

**Administrative Board, Brecksville United Methodist Church
January 8, 2008**

In attendance: Jennifer Schneider, Karen Walburn, Ruth McDonel, Kay Auwerter, Les Buttolph, Sue Dietrich, Laurie Riccardi, Marilyn Schillo, Janet Kleckner, Donna Houston, Joe Holmes, Sandie Meyer, Don Krolkowski, Sally Becker, Craig Kotnik, John Falko, Joy McGuire, Betsy Wooster, Karen Oehl, Leslie Miller. Guest from Conference office: Dirk Elliott.

Opening thoughts from Leslie Miller, Chairperson.

Staff reports:

Betsy Wooster, Christian Education. Upcoming events are the Passion Drama on Palm Sunday, new adult studies this month of the New Testament (Karen Oehl) and the Supplementary Epistles (Kendall Lancaster), and the Lenten Study. This year's study during Lent is the Gospel of Mark. Matt and Betsy Wooster are writing a study guide. Betsy is writing the Bible curriculum for the elementary grades this winter.

Joy McGuire, Music. Joy is learning many new things! She's been enjoying learning about favorite hymns and songs through the requests that have been turned in. She is working on ways for all ages to be involved in worship and music. She is also looking ahead to the fall of 2008, with an eye to how worship and music will change because of the new schedule.

The **Transition Task Force** has been meeting monthly, and will have recommendations ready for the March Council on Ministries meeting. Reminder: as of September 2008 the Sunday morning schedule will include an hour of Christian Education *between* worship services.

Committee reports:

Jennifer Schneider, Commission on Education. They are still looking for leaders for the Lenten studies. On March 2 the children will lead worship at 9:00, with some leadership in the 11:00 service?

Karen Walburn, Evangelism Committee. The committee is sponsoring/hosting a tea at Chippewa Place on January 26. New welcome bags are being created, which will be given to visitors to our worship services. This will be a gift to them, and help us to identify and greet visitors. The committee continues to recruit greeters and deliver bread to visitors.

Craig Kotnik, Missions. There was the usual end of the year flurry of deciding on the designated theme and places for the Christmas Eve offering and the rest of the 2007 Missions budget. They are looking forward to the new year.

Janet Kleckner, Staff-Parish Relations. Two organist candidates were interviewed and auditioned in December. The committee and others who participated are hoping to meet on Sunday the 13 to make a recommendation.

Kay AuWerter, Trustees. A new sidewalk was put in from the front door to the street. Pitching it away from the building should help prevent water coming in along the building and into the basement cloak room. A new ice maker will be purchased soon, with funding from Gifts and Memorials. Work has been continuing on various heating problems and issues. We now have a service contract with Stack Heating and Cooling. The big project for this year is to start installing automatic door closers on stairwell doors, so that they can remain open but will close in the case of a building emergency. The elevator has had repairs which should allow it to run smoothly for some time. We also have a new contract with a company for snow removal in the parking lot. This will now include spreading calcium chloride, to help with ice.

Sue Dietrich, Worship Committee. Committee members helped to put up and take down Christmas decorations. There were an estimated 800 or more people at the three Christmas Eve services (400 at 9:00). Ash Wednesday is February 6, there will be an early morning and an evening service. The new poinsettia arrangement went well, having them in worship for 2 Sunday of Advent and then delivering them to shut ins, etc. There still were plenty for Christmas Eve, and even a few for a Christmas wedding and Epiphany.

Kay AuWerter, Youth Board. Youth Jam went well, overall, although the group was spread out on more than one floor where they were staying, which caused some problems. There are retreats coming up for Jr. and Sr. High. Also a day trip on January 19 to Delaware. Mentors are now meeting with confirmands. Leslie Miller shared her strong support of the mentoring program.

Don Krolkowski, Communications. There is still a hope that an additional publication will be created this year this is more feature article style and will be printed professionally. Two purchases of equipment will help with education and youth programs—a new laptop and a video camera. These will help with Epic and the confirmation church history project. Gifts and Memorials helped with these.

Ann Rittman, Finance Committee. Ann came before the Board with the proposed budget for 2008.

