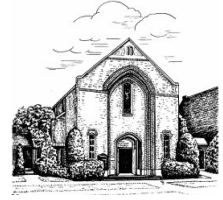




# 1<sup>st</sup> United Methodist Church

*The Heart of Downtown Gainesville*

419 N.E. First Street Gainesville, Florida 32601 352-372-8523



*Catch our vision to...present Jesus Christ positively.  
Make and encourage disciples, relieve suffering*

## CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES

November 25, 2008

Randy Stacey opened the meeting with a prayer.  
Minutes - Approved as submitted and distributed.

### Staff Reports

*Pre-School Director, Amy Watson:* present, written report.

The next big event for UMC Preschool will be the annual Christmas program on Wednesday, December 17th at 11:00 am in Fellowship Hall. Following the musical presentation, the Christmas story will be read. Santa will then make an appearance! Topping off the morning will be a potluck lunch. The FUMPers joined together with FUMC during Thanksgiving to donate items for the Project 5000 boxes. FUMPers completed 4 boxes for this ministry.

*Director of Music, Robert Jackson (BJ):* absent, no report.

*Director of Children, Youth, Christian Education - Frank Ferreri:* present, written report submitted. Frank thanked everyone for their prayers and words of encouragement as he and his wife Heather await the birth of their first child. New ministry initiatives are seeing the beginning of some new developments in the area of Christian education. Recently there has been some restructuring of the Sunday School classes. For now, there are fewer classes. At least two positives have emerged from this: 1. There is greater cross-congregational fellowship opportunity, with people from both services having a greater chance to interact with each other; 2. In the case of the Agape/College and Career Class, attendance has picked up among both groups due to fresh perspective being offered and new relationships being formed. The lesson of this is that our education ministries must always be dynamic and open to healthy change. This keeps ideas, and more importantly, minds fresh. As William Willimon once famously proclaimed, "Jesus died for the things he said. The worst sin we can commit is to be boring. Also, I am pleased to report that Mary Hill is the new chair of the Christian Education Committee, with a focus on making that group a more active and involved part of the life of the church. Under her leadership, we can expect to see an expanded Christian education program. Sunday School and Wednesday night are great pillars of Christian education here, but there is no reason to think we can't do more to meet the spiritual needs of Gainesville's intellectually diverse population. Meeting those needs will also involve a greater variety of programs offered. We've seen some success with that with this semester's course offering. (1). Dr. Henderson's class covered an important part of scripture that is often ignored in mainline churches, the Book of Revelation; (2). Pastor Carl and Dr. Kirk led the first Grief Share group here at the First Church; this is something we will continue, beginning with the "Survive the Holidays" program Carl will lead starting on December 4th; (3). Heather Ferrari has led a bible study for women that turned out to be intergenerational and (from what I hear) has had a small-group feel to it; Trish Eccles has been gracious enough to lead that group in the spring; (4). Dan Greathouses' class also had a small-group and spiritual discipline component to it; (5). And my class on the Just War Tradition had a focus on Christian discipleship in the face of contemporary ethical challenges. All of that is to say that we can't keep our feet still on Christian education here at First Church -- throughout the years it has proven to be a vital part of our individual and communal spiritual growth, and, I believe, with Mary's leadership it will continue in that direction in quality-focused ways. Lastly, as of November 1st, I am a Certified Lay Speaker. There will be a brief article about this in the Messenger for December, but in the meantime, I would encourage members of the First Church family to consider participating in this program. It is about more than preaching -- it's a good development tool for teaching and leading in a church setting. It is also a good means for personal growth and discipleship.

*Assistant Pastor - Carl Romey:* present, oral report. Talked about Third Thursday.

Carl also mentioned that he is finding himself dealing a lot with people in the working poor category.

*Senior Pastor - Harold Henderson:* present, read written report. Additional report handed out but not read. Announced that 12 will be joining the Church on Sunday, November 30, including 97 year old Jim McCachren. Harold offered some preliminary observations based on his almost 2 years as Senior Pastor. Following are the highlights:

▣ Dominant feelings are thankfulness for the journey thus far and excitement about the potential that lies ahead. To make it all more interesting and challenging, the conjunction where we stand between the past and the future is characterized by unprecedented economic turmoil.

▣ Since worship lies at the heart of our broadly based ministry as a congregation, one measure of our growth is average attendance at our Main Sunday worship services. The average so far this year is 248.6 as against 239.0 for the same period in 2007.

▣ Another interesting measure of growth can be expressed in financial terms. In 2007, we received 170 pledges totaling \$565,504. Pledged income received so far this year is almost \$20,000 more than for the same period last year.

▣ We have also experienced significant staff changes: Beginning with my appointment to replace Rev. Earl Parker as from January 1, 2007. Transition from Larry Dodd to Robert Jackson as Director of Music Ministries. From Charlene Haufler to Joyce Martel and back to Charlene as Administrative Assistant. From Nathan Carden to Frank Ferrari, and, as we meet, a strong possibility of a strong replacement for Ben Ehrlich as Organist.

▣ Completion of Phase I of the Master's Plan and our return to the renovated Sanctuary.

## **Old Business**

Committee Highlights:

*FUMC Men, Larry Shaw* - present, Reported that the FUMC Men had collected \$1,600 for Christ Mission

*Staff Parish Committee, Jim Nation, Chair* - present, oral report. Presented discussion and information gathered by his committee concerning Dr. Henderson's salary for 2009.

Pastors Salary	\$78,746
Health Insurance	\$19,518
Housing Allowance	\$24,000
Total	\$122,264

Council approved Staff Parish Committees' recommendation. Dr. Henderson's 2009 salary represents a 6% increase over 2007.

*JoAnna Emerson and Ole Nelson Committee to work on the FUMC Mission Statement.* The statement presented is: Inspiring the community through traditional worship and meaningful outreach. Council was in favor of this Mission Statement. Dr. Henderson thinks this mission statement is good, but feels we should circulate it more widely among church members to get feedback.

*Finance Committee, Aubrey Lewis, Chair* - no report.

*Treasurer's Report, Sara Daly,* no report.

*Trustees Committee, Leon Couch, Chair* - no report.

*Girl/Boy/Cub Scouts, Sandy Evans,* no report.

*Helping Hands Clinic Report - Randy Stacey* present, oral report. Randy said we have received a lot of donations for this next year. The Thursday night Women's clinic is progressing well. Randy asked for a donation of a main dish for their dinner each week. The clinic has been seeing about six to eight women. Christmas Dinner for the homeless will be held on December 14th and gifts of hats, gloves, and socks will be given. B.J. will provide music for the dinner and there will be a religious service before the dinner.

## **New Business**

No December meeting. Next meeting will be on January 27, 2009.

Carl Romey closed the meeting with a devotion.

**NEXT MEETING JANUARY 27, 2009.**