

**Minutes of the February 22, 2009, Church Council Meeting  
First United Methodist Church  
LaGrange, Georgia**

The Church Council of First United Methodist Church, LaGrange, Georgia, met on Sunday, February 22, 2009, at 2:00PM in the Chapel.

Mrs. Esther Rainey, Council Chairperson, called the meeting to order. Mr. Tripp Penn opened the meeting with prayer.

The minutes from the December 18, 2008, Church Council meeting were reviewed and approved as presented.

**Old/Unfinished Business:** None.

**Committee Reports:**

Finance: Chairperson Denise Wilson presented the financial statement from year end 2008 and reported that even though during a good part of 2008 the church was significantly behind in revenues, the church ended the year with a positive cash balance. She stated that there were still people who waited until December to pay their pledge while the church had monthly expenses it had to pay. She stated that at year end for 2008 there was about \$2500 in unpaid pledges. She reported that as of the meeting the church had \$129,000 in the operating account. Mrs. Wilson then presented the proposed budget which had been revised per the instructions of the Church Council. She stated that the Finance Committee had met twice and after meetings with church committees, the budget had been reduced in almost every line item. She stated that on the revenue side, the financial report would begin showing a line item for income received from Building Use Fees. She also stated that over the last few weeks a lot of emphasis had been on cutting the budget and that the committee would now focus on the positive. She stated that the committee wanted to work toward educating the congregation about the importance of monthly contributions and making everyone aware of where the money is going. Following some discussion and questions, Mrs. Wilson stated that capital expenditures had been taken out of the operating budget, and that capital items such as major maintenance needs or repairs would probably be addressed with special offerings taken throughout the year. She then presented the Finance Committee's motion to accept the proposed budget as presented that was seconded and approved.

Bereavement: Chairperson T. Fagan submitted a written report which stated that 3 families had been assisted so far in 2009.

Education: Chairperson Beth Harlin reported that a Safe Sanctuary training would be held on March 8<sup>th</sup> in the fellowship hall for all persons who desired to work with children under the age of 18.

Evangelism/Communication: Chairperson Mike Wilson reported that the committee was working to grow the church membership following the removal of around 600 names from the church role. He stated that all adult Sunday School classes had been asked to talk about Faith Sharing for 2 Sundays in March and to invite friends to church on March 29<sup>th</sup> for March to Church in March Sunday.

Kitchen: No report.

Lay Leadership: No report.

Memorials: No report.

Methodist Day School: Chairperson Edward Smith reported that marketing for the Summer Camp program was going well and that registrations for half of the number of needed participants were in hand.

Missions: No report.

Music: Chairperson Fred Cammon stated that today was Sonia Shin's last day with us and thanked her for her service to the music program and for the wonderful concert held during the 11:00 service. He stated that he would be working with the SPR committee to look for a replacement and looking also for directors for the children's music program and Morning Glory.

Staff Parish Relations: Chairperson Heather Graham stated that a search committee would be put in place to look for candidates to fill the open positions in our staff. She stated that Debbie Ogle and Short Brown had stepped up to fill in as needed until someone was named as the director or interim director of the adult choir.

Stewardship: Chairperson Jack Brown stated that the committee was well aware of the financial situation and that they would be working diligently, along with the Finance Committee, to do what was necessary to sustain the church.

Trustees: Chairperson Jamie Bradfield reported that the committees under the umbrella of the Trustees would be actively working to address their areas of concentration and that the Trustee Board would act as more of a policy making group. He stated that three quotes had been requested to repair the roof over the parlor; that ideas for expanding or enhancing current security measures were being discussed; and the need for another church van, perhaps with handicap access, was being looked into. He stated that there was \$19,000 available in the budget to use for roof repairs.

Activities & Use: Council Vice Chairperson Tripp Penn reported that the committee had met twice and had given approval to 3 groups to use the church facilities. He stated that the committee was currently reviewing the building use policy.

Long Range Planning: No report.

Security: Chairperson Rick Cox stated that there had been some instances of concern with regard to security and in an effort to address the church's needs, the person who is director of security for First Baptist Church in Atlanta would be coming to our church on March 4<sup>th</sup> to walk through the entire complex to identify our weaknesses and strong points. He stated that this individual would also present a personal safety program for all members in the fellowship hall following the Wednesday night meal.

Worship: Chairperson Jim Thornton reported that at the committee's first meeting the chairs of the Music and Evangelism Committees were in attendance in an effort to coordinate and enhance the worship experience at First Methodist, which is often the first impression someone has of the church. He stated that the Ash Wednesday service would be held on February 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm in the sanctuary, that Maundy Thursday would be April 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm also in the sanctuary and that there would be all 3 worship services on both Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday. He announced the first combined worship service would be over

the July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend. He stated that the staff would put together a Lenten calendar and distribute it with the Flame.

Memorial Foundation: No report.

### **Singular Office Reports:**

Membership: Mrs. Patti Lybrand reported that she was continuing to work with the Evangelism Committee to help track attendance of our visitors.

Scouting Coordinator: Mr. Bernard Bledsoe reported that this was the 82<sup>nd</sup> continuous year that the church had sponsored Troop 21 and the 30<sup>th</sup> consecutive for the Cub Scout Pack 21, and thanked the Council for their commitment to the Scouting program.

### **Staff Reports:**

Minister of Visitation: Rev. Helen Henry stated that she continues her visits to the older people and that growing old is not easy; it requires a courageous spirit. She reported that the Columbarium Committee was doing well and that the first phase of the Columbarium will be completed this spring. She thanked J.M. Ralwinson and Charles Stevens for visiting all the Sunday school classes with an update on the Columbarium. She asked everyone to check out the Flame for the dates of the 4 session Lenten study, "Beginning to Pray."

Associate Minister: Rev. Kathy Lamon stated that Harold Lawrence was on vacation this week. She stated that this year had begun with a lot of committees working together and she commended the chairs of the committees for their leadership. She informed Council that there were several issues with regard to our children's safety being addressed; but that issues of children running rampant around the church, not participating in programs, being disrespectful of adults, and parents not knowing where their children are were also issues that needed attention. She thanked Denise Wilson and Lisa Highland for all the hard work in getting the budget put together.

### **New Business:**

Following a discussion of Council meeting dates and times, a motion was made to discontinue Sunday afternoon Church Council meetings and set all Council meetings on the fourth Wednesday night of the even months. The motion was seconded and approved.

Rev. Kathy Lamon closed the meeting with prayer. There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Respectively submitted,  
Dodie Patterson