

**The Administrative Board of Brecksville United Methodist Church
October 12, 2009**

Present: Leslie Miller, Karen Oehl, Joy Fenton, Craig Czarnota, Matt Nelson, Carole Brachna, Les Buttolph, Don Yates, Jenny Gee, Donna Sibits, Sandy Crist, Lynn Spencer, Ruth Holmes, Joe Holmes, Nancy Smith

Reviewed the minutes of July 13, 2009 and supplemental meeting in September.

Corrections and notes: education report is incomplete, correct spelling of Don Yates and Becky Gezze.

Spencer/Joe Holmes motion to approve as corrected carried.

Item for action: Pastor/parsonage housing exclusion for 2010 in the amount of \$6,000. Nelson/Gee motion carried.

Item for action: Grant permission for Business Administrator Les Buttolph to use up to \$5,000 from the General Reserve if needed to meet obligations if there is a deficit before the end of the year.

Discussion: What if more is needed? Should we approve more? Leslie Miller recommended that we not change the amount. If it is needed, we would want to have more details about why it is needed and what the situation is. Les also pointed out that the Administrative Board meets again before the books are closed in January, and if needed more can be approved at that time.

Nelson/Sibit motion to approve up to \$5,000 may be used from the General Reserve by Les Buttolph to meet 2009 operating shortfall.

Report on meeting with Bishop Hopkins and Doug Anderson

Leslie Miller gave a summary report on a meeting of the Tier 2 (medium-large) churches in the conference with the bishop and Doug Anderson, a church growth consultant. Lucy Fesler and Rev. Oehl also attended. Churches were encouraged to look at the way we make decisions; is it based on just “doing stuff” or on taking steps to fulfill our mission? We can very easily fall into the trap of repeating activities, and keeping busy to make us feel that we are vital. This leads to stagnation and burn out. Brecksville UMC has the advantage of having taken a serious look at our mission and activities through the Strategic Plan in the past few years.

Leslie encouraged committees to work toward the model of living out our mission as they plan and evaluate activities. Where do you want to end up? What is the next step to MOVE in that direction? Consider then how you might make reports from your committee based on this emphasis. Doug Anderson challenged us as a conference to ask how our churches are involved in the East Ohio Conference mission to make and mature disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Lucy asked the question, “How do we measure?” Isn’t it important to look at numbers sometimes, for example in the case of new members. Lynn remarked that not only new

members are important, but member development. Matt Nelson and Carole Brachna shared what helped them make the decision to get involved here: location, children's programs, and friendliness. Fellowship groups and activities, such as the Wednesday Wheels biking group help us get to know each other, which encourages commitment to our ministry together. Craig Czarnota offered his view of how Evangelism helps us to fulfill our mission by encouraging and training people to share their faith, which will eventually grow our church family.

Other discussion on this idea of what church growth might look like or how it might be measured included the following concerns and comments:

How do we open up this discussion to the whole congregation?

Where do we need to balance change and keeping traditions?

How do we do ministry in a way that encourages people to choose church over the other demands in their busy schedule?

How is what we do or offer different from other churches?

What are other churches doing that encourages church growth?

We are in an era where people don't go to church because they have to, but because they choose to.

What are we passionate about and how do we communicate with/infect/recruit the general population?

Committee Reports

Church and Society: Jim Houston will be speaking on Monday, September 26, 7:30.

Education: Jenny Gee reported that they are working on the budget, have purchased curriculum for VBS in 2010, the new Logos curriculum being used in 6th and 7th grade is successful, Seasons of the Spirit materials are being used in CMAP, Sprouts, Quest and worship.

Evangelism: Faith Sharing Workshop on coming Saturday, 9-12, with guest leader Don Richards, chair of the conference Evangelism Committee. In the next adult Sunday School session a class on Becoming a Contagious Christian will be offered. The committee is also looking at the Alpha program, a course on Christianity that incorporates a meal, worship, presentation and table discussion. This is a very successful program, and one that St. Basil's has been doing for a number of years.

Finance: Les Buttolph shared some things going on financially. The budget for next year is in the development stage, aiming at a 0% increase in expenses. At the end of September there was a \$30,000 gap between revenues and expenses. We were behind last year at this time, but not to this extent. Last year the amount was made up in the fourth quarter and we ended the year with a surplus. That is not projected this year. Based on the numbers so far, the Capital Campaign will not be paid in full by the end of this year. There may be as much as \$45,000 in uncollected pledges. Finance Committee will be considering ways to honor and repay the loan we made to ourselves through Gifts and Memorials for the renovations. The new energy coop which we have joined should

help with gas bills and may eventually lower our electricity bills. Power Alarm is now monitoring our fire alarm system.

Missions: A lot of their work right now is in inviting organizations to be part of the PROJECT 2010 kick off event in January. There will be trips to the Cleveland Foodbank and Brooklyn Memorial to serve dinner on November 21 and 22. They are working on ideas for the Christmas offering. The knitting ministry continues. Ten people will be going on a trip to Costa Rica in January.

Staff Parish: Lucy Fesler reported that they are reviewing resumes for the Office Manager position, expecting to start interviews next week. They are also preparing for Charge Conference.

Trustees: Bob Lundholm reported for Trustees. Work on the parsonage is moving along. The kitchen and powder room are done, as well as the main bath. The master bath remains to be done. There will be a church grounds clean up day on November 7, and Boy Scout Troop 175 will be helping. Trustees are looking carefully at scheduling projects based on funds available and immediate need.

Worship: Everyone was asked to turn in their worship surveys.

Music: Joy gave a report on the Fine Arts Series concerts. The first one was very high class in quality, the cost supported by the train event last January. Another on November 14 will be excellent again with a nice reception to follow. Spread the word!

Next Administrative Board meeting will be on January 11, 2010, 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Karen Oehl