

Christian Education Committee
Wednesday February 13, 2008
Meeting Minutes

Members present: Elizabeth O'Brien, Brad Buchanan, Eileen Denne, Casey FitzGerald, Patrick Honeycutt, and Clara Beth Van de Water

Elizabeth opened the meeting with prayer at 7:35.

Children's Ministries

Casey plans to take twelve weeks of maternity leave beginning sometime around April 18. She would like to have all her planning in place by April 1.

Her new Morning for Moms program held in Creation Station on Wednesdays from 10:30-noon has had a regular attendance of five to eight mothers and their children.

Casey sent out a reminder about a potluck dinner March 1 from 5-7 for adults who want to learn more about sharing faith within their families. Babysitting will be provided.

Looking ahead to the fall or later, she said she is considering running a church-wide or family retreat in conjunction with the Congregational Life committee.

Casey expressed concern about WPC's policy requiring adults working with children to have been members for six months. Volunteering with children and youth is a good way to incorporate new members into the life of the church. Often, new members have been attending WPC for more than six months and are well-known by staff. Recently, Session voted to make exceptions to the policy for two volunteers who did not meet the six-month criteria. Casey will ask the Clerk of Session, who is currently reviewing WPC policies, if the CE Committee, instead of Session, could vote on such exceptions. Patrick agreed that a revised policy would simplify his recruitment of youth advisors.

M&M Week is scheduled for the afternoons of June 16-22. Alexandria Public Schools have half days that week. Casey will be on maternity leave by then. Paul Stetsenko will be planning the program.

Casey was later asked if she planned to have a donkey for Palm Sunday as in previous years. She said she would discuss this with her counterpart at Trinity Methodist Church.

Youth Programs

Patrick reported that 12 youth and four adults attended the lock-in Feb 8-9.

The Feb. 23 dessert auction and congregational dinner will raise money for the Senior High mission trip to Mississippi June 22-28 and the Middle School mission trip to West Virginia July 7-12. So far 17 people have signed up to go to Mississippi and twelve have signed up for West Virginia.

Patrick discussed his need to recruit more youth advisors. He has three active Middle School advisors and five active advisors for Senior Highs. His vision is for advisors and the youth to work together to take ownership of the programs and help with planning. Casey, Brad and Eileen supplied him with some names of potential recruits.

Adult Education

Clara Beth's first planning meeting will be at her home at 7:30 on March 3. She has a number of people, several new this year, who plan to attend. They will review the programs from last year and recommend classes for 2008-09. Next year there will be no Sunday School on Palm Sunday or Easter, or on the Sundays immediately before and after Christmas. Because of a scheduling issue, there will be a class this year on Palm Sunday. People will have to leave the Palm Sunday breakfast early to attend this class.

The group discussed whether the class offerings each Sunday were well publicized and if people noticed the small sign she places on the coffee table near the parking lot entrance instead of the large easel she used previously.

Library

Cathy Hunter was unable to attend, but Elizabeth shared an email she sent about a wish list she has set up on Amazon.com. Cathy wanted to know how the congregation could be informed of this new way to contribute books to the church library and if it had to be approved under the new gifts and fundraising policy. The committee discussed various ways to supplement the library's collection with gifts and donations from members. Elizabeth suggested that books recently recommended by staff members in the Chronicle be available for check-out in the library. Elizabeth will follow up on these library issues.

Other Discussion items

Elizabeth asked the committee to ponder before the next meeting whether the committee should be expanded and ways it can serve CE programs. Elizabeth also shared some of the issues and concerns about Christian Education in general that have been raised at the Reformed Institute Colloquy she has been attending this year.

As chair of the Personnel Committee, Eileen shared a few announcements. She said Nedra Trahant, who will be retiring this spring, will be recognized at church on April 6. She recommended that the CE Committee and Preschool Board co-host coffee hour. Casey said she will contact people who know Nedra well to participate. Eileen added that staff recognition Sunday is scheduled for March 30. Clara Beth pointed out that several staff will be on the women's retreat that day. Eileen also announced that Sandy Calhoun will be recognized at the Congregational Picnic June 8.

Meeting Schedule

Committee members agreed to meet on the second Wednesday of each month, with exceptions made as needed. The next CE meeting will be March 12 at 7:30.

Patrick closed the meeting with prayer at 8:50.