

**Council on Ministries
Brecksville United Methodist church
Monday, May 4, 2009**

Janet Kleckner opened the meeting with prayer.

Present: Janet Kleckner, Catherine Vastartis, Dee Lancaster, Betsy Wooster, Lynn Hobzek, Lisa Drew, Jenny Gee, Ruth McDonel, Donna Sibits.

Minutes have not yet been received—will be reviewed when they arrive.

Report on Administrative Board meeting and Strategic Plan review in April given by Janet Kleckner.

We reviewed the Strategic Plan that was adopted in May of 2006. Many things have been done and are being done that were action steps of that plan.

However, there is still a sense that something more is waiting to be done.

One idea that surfaced at the Ad Board meeting was that we need to move forward on marketing in some form. There is uncertainty about what that means: Find a new audience and create worship and programs for them? Market what we are doing already? Where do we go from here? At that April meeting these questions and direction were forwarded to Council on Ministries for follow up.

Next step: We have the opportunity for a free consultation with someone who is in the marketing profession, is a personal friend with church members, and represents a large area institution. A meeting will be set up with some church leaders and staff with this resource to help us get an idea of direction and tasks to be done.

The next logical question is: What are we marketing? Is there still something else that we need to develop here at this church?

One possible “missing” piece is the lack of hands on service opportunities. The second half of our mission statement is “serving in love,” but while the idea is there, it is not something we really own yet. Missions has done a wonderful job providing the church with opportunities, especially in the last year, which is a start. From conversations with various members and people in the community, there is a real *hunger* for meaningful service in the world.

Donna and Catherine shared that in their experience from serving the meals at Brooklyn Memorial, this opportunity is popular and important at Ridge UCC, the other church that has partnered with us on those meals.

While Brecksville itself is not a community with many needs for hands on service, we have plenty of urban opportunities in the Cleveland area. With the many Catholic parishes closing, there are going to be gaps in the service network.

How can we incorporate service more into our lives? Is it reasonable to ask each member to be involved in at least one hands on service during the course of a year? How would we do that?

Accountability/encouragement groups to help with follow up.

Link a promise or pledge of service with the stewardship campaign. Have people “make the pledge,” declaring intentions.

Launch a campaign to get people involved, with the year of service kicking off in January.

Have a ministry fair (perhaps in January) that includes booths for service opportunities that we have organized or from the community. You can sign up right away.

So. . . is this what we would plan to market about ourselves? Making service part of our life together fulfills the hunger for service, connection, etc. It appeals to all ages, both genders, people who have diverse interests. It is true that this congregation is mission minded, but in the past that has been demonstrated more in financial support.

This is perhaps what it means to rethink church, as the new national campaign of the UMC is encouraging us to do. What if church is a verb? You can visit the Rethink Church website to find out more. If others visit that site, then come to ours, what will they find? If a life that includes living in Christ and serving in love, integrated life, this could be a new way to invite people into Brecksville UMC. We need to use our web site to make our life more clear to those outside the church family.

By consensus this meeting of the Council on Ministries decided that we will move forward on developing a campaign to involve everyone in the congregation with one act of hands on service in 2010. The work can start now, by making connections with organizations with volunteering opportunities, advertising, organizing a trip, making plans within each committee or group, etc. Don't get discouraged!

Nominating/Lay Leadership issue:

As we go into the nominating season, the Lay Leadership Committee will be inviting new members of committees and chairpersons to serve starting in July. There will be a training for leadership this summer.

In addition, the committee will be considering “decommissioning” committees that might need a “rethink” of their own. Two that are proposed are Koinonia and Church and Society. While they have good members that have been committed and involved, they also have had some frustrations in response in the church. Perhaps there is a need to redesign and redirect? The council was in agreement, and this idea will be taken up in the Lay Leadership meetings this spring.

Reports

Missions: Dinner at Brooklyn Memorial was successful. BBQ beef was a hit. They prepared for 200, served 100, but sent leftovers home. The committee has already signed up to continue with this program next year. Trips to the Foodbank will be every other month starting in September. The rest of the dates this year are May 16, September 26, November 21. The committee is supporting Jenny Scheufler's Honduras mission, Bruce McCrodden's trip to Russia. Approximately \$1000 each were given to the three missions

sponsored by our Easter offering. The knitting club continues and will probably go on through the summer, incorporating some new ideas. The newest project being sponsored and promoted by Missions is the new Habitat RESTORE. They recycle appliances, furniture, furnishings. Look for information out. Missions accepting donations for a Tool Drive for them.

Worship: The Hospitality captains joined the most recent meeting and the summer worship plans were reviewed. There was an usher and greeter training in April, pretty well attended. Along with miscellaneous details to help ushers, we went over fire evacuation procedures. Trainings will continue to be held 2 or 3 times a year. The Easter flowers were beautiful, despite a couple of glitches. Outdoor worship at 8:30 will be held every Sunday and will “count” as worship, including communion, etc. Suggestion to advertise this unique opportunity. . . .

Evangelism: The committee is working on invited someone to come and do a Faith Sharing workshop in the fall and follow that up with a class on faith sharing. They are also looking at all of our publicity and information materials with an eye to evangelism. Another area of planning is incorporating new members. There is a new member session coming up with orientation opportunities on May 31 and June 7. New members will join on June 14 at the 10:00 service.

Education and Director of Education: The Passion Drama was the recent accomplishment from this ministry area. There was a lot of work and involvement from the committee and others. About 100 people went through. The next big thing is Vacation Bible School on June 22-25. Part of VBS this year is beginning to partner with Brooklyn Memorial in faith and mission. Camps supplies will be collected at our VBS during the week. On the Sunday following VBS families are invited to attend worship at Brooklyn memorial to start building friendships. The CMAP musical is May 17 and it will be wonderful! They are hoping for more attendance from the congregation. Right now curriculum is being reviewed and teacher recruitment is already underway for next year!

Youth/Youth Director: Planning us underway for VBS in the park and for the fall. During the summer there will be a Senior High (and college age) Sunday School “on the square” in the gazebo park from 9:15-9:45. This is meant to be primarily a time for connection. Katie Bartholomew will be serving as a summer intern with Lisa to introduce her to youth ministry work.

Koinonia: Karaoke night on the preceding Saturday night was fun (who knew all those Hannah Montana songs?). There was pizza, music, and about 40 in attendance. They went about an hour past the expected time for the evening.

United Methodist Women. The April meeting was a program given by Peg Rowan McGovern with Brody, her dog that is involved in therapy in nursing homes, etc. UMW Sunday is May 10, with guest speaker Rev. Diane Johnson from the Wooster UMC. All women will receive a flower. The next UMW meeting will have a program given by Les

Buttolph on the Ireland trip he took with Rev. Kuntz and others. On June 7 there will be a special “high tea” at 3:00. Tickets will be available for a \$3 donation ahead of time. Home days are coming. Volunteers will be needed!

Next meeting: June 1, 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Karen Oehl