A review of the process: In August and September the campaign itself was planned. Committees and staff were asked for budget proposals in September and October. The campaign ran through October, with a commitment Sunday on November 4. Since then, the Finance Committee has continued to review the budget requests, pledges, and expenses and receipts in 2007. Although the average amount of pledges is slightly up, there have been less pledges. This may be a combination of the added need of the Capital Campaign, confusion over pledging done for 3 years for capital and 1 year for the budget, and the generally more difficult economic situation, including high gas prices.

In December the Committee realized that there would need to be a budget reconciliation meeting, asking staff and leaders to consider their budget requests in light of the pledges and the 2007 budget. Leaders met and were able to reduce the budget by \$20,000. Even after this there is a deficit of \$47,114. On behalf of the Finance Committee, Ann Rittman recommended that the Administrative Board approve the unbalanced budget with the following plans of action included: Finance Committee will go to the congregation to apprise them of the situation, inviting them to help; Finance Committee will continue monitoring the situation, especially in the first quarter of 2008; all committees and staff will be asked to keep spending as low as possible; the Finance Committee and others will explore alternative funding sources.

As the recommendation came from committee no second was needed.

Discussion included:

In January of 2007 the budget was in a deficit of \$49,000. After going to the congregation, that was reduced to \$24,000, but the unbalanced budget was approved in April. We ended 2007 balanced mainly because the budget was underspent, helped by factors such as staff positions that were not filled for part of the year, and a decrease in education spending.

Questions about decrease in pledging. Is there one factor? Answer was that it seemed to be a combination of factors. Last year a big problem was the loss of several key givers. This year it is more in number of givers.

What is our obligation to pay apportionments? Are we carrying the load for other churches that don't pay? (Pastor Karen responded to this. Apportionments based on what we spend on ourselves. We may get some break in 2009 because we can exempt Joy's salary for 2 years. We are also looking at building use/utility issues that may change the way we report expenses and help with apportionments. When churches don't pay, others are not penalized. Ministries don't happen.)

After discussion, the budget was approved.

Capital Campaign report. As of the end of 2007 we have received 35% of the target amount. The pledge amount remains a bit under the \$400,000 goal. There is a hope that as work is done and people can see how the money is used this year, giving and pledging may increase.

Additional Staff Items.

Prayer Retreat January 26-27, led by Lisa Drew. This will be held at a very nice retreat center.

Pastor Karen encouraged everyone to consider attending the North Coast District Leadership Academy, a day of workshops, on February 2, at the Lakewood UMC. Handouts and registration were available. Lisa Drew has been on the steering committee, the Jaszczak family is leading a youth arts workshop.

Report on New Church Start

Dirk Elliot, from the East Ohio Conference office, came to share plans that are in motion to start a new church in southern Broadview Heights, in the area of the intersection of 82 and 176. This is a growing area with a lot of young, unchurched families.

The way a church is started is that a pastor trained in new church starts is appointed, and comes to the area to start meeting people, holding Bible studies, and just getting the word out. Meetings, classes, and even worship can be held in public places at first. A Community Center in that area could serve this function.

The churches close by are also invited to be part of starting a new church, which is why Dirk Elliott was approaching BUMC. The UMC in North Royalton has also been approached. Two other churches nearby will probably not be involved, as one is quite small and rural and the other, Strongsville, already has been involved with River of Life, the new church in Olmsted Falls.

Dirk provided a report on the reasoning behind new church starts. Study shows that the entire church community benefits as new churches are launched. Many unchurched people are more comfortable getting in on the ground floor of a church, rather than being an outsider coming into an established church. Members of new churches are more likely to invite others to come to church with them, making this the most effective tool of evangelism. New churches are not meant to compete with existing churches, but to reach different populations.

We can choose how we might want to be involved in this new church.

1. Financial support
2. Sending a core of members to “prime the pump” of membership. Such would need to feel called to be founding members of a new church.
3. Share space and staff.
4. Become a partner with the church, perhaps seeing it as a satellite or additional campus of our church.

This church will be launched whether we decide to be involved or not. A clergyperson will be appointed this summer. It will be supported by the Conference and District initially.

We have been invited to think about our interest and commitment in this project.

After some discussion of this topic, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted, Karen Oehl