessions...call Suzi Smith or chat with Pastor Clara re. this!!
9. The **Krazy Quilters** completed over thirty five quilts for the Homeless in Newport News. They were blessed and then given to L.I.N.K. for distribution after PORT closed for the season. Lap Quilts were made by many for nursing home residents. We are grateful for these hard working, mission minded and very talented women.

#### **Nurture Ministry** (Della Shelton and Betty Brummer)

1. The **Nurture Ministry held a meeting on April 30.**
2. Betty Brummer and some other ministry helpers took the initiative to **begin contacting, via letter, members of our church community that have not attended services in several Sundays.** The first letters went out in March, and we would like to continue this practice about every 10 to 12 weeks. Helpers are needed to compare pew pad entries against our member database, comprise the list of letter recipients, and stuff/mail the letters. Please pass this along to your circles, Sunday School classes, etc. and let us know if there are any volunteers.
3. We will be meeting in June to **discuss continuation of the fellowship dinners next year** (starting again in September). If you have any ideas or suggestions, please let us know.
4. Clara Gestwick has about 16 or 17 names of folks to visit as part of the **shut-in ministry/visitation.** We are still collecting names of individuals to participate in that ministry, so please let one of us know of any volunteers– or even if you know someone that might be willing to chair this initiative. Also, if you think of a good name for this ministry area, we're taking suggestions!
5. We are putting feelers out regarding a **more focused ministry for older adults** in our church. If you have any recommendations or ideas or are interested in participating, please let us know.
6. The **next Nurture Ministry meeting is scheduled for July 30** at 6:30 p.m.

#### **Service Ministry** (Susie Small and Kathryn Budzik)

1. **Five groups have received funds from the Easter Egg Project** and \$17,000 will remain in reserves to assist individuals as needs arise. Even there were some very hard decisions to make the revised guidelines for distribution of the funds was well received.
2. **Brazil Mission Trip** plans and preparations still going strong. Currently working out the tour schedule and hotel arrangements for the 14 folks that plan to attend.
3. **ASP is June 27-July 4** and there will be 77 volunteers this year.

#### **Green Church Initiative** (Joe Posey)

1. Karen Berardini is now **using "green coffee" for the Fellowship Minute** in between worship services on Sunday.

### Education Ministry (Theresa Butler and Eric Cooper)

1. **Education Ministry met on June 4, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.**
2. **Sunday School Teacher Appreciation** was held April 26.
3. **Confirmation Sunday** was May 31 (20 newly confirmed members).
4. **New Young Adult Sunday Classes** have started (11:00 a.m. Nate DeHart)
5. **Spring 2009 Bible Studies** are underway
6. **Sunday School Teacher Response Form for 2009-2010** – 27 current teachers have been contacted, and all but ten have responded so far. Preschool and the 9<sup>th</sup> / 10<sup>th</sup> grade class are known vacancies at this time.
7. **Vacation Bible School “Paul and the Underground Church”** – July 20 thru 24 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., opening celebration, July 19 at 6:25 p.m. This year volunteer and participant registration is available online at [www.stlukesyorktown.org](http://www.stlukesyorktown.org). So far, 16 volunteers and 65 participants have registered online. Registration deadline for volunteers is July 5, for participants is June 30. VBS teacher training will be held on June 11 at 6:30 p.m. VBS planning meetings will be scheduled for July 5 and 17.

### Youth Ministry (Nate DeHart)

1. In April, the youth **led the Easter Sunrise service**, the High School graduating **class of '09 went on an OBX retreat** and we had the **30HR Famine**.
2. May was a slow month as the **Gong Show was canceled** due to a lack of parties willing to perform acts.
3. June 18 begins our summer **“Thursday Events”** with a Driving Scavenger Hunt beginning at 5:30 p.m.
4. June 21 – 26 will be the first week of youth going to **Camp Overlook**.
5. June 27 – July 4 is **ASP**.
6. Thursday, July 9 will be a **Pool Party at Windy Point** from 9 p.m. – 11 p.m.
7. July 10 – 13 is **DCLA** (a very large youth conference in Washington, D.C.)
8. Thursday, July 16 we will be going **tubing down the James River**
9. Thursday, July 23 is a **Miniature Golf outing**.
10. Thursday, July 30 the youth will be going to **Busch Gardens**.

### Board of Trustees (Tom Sayre)

1. **Open Contracts.** The following contracts have been signed and down payments made.
  - a) Conversion of oil heat to heat pumps. Completion scheduled for June 09.
  - b) New electric stove and fire suppression system. New stove will be installed on or about June 10, 09.
  - c) Masonry and courtyard drainage repairs. Underway and should be completed by mid June.
  - d) Fellowship hall and hall way painting. Underway and should be completed by June 19, 09.
  - e) Carpeting removal and installation of new carpeting. Scheduled to start on June 22, 09.
  - f) Radiator removal (in house). We should get it done piece meal during June and July.
  - g) Removal of residual oil from the oil tank. Anyone interested in purchasing and removing the oil?
2. **Classroom Painting.** The trustees selected five pastel colors for the classrooms. The sample colors are in the administrative office for your review. We also plan to visit each SS class to get your selection and to determine when you would like to paint your rooms. To the greatest extent possible, we would like each adult class to paint their own rooms.

In addition, we need volunteers to paint the rooms of those who are unable to paint their own rooms. It would also be nice if we could get parents of the younger students to paint their rooms. It would be great to get most of the painting done by summer's end or soon thereafter. There is also a possibility that the some painting will be done as an Eagle Scout Project.

