

**Minutes of the August 26, 2009, Church Council Meeting
First United Methodist Church
LaGrange, Georgia**

The Church Council of First United Methodist Church, LaGrange, Georgia, met on Wednesday, August 26, 2009, at 6:30PM in the Men's Bible Classroom.

Mrs. Esther Rainey, Council Chairperson, called the meeting to order.

Dr. Harold Lawrence began the meeting with prayer.

The minutes from the June 24, 2009 Church Council meeting were reviewed and approved as presented.

Old/Unfinished Business: None.

Committee Reports:

Lay Leadership: No report.

Staff Parish Relations: No report.

Finance: Chairperson Denise Wilson presented the financial statement and reported that the general operating account was in good shape and that we have a good healthy balance. Our pledge offerings are behind around \$60,000, however, that is better than where we were last year at this time. We have been keeping expenditures down and we sold the 2,000 shares of Coke Stock. Also, we had a special offering on July 5th at the combined worship service. It appears that the Summer Day Camp was very profitable but exact numbers will not be known until all of the bills are in. The Finance Committee will be working on a budget for 2010 which will be forwarded to the Stewardship Committee.

Memorials: Esther Rainey reported that the Memorials Committee approved a request from Rev. Kathy Lamson for 8 hearing devices for the main sanctuary of the church at a cost of \$704.00. Additional devices were approved for the Morning Glory Service but the exact cost will be determined at a later date. At the end of July, the balance in the Memorial Fund was \$12,343.56.

Trustees: Jamie Bradfield reported that we are going to be upgrading our computer system. Rev. Kathy Lamson has spear-headed this committee and money is available to order the necessary equipment. The trustees are working to oversee general maintenance of our facilities in order to avoid any crisis situations in the future.

Activities & Use: Shirra Rogers presented a change in the current policy for use of our facilities. This change has been reviewed and approved by the Trustees. A vote was taken by the Council members who also approved the change in policy. A copy of the change is on file.

Policy: No report.

Kitchen: No report.

Worship: No report.

Music: No report.

Senior Minister: Dr. Harold Lawrence informed the Council about a workshop that some of the staff and Mike Wilson attended called “Rethink Church”. A campaign has been ongoing in the Methodist Church for 8 years “Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors” and now we are about to embark on a new direction entitled “Rethink Church.” The purpose of the workshop is to help churches rethink about how they present themselves to visitors. Many of the new ideas will be passed on to the appropriate church committees for them to utilize. Even as we move forth with this, we must remember that our church can only survive if everyone is involved and is willing to step out of their comfort zone to welcome others.

Evangelism/Communication: Mike Wilson gave a presentation for “Rethink Church” and talked about sources available to our church for advertising and matching grants to offset costs. Several things the committee has done to reach out are:

- “Get Acquainted” luncheons - where new visitors meet with a small number of our congregation at a luncheon to get to know one another better.
- Welcoming College Students - provided water and candy on moving day and then ice cream coupons later at a special event on the hill. Bible studies will be provided on Wednesdays.
- Creating informative brochures - to display in kiosks in the Narthex and Methodist Ministries Center.

Missions: No report.

Education: No report.

Bereavement: No report.

Stewardship: No report.

Buildings & Grounds: No report.

Long Range Planning: Bobby Carmichael reported that his committee is keeping an eye on the Bridges property adjacent to our church. This property includes the main house on Broad Street and the rental house on Vernon St. The price has dropped several times but there is still a difference in the price of \$ 747,000 and the appraisal of \$ 627.00. We will seriously consider the possible purchase of this property if the price continues to drop.

Security: No report.

Community Care: Mr. Rick Free reported that our Prescription Assistance Program has 12 volunteers and the office is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9-11 am. Between May and August we assisted 96 clients. There is a rule of a 60 day waiting period between times that people can receive assistance. Our monthly budget is \$2000 a month. There is always a need for more volunteers to work in the Community Care office.

Memorial Foundation: No report.

Singular Office Reports:

Lay Leader: No report.

Membership: No report.

Adult Education: No report.

Scouting Coordinator: No report.

UMM: No report.

Treasurer: No report.

UMW: No report.

Staff Reports:

Associate Minister: Rev. Kathy Lamon further talked about the theme of “Rethink Church” by stating we must be genuine and authentic in our welcoming. We must agree as a body of Christ that we want others to join our church and we may have to change our present ways within the church to accomplish that. She asked the group the question “How easy is it for a newcomer to find their way around our church?” Are there proper signs or people available to guide a visitor? Anything that is thriving and vital is always changing.

Senior Minister: Dr. Harold Lawrence also talked about the “Rethink Church” theme and reminded the Council that it takes everyone in a church working together to keep a church vital. The staff and even the committees cannot do it alone.

New Business:

Council Chairman Esther Rainey reminded everyone that due to Fall Festival on October 21st, the next meeting would be held on Wednesday, October 28th at 6:30pm in the Men’s Bible classroom. There being no further business the meeting adjourned following a prayer.

Respectively submitted,
Patti Lybrand