

SUMC Church Conference
Minutes
Monday December 5, 2016



District Superintendent Rev. Ken Kieffer called the meeting to order and polls opened at 7:35pm

In attendance:

Rev. Woody Eddins, Rev. Peter Preiser, Rev. Ken Kieffer, Deb Clifford, Peter Gailey, Jim Ray, Rudy Maurer, Charlotte B. Bacon, Marje Van Dusen, JoAnne Douglas, Joyce Tullock, Leslie Kirkwood, William Kirkwood, Charlotte Ray, Charlie Mayer, Hal Johnson, Bob Shea, Jennifer Acheson, Johnnie Denton, Jim Swearingen, Squire Bressor (representing Carol Bressor), Tonille Watkis, Debbie Beckius, Jody Swan, Wayne Lambert.

Opening:

Ken Kieffer offered an inspirational message. Ken and Woody offered an opening liturgy of the Eucharist.

Celebrations:

An opportunity to share SUMC celebrations and God's grace was opened up. Many in attendance shared meaningful SUMC events such as: Appalachian Service Project, Adult Spiritual Studies, Laity Sunday, Days for Girls, Uganda Mission, Stephen Ministry, Adult Spiritual Retreat and much more. The common thread throughout each celebration mentioned was the closeness, support and love experienced when we are in community and in mission at SUMC.

CT District Happenings:

Ken Kieffer punctuated several important upcoming events for the benefit of the 73 churches in the CT District. There will be two District Resource Days. The one in Bristol Sunday January 29th will most likely be more convenient for SUMC members to attend. The District Conference will be held in Meriden this year. As in years before, a primary focus will be the joy of music. The two major District Mission Projects this year are (1) Days for Girls and (2) Raising the Roof (putting a roof on a Methodist orphanage building in the Congo). Finally, Ken presented SUMC with a certificate noting our full participation in our Conference apportionment. Ninety percent (90%) of the CT District paid their full apportionment. Those who did not, were not able to do so.

Reporting:

It was noted that all Church Conference reports were posted to the SUMC web site prior to the meeting. Here again is the link: <http://www.simsburyumc.org/ChargeConference693815>

SPR (Jim Swearingen) reported highlights from the SPR report on file. SUMC is fully staffed. Each staff member has a SPR liaison. Our Safe Sanctuary policy was enhanced and updated this year. A

unanimous vote to request Pastor Woody as our pastor for 2017 was taken during the SPR meeting just prior to the Church Conference meeting.

A motion to accept Pastor Woody's salary, professional expense reimbursement and housing exclusion was made by Ken Kieffer and seconded by Peter Gailey. The motion was carried unanimously.

Trustees (Rudy Maurer) reported highlights from the Trustee report on file. Repairs and investments were made to SUMC roofing and guttering. The parsonage was repainted and re-stained. SUMC switched our insurance to the *Methodist Church Program* for a savings of \$4,000 and better coverage. Charlotte Bacon reported SUMC received a bequest from the Gardner Wood family in the amount of \$10,000.

A motion to accept the bequest was made by Charlotte Bacon and seconded by Hal Johnson. The motion was carried unanimously.

A motion to place the funds from the bequest in the SUMC endowment fund was made by Hal Johnson and seconded by Marje Van Dusen. The motion was carried unanimously.

Stewardship (Peter Gailey) reported highlights from the Stewardship report on file. As of November we are behind \$16,000 towards our 2016 pledge of \$401,000. Steps to rectify the current shortfall were outlined – Stewardship moment Sunday December 11th, Email communications from the church office and a request for all committee and program chairs to share the message of our shortfall to their members. Next, Peter reported on 2017 Stewardship Campaign status. We are challenged with less pledging units due to SUMC members passing away and/or moving away. Currently we have pledges for \$275,000 of the required \$401,000 pledge amount requested towards the 2017 budget. Steps to rectify the 2017 shortfall were outlined including – ensuring new SUMC members understand the pledging process, a telephone campaign targeting those who pledged last year and have not yet pledged towards 2017 and more. Ken Kieffer offered a suggestion to consider the BANCO electronic giving process to support our Stewardship efforts.

Finance (Hal Johnson) reported highlights from the Finance report on file. Our current budget of \$401,000 for 2017 will result in a \$59,000 deficit according to the projected income and expenses reflected in the 2017 budget. However, we have adequate reserves to cover both the 2016 shortfall and 2017 deficit.*

A motion to accept the 2017 budget was made by Hal Johnson and seconded by Jim Swearingen. The motion was carried unanimously.

Lay Leadership (Woody Eddins) highlighted changes to committee and program leadership (a full listing of 2017 Staff and Lay Leadership can be requested from the church office). Tonille Watkis is our SUMC Youth director. Little Lambs and Ivy (LLI) restructured into an executive board and a larger committee for ease of communication and program execution. Wayne Lambert replaces Ross Fritschler as SUMC Lay Leader. He will be joined by Tami LePage. Bill & Leslie Kirkwood and Deb Clifford will represent SUMC at Annual Conference again this year. Jen Acheson will step into the role of SPR Chair as Jim

Swearingen steps down after many years of service. Bill Kirkwood will join the SPR committee. JoAnne Douglas will lead the Family-to-Family ministry. Debbie Dunn leads Volunteers in Mission (VIM) and Outreach ministries. Heidi Fitzsimmons replaces Sheri Tyler in the role of External Communications Coordinator.

A motion to accept the slate of officers was made by Pastor Woody Eddins and seconded by Bob Shea. The motion was carried unanimously.

Election of Trustees: The Nomination Committee recommended Don Baker, Peg Mayer and Peter Gailey for the class of 2017 Trustees. A vote was taken by ballot and the three trustees were accepted into office with a majority vote.

Pastor's Report (Woody Eddins & Peter Preiser) was given by Pastor Woody and reinforced by Pastor Peter. The full report can be viewed on the SUMC web site.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was called by Peter Gailey.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50pm.

*** Note from Church Council:** Although the 2017 budget was accepted at Church Conference, it is important to note that we are operating above our means and, as a result, plan to convene in early 2017 for further analysis and course correction. If you are interested in participating in this analysis, please contact Deb Clifford (deb@inspiredpeople.com).