### **Building Ministry** (Blair Ellis)

1. As described in our April minutes, the Building Committee has been **working with Myler regarding inputs/changes to the building plans** to make changes in response to feedback from our meetings with the SLUMC laity in Dec/Jan. Details of these changes are in the April 2008 report.
2. We **expect to hold a Building Committee meeting in the near future** to go over and hopefully finalize proposed changes in our plan, as per earlier discussions.
3. As mentioned in the Building Committee's April report to Church Council, **RSI's consultant to St. Luke's for the Capital Campaign was laid off**. The lay off by RSI caused several of the members of the Building Committee to re-evaluate our contract with RSI. The Senior Pastor had been contacted by another Capital Campaign company which has been given "high marks" by a number of pastors in the VA conference. After some discussion, a few members of the building committee, the Pastors, and others listened to a presentation given by James D. Klote & Associates to see what kind of differences their program might offer. The differences in the Klote program were significant and after consultation and discussion with the Senior Pastor, Associate Pastor, Finance Chair, Trustee Chair, SPRC Chair, and others, we elected to talk with RSI about terminating our contract.
4. As a result of this discussion, we have **sent a letter requesting release from our contract with RSI and are awaiting their formal response**. No decision will be made regarding a future selection of a Capital Campaign company until after the status of our contract with RSI is resolved.

### **Outreach Ministry** (Paige Glass, Scott Glass, Ginny Potts and Mary Ellis)

1. **The Glass family will relocate in June**. Paige has been a great help with the Outreach Ministry and their family will be truly missed.
2. **New Hospitality/Shepherding** – New hospitality/welcoming procedures are now in place for first-time visitors in worship.
  - a) Recent changes have been made as a result of an apparent reluctance on the part of first-time visitors to "raise their hands" when asked to do so during the worship services.
  - b) Rather than being asked to identify themselves, guests are simply and warmly welcomed, and then invited to visit our staffed Hospitality Desk following the service, where they are given a gift of homemade bread and offered a packet of information about our church.
  - c) We also have new visitor cards that now ask guests to indicate a "preferred method of contact", allowing them to choose the way they want to hear from us. Follow-up is a phone call or an e-mail from both a layperson and a pastor.
  - d) We are working on having "Guest Guides", not to take away from the culture of hospitality we want to foster in the entire congregation, but to be sure that someone will be especially alert for newcomers after worship.
  - e) For many months we had had very few visitor cards returned. On the first Sunday we tried our new action plan, seven first-time visitors came to the Hospitality Desk to receive their gift and to leave their information. On a recent Sunday, we had six.

- f) We are working toward being more and more intentional in our welcoming and tailoring it to achieve the best possible response.
- 3. **Preschool Summertime Story Hour** – June 17 – July 15, Wednesdays at 10:00 am.
  - a) Debby Clotfelter, Jean Henley and Kirsten Koch will lead.
  - b) Preschoolers from the church, the preschool, and the community are invited to bring a parent or caregiver to hear these stories:
    - “God Made the World and Everything in It”*
    - “Noah’s Ark”*
    - “Baby Moses”*
    - “Daniel and the Lions’ Den”*
    - “Jesus Loves All the Little Children”*
  - c) Many thanks to our leaders who will share Christ’s love in a very special way.
- 4. **Community Carnival/Outreach Event** – Sunday, September 20 from 2 – 6 pm. (September is Open House Month.) We will have a meeting this Thursday, June 11, at 7:45 to begin forming a committee of folks interested in coordinating and helping with this event that will be held on our church grounds. The Carnival will be advertised in the community. We are working on having large games/equipment from Big Top, as well as smaller carnival type games, free food, and a registration/information booth.
- 5. **Matching Grant Proposal for Rethink Church TV ads** – (This is a NEW media campaign with a different emphasis from the previous Igniting Ministry campaign) - A proposal has been submitted for a matching grant from United Methodist Communications to help pay for TV advertising for Back-to-School and for Advent. Our budget will allow us to pay for the ads whether or not we receive matching funds. If we are approved for the grant, there are strings attached in that we must complete Online Training and Welcoming Certification before they will pay us. Pastor Clara, Ginny Potts, Karen Berardini, and Mary Ellis will be “students” for the online training during July and August. We would love to have someone from each ministry area join us. Please contact one of us if you are interested.
- 6. **Drive-Thru Nativity** – December 11 & 12 - We are seeking an overall coordinator and hope to begin working on this in the next few weeks.

**Communications Ministry** (Ken Engebretson)

- 1. **Communication deadlines:**
  - a) Bulletin: Tuesday, 6:00 p.m.
  - b) Newsletter: June 15

**Director of Discipleship Ministries** (DDM) (James Pace)

- 1. Preparations continue for **Vacation Bible School**.
- 2. Lining up **teachers for the Fall Sunday School classes**.

**Associate Pastor** (Clara Gestwick)

- 1. **St. Luke’s will host the touring youth choir from Brentwood UMC in Nashville, Tennessee** on Wednesday, July 22. They will be a roaming Roman choir for our Vacation Bible School on Wednesday. Host families are needed to house the youth for the evening, feed them breakfast on Thursday morning and bring them back to the church. There will also be picnic for the youth and host families at Yorktown Beach (grassy area) on Wednesday evening. Forms to be a host family are available on Pastor Clara’s door.

**Senior Pastor** (Doug Gestwick)

1. **Pastor Doug will be away from the office July 14-28** for Annual Conference, ASP and vacation.
2. **The Comstock, Striepe and Glass families will be relocating soon** and will be missed. Please make a point to wish them all well.

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. **Debbie Fullhart will be out of town for the October 13 Church Council meeting** and requested a volunteer to take the minutes for that meeting. Thank you to Mary Ellis for volunteering.

**ADJOURNMENT**

1. Church Council members lifted up **Praises and Concerns** and Pastor Clara closed with prayer.
2. **The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.**

*Submitted by Debbie Fullhart, Church Council Secretary*