

**Minutes of the April 23, 2008, Church Council Meeting
First United Methodist Church
LaGrange, Georgia**

The Church Council of First United Methodist Church, LaGrange, Georgia, met on Wednesday, April 23, 2008, at 6:30PM in the Men's Bible Classroom.

Mrs. Esther Rainey called the meeting to order. The Honorable Quillian Baldwin gave the devotional.

The minutes from the February 24, 2008, Church Council meeting were reviewed and approved as presented.

Old/Unfinished Business:

Mrs. Rainey informed Council members that she had received a lot of input regarding the proposed Mission Statement for the church, and that in an effort to capture the essence of First Methodist she and others would continue working to draft a statement by the next Council meeting. She encouraged suggestions and comments.

Committee Reports:

Activities & Use: Chairman Bob Cammon reported that the committee had approved several activities and that the committee had put into place a requirement for all groups using the church to reapply each year for that use. He stated that this requirement would be put into the policy and procedures manual.

Bereavement: Rev. Helen Henry reported for the committee and stated that there had been 3 deaths where the committee had taken food to the family and several others where sympathy cards were sent to family members.

Buildings & Grounds: Chairman Hugh Jones reported that the painting of the MMC building was complete. He stated that plans were being made to improve the Trinity Street entrance by adding steps, removing the magnolia trees, repairing the brick walkway, and adding flowers in several locations. Mr. Jones announced that handrails would soon be installed on the steps in the altar area of the chapel.

Communication: Mrs. Rainey reported for the committee that there had been a decrease of 95 paper Flames with 137 people having signed up to receive the Flame online. She stated that the committee wanted to encourage everyone to sign up if they had not already done so because of the cost savings to the church, the benefit to our environment, the availability of a full color Flame, and the earlier delivery of the Flame.

Early Learning Center/Methodist Day School: Chairperson Pam Doig informed Council that the Board had decided not to register children for the full time day care program at this time. She stated that the license to operate the half day program was still in effect and that the board would continue to work to get the full time license approved. She informed the Council that all policies and procedures in the licensing process had been approved, but that there were some issues with the facilities part of the license that were being addressed. She assured the Council that all decisions made were done so with keeping the integrity of our church and all it stands for as a top priority.

Education: Chairperson Kenli Holbrook presented a copy of the education objectives for all the programs for children from ages birth through senior high including Sunday School, Wednesday evenings, and all other times. Copies of the 7-page report were given out to Council members.

Evangelism: Mrs. Rainey reported that the committee was meeting and that there was a lot of fire and spirit within the group. She stated that over 40 letters were going out to regular church visitors asking them if they would like to officially join the church.

Finance: Business Manager Lisa Highland explained that we were some \$50,000 behind in revenue and that the summer was right around the corner which usually meant a less than normal monthly giving. She stated that the expense side was in line for now. She and Chairman Rainey encouraged people to use the online giving feature or to pay pledges in monthly installments.

Kitchen Work Team: Mrs. Rainey announced that the committee had met, but that there was no report for meeting.

Lay Leadership: Mrs. Rainey reported that there had been no changes in the lay leadership team.

Long Range Planning: Mrs. Rainey reported that the committee had received a layout design for a youth building and future day care building on the Vernon Street parking lot. She stated that the committee would examine the drawings, the set back variances needed, rezoning that might be required, and any other issue that might need to be addressed and then report back at the Council next meeting.

Memorials: Chairman Skip Smith presented the church with a memorial book made by the Hawley Smith family commemorating the dedication of the stained glass windows in the chapel. The book will be placed in the church library.

Missions: No report.

Music: Chairperson Nancy Larson encouraged everyone to attend the production of "Elijah" presented by the Celebration Singers on Wednesday, May 7th at 6:30pm in the fellowship hall.

Policy: Rev. Kathy Lamon reported that the committee had no changes to bring Council at this time.

Security: Chairman Rick Cox reported that security cameras had been installed and that the card access system was being installed. He stated that the staff would be trained on the new system, and that committee would be creating a policy outlining who should be given an access card.

Staff Pastor Parish Relations: Lay Leader Dorothy Cammon reported that Debbie Ogle had resigned as Choral Director effective the end of May, but she will remain a member of the choir. She stated that the committee would work to find a replacement and assist with the transition. She also reported that Chairperson Nancy Stevens would be meeting with each staff person in the future.

Stewardship: Rev. Kathy Lamon reported that the online giving was up and running and that by the automatic bill pay regular donations were coming in which helped the church on a monthly basis. She stated the committee wanted to use the same theme as last year.

Board of Trustees: Chairman Mike Wilson reported that the new operational controls on the heating and air system were in place and all that was left was the installation of the thermostats. He stated that a new purchasing process of buying in bulk when available had begun, but there was a problem finding proper storage areas for large quantities.

Worship: No report.

Community Care Team: Mrs. Rainey reported that the committee continued to see clients on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 to 11 and that an average of \$2000 a month was spent on purchasing prescription medication for individuals.

Singular Office Reports:

Membership Secretary: Mrs. Rainey reported that 8 new members would be received this Sunday, April 27th making the total membership increase 15. She reported 8 members had transferred to other churches and 5 had died. She reported that Mrs. Lybrand continues to update personal information on our members.

Lay Leader: No report.

Church Historian: Mr. Clark Johnson reported that 2 boxes of files had been found in the church; one needed to be kept, the other was thrown away.

Church Treasurer: No report

Memorial Foundation: Mrs. Rainey reported that the Foundation had approved funding for the new Columbarium at First Methodist. She stated that there would be a separate committee set up and charged with the responsibility of establishing policies, procedures, and other directives for the maintaining of the Columbarium and that the Foundation will work with a marketing committee to promote the project.

United Methodist Women: President Sandie Deyo reported that the UMW had 2 new members; that it had made donations of \$500 to the Shepherd Center, \$250 to the Community Care program, and \$250 to the Boys & Girls Club. She also reported that Jane Carwell had assumed the leadership of the Community Clothing Center and that Holly Reese would serve as our Clothing Center Coordinator.

United Methodist Men: No report.

Altar Guild: Mrs. Catherine Carmical reported that the sanctuary candelabras and a few other items had all been rebrassed, the 80 pounds of rock had been added to the pots at the sanctuary front doors, and that all of the special services leading up to and including Easter had gone really well.

Adult Education: Mrs. Rainey reported that plans were underway for a Bible study in the fall that focuses on women with a particular emphasis on women who were and are busy with children or something else and all of a sudden find themselves with an empty nest. A move to provide retreats is also being discussed.

Scouting: No report.

Ushers: Chairman John Holliday reported that there were 2 new team captains and that a training session was being planned for a Saturday morning in conjunction with the Men's breakfast in the summer.

Staff Reports:

Minister of Visitation: Rev. Helen Henry reported that she routinely visits 30 elderly in nursing homes and assisted living facilities and another 20 who are homebound. She also visits some 20 more that live alone.

Associate Minister: Rev. Kathy Lamon reported that at the moment the computer system was relatively stable and the system had been mapped so that we now know how everything is wired and where the wires are.

Senior Minister: Dr. Harold Lawrence reported that he had been to Council meetings for 40 years and that he appreciated the commitment Council members make to running the business of the church. He stated that now it is so important to continue giving one's talent and energy to make it all work because the church has competition. He also thanked the staff for their hard work on a daily basis.

New Business:

Mrs. Rainey announced that the next Church Council meeting would be held on Sunday, June 22nd at 2:00PM in the Chapel.

Dr. Harold Lawrence had the closing prayer. There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Respectively submitted,
Dodie Patterson