

Finance Committee Minutes, Brecksville United Methodist Church  
November 17, 2008

Present: Eric Louttit, David Brown, Les Buttolph, Mary Jane Matts, Emily Vincent, Karen Oehl, Kristi Eberhardt, Janet Kleckner, John Scott, Jack Drescher.

Minutes were read and approved—thank you to Kristi for serving as secretary for October 20.

Statement as of October 31, 2008

Les did show in revenues the standing so far with the activity on the Celebration Garden, Mugs, and Garage Sale. We still are paying bills on the garden, and should start showing a profit with future sales. Note: statement does not show bill for the bricks themselves, so is not accurate yet. The garage sale, with a profit of 4,211.96 was a great success! A thank you to Jane Petrie will go in the Good Word. Please find ways to show your appreciation.

Stewardship Campaign Update

Pledges received so far: 173. Total pledges last year were 225. Pledges are still coming in. The average pledged amount is up. A follow up letter went out the day after commitment Sunday to those that had pledged, confirming the amount. Another follow up letter, dated today, will be sent out to those who have yet pledged with a gentle reminder and an additional pledge card. In the next few weeks, a calling list for one last reminder or follow up will be created and Mary Jane will make the calls.

Eric reminded us to proceed with caution as we create the budget based on these pledges. Although pledged in good faith, with the current economic situation there may be changes in life circumstances that keep people from fulfilling their commitments.

Proposed Budget

One note: Les has been holding back on paying for missions projects unless they were people/time sensitive. The committee feels strongly that he should move forward on projects decided on by the Missions Committee, even if this spending puts us in a deficit situation again. This congregation strongly supports missions and a deficit budget was approved with mechanics to cover bills with the General Reserve Fund. We should not balance the budget with a decrease in mission spending.

Discussion on the budget. Committee noted the higher office supply and equipment costs. Irma held off on many things this past year because of a carry over of surplus from 2007, but new supplies will be needed in the coming year. There will be more needed for postage, etc., and one additional computer.

The unpledged giving has been down this year, so a lower figure is being used there for 2009. Some may still come in this year (2008) at the end of the year for tax reasons. The usual sale of stocks gifts will take a big hit, however.

Clergy salaries were not increased. Staff Parish is seriously discussing doing the same with staff salaries. They are very reluctant to do so, not wanting to balance the budget with the staff's income. Perhaps will be frozen, with future raise possibilities.

Perhaps a bonus at end of year if it can be done. Although Staff Parish makes the recommendations, Finance can decide to accept their proposal or not based on the most accurate financial information.

The parsonage utilities figure is lower based on the past year's actual costs. Health insurance amounts are set by the conference.

#### Other fund raising ideas

Suggestion made to participate in the program of working concessions at Indians games. Some other churches and organizations have done this successfully. Some discussion about whether it is as profitable as might be hoped. There is also the issue that this benefits a big organization that gets free labor from the volunteers, and fills positions that otherwise might be jobs for those that need them desperately. Perhaps this is not appropriate for our church to support.

Meeting was adjourned. Next meeting: December 15.

Respectfully submitted, Karen Oehl