

Spring Meeting of the West Dover Congregational Church May 15, 2011

Present: Rev. Emily Heath (Pastor), Chuck Gentilin (Moderator), Barbara Willenbrock (Treasurer), Richard Severance (Assistant Treasurer), Louise Severance (Co-Chair Deacons), Harriette Hamilton (Co-Chair Deacons), Charlotte Bond (Chair LKG), Bill Hamilton (Chair Trustees), Elinor Havness (Vice Chair Trustees), Janet Kierys, Dave Bolton, Leni Brown, Nelson Bond, Sally and Merrill Mundell, Eddie and Sandy Barber, Joan Judd, Sindy Hassig, Jeremy Schrauf, Mindy and Andy Childs, Andy McLean, and Jill Gentilin (Secretary)

Opening: Chuck called the meeting to order. Emily opened the meeting with prayer. It was established that we had quorum. Jill made an announcement about the Food Pantry.

Percentage split of pastoral expenses with the Wilmington Congregational Church. Chuck explained that the purpose of the meeting was to approve a request from the Wilmington church to change the present split of these expenses from 60%/40% to 70%/30%. The Wilmington Church is having difficulty meeting their expenses and at the current level, they project the church will be closed in 2 ½ to 3 years. They may be able to stay open longer if we can make the change.

Barbara reported on the current budget. Currently we are on target with income versus expenses. If we stayed on track for this year and spent all the money Wilmington requested, the projected deficit will be \$10,000+. Leni moved to change the current 60/40 split to 70/30 and Sally seconded the motion.

Emily said the Wilmington Church has been talking about their problems in a more realistic way and they were ready to move to the next phase (doing more planning). They have rebounded in the last year to some extent. There has been some discussion about combining with our church but they were not all of one mind to do this. They are doing different kinds of sales and talking with the Episcopal Church about sharing their building.

Leni reminded people that for years the Wilmington church had carried us.

Jeremy said that he hoped at some time our church will be able to afford a full time pastor and a youth pastor. A part time youth pastor could be paid for by the Wilmington Church.

Richard said we might face the same of problems down the road if we didn't do something different. Nelson moved to amend the motion: The Church Council be authorized to approve splitting church expenses with Wilmington to 65/35 this year, 70/30 next year and 75/25 in a subsequent year if required. This would give both churches some time to get on track. He noted that there were many unknowns such as the exact wording of their contract with the cell phone company.

The discussion moved to an agreement that members of both churches should increase their conversations with each other in Church Council, Trustees, and Deacons. Sally said that this was something that had been set up several years ago but was side tracked by a snowstorm. Louise asked who would head up the process. This has begun with a meeting by both churches at Church Council. The Wilmington church does not have deacons or trustees.

Emily asked about starting a "visioning" process with both churches looking at where we might want to move ourselves in future years.

Nelson said this had been done in the past but maybe with new circumstances it is time to do it again.

Jeremy agreed and said Jim Thomas from the VT UCC could help us.

Andy said they had done this as part of the Search Committee and that helped us hire Emily. He said that he could not believe how much she had done in one year and cited the "Faith on Tap" program as one example.

At that time, Chuck called for a vote by paper ballot. The decision to accept and pass the amendment for a 65/35 split was accepted.

Other: Janet introduced her plans for a "fun raiser". The LKG will do a barbeque social for members and friends at four homes. After that there will be an ice cream social for the community at the church. All details have not been worked out and the congregation will be kept informed. Jill said Cindy has encouraged us to talk about other ways to increase attendance. One of her ideas was to invite a friend to church.

There being no other business Emily closed the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully submitted

Jill Gentilin

These minutes have not been approved.