

December Session Brief

The B-DRPC Session met for its stated meeting on December 16, 2008, at 6:00 pm in the Church Lounge.

The meeting was opened with a devotion and prayer followed by sharing of concerns of members of our church family.

Ministry Team (MT) Reports to Session:

Church Family Division – Co-Lead Elders Sara Champion and Don Gentle

Church Family Fellowship: Sara Champion, Lead Elder. Jinks Ramsey, Chair.

Church League Basketball is underway with Missy Ellenberger coaching a team of K-2. Schedules and roster will be shared so the congregation can participate. Thanks to the generosity of our Session members who personally funded this activity.

The annual Gift-making Workshop coordinated by Kathleen Baker was held Saturday, December 6, with twenty children attending. Activity (craft) leaders donated all materials and supplies for their activity.

Coffee Hour schedules have been completed for the remainder of this year. Thanks to Ginny Simpson for organizing this for the past year. Occasionally, baskets for donations will be put out for coffee, cookies when needed and supplies. The Mid-Week Manna Committee buys church supplies like coffee, creamer, sugar, etc.

Epiphany Sunday, January 4, will include a “King Cake” ceremony for both coffee hours.

Shrove Tuesday, February 24, will feature a pancake supper again this year cooked by the Men of the Church.

The CFF MT has operated a little differently than the other teams. We do not have a large group that meets every month. We have a different coordinator for each activity and Jinks has operated as an oversight person.

To help carry this team forward, Jinks, Don Gentle and Sara Champion met and went over past events and the future calendar, and explained to Don the responsibilities. In addition to the above mentioned activities, discussion included the Easter Egg Hunt/Picnic, Pentecost Picnic, Breaking Bread Groups, the Church Family Retreat and Kirkin’; how they have operated in the past, and any thoughts about the future; as well as potential leaders for each activity.

Membership: Don Gentle, Lead Elder. Edna Bell, Chair.

Team Reports:

Bread Delivery and Baking: Corinne Hachbold reported that she has people lined up to attend the Bread Cart for December and January. She has plenty of bread on hand now as very few people have picked up a loaf the last few weeks.

Calling Visitors: Linda Goodwin reported that she has made one phone call.

Total income \$538,317

The amount of the “fixed cost” portion of the budget will depend on payroll decisions to be made by the Session. Assuming no increase in salaries (*which is not the recommendation of the FMT*) and including reductions in professional expenses, fixed costs for 2009 project to be \$506,349.

Total budget requests from ministry teams, excluding the Property MT, totaled \$102,11:008, with 70% of that amount being requested for benevolences and the remainder for all other ministries. Salaries, property, etc. are not included in this figure. The Preschool benevolence is estimated at 2008 levels (\$26,300).

Subtracting expected fixed costs from estimated revenues shows an anticipated \$31,968 available for benevolences and ministries. The amount will be less if the Session approves salary increases for staff. From this amount, at least a portion of the General Fund deficit at the end of 2008 will need to be retired.

Projected Income	\$538,317
Fixed costs (no salary increase)	\$506,349
Revenue remaining	\$31,968
Current General Fund deficit (11:00/30/2008)	(\$44,840)
Available for benevolences/ministries	(\$12,872)

A more detailed discussion of the 2009 budget was held during the Session meeting.

The Session must approve the 2009 budget prior to the first payroll on January 15, 2009.

Stewardship: Pledges continue to be received. As of 12/11:00/2008, 224 pledges have been received for 2009 in the amount of \$463,152 compared to 226/\$472,937 in 2008. A breakout of results is as follows:

- 33 new pledges
 - 76 pledges increased from 2008
 - 26 pledges decreased from 2008
 - 89 pledges did not change
 - 35 pledges stopped or not yet received
- The average pledge for 2009 is \$2,068, which is below the 2008 average of \$2,093.

Letters have been sent by Nita Padgett to those who have not yet pledged for 2009. A few members increased their 2009 pledge in response to the recent Congregational Meeting.

Worship Ministry Team – Larry Goodwin, Lead Elder, Pat Crawford, Chair

The following issues were addressed at the December meeting:

Hanging of the greens was reviewed. It was felt to be successful and inspirational. A decision was made to do the Hanging of the Greens on a Sunday next year.

Preparations for the Love Feast were made. Arrangements were made for servers, and the children will provide a musical program.

Preparations for Christmas Eve 5:30 and 11:00 PM services were made. Bob Singdahlsen will be preaching.

Lessons in Carols will be on January 4th.

Christmas decorations will be taken down, after the January 4th service.

Communications Division – Co-Lead Elders Ginny Bradford and Judy Caldwell

Communications:

Denise Byrd reported that she will reschedule website training Sessions beginning in January, probably prior to Midweek Manna. She has received much appreciation for the *Session Brief* and recommended that steps be taken to assure its continuation. This led to discussion of the amount of work involved in compiling the *Session Brief* from many different reporting formats provided by other ministry teams. It was decided that Judy Caldwell will bring a motion to the December Session meeting to clarify the responsibility of the lead elder of each ministry team to prepare a brief report in narrative form of the month's activities. This should not be in the form of minutes, and any motions should be clearly stated. The Communications MT agreed that lead elders need to have a description of the "nuts and bolts" expectations of the office, such as seeing that reports to the Session are submitted. Carolyn Turner agreed to raise this issue at the December meeting.

Paula Jackson reported that the Office Production team is running smoothly.

Items for the *Transylvania Times* were discussed, particularly the need for items announcing Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany activities.

Results of the feedback on the November Congregational Meeting were reviewed. There were 42 responses, with all finding the meeting helpful or somewhat helpful. Individual questions have been answered by Phillip Jerome or a designee. Topics of interest for the February meeting were focused on giving a budget update. Other suggestions were the cost of church-sponsored activities, how church priorities are established, information about Presbytery and General Assembly, information about the people who have left the church, use of the property behind the church, and dialogue on our mission as a church. In regard to other times for Congregational Meetings, the majority of respondents like having them following the 11:00 service. Two people suggested having the meetings between services. Denise pointed out that information on Presbytery of WNC and PC-USA are links from our B-DRPC web page, and she will highlight them.

Don Stinchcomb will Chair the ad hoc committee on reformatting Sunday worship announcements.

Motion: That Lead Elders of ministry teams be responsible for providing a monthly report prior to Session meetings. The report should be an attachment, in narrative form suitable for inserting directly into the *Session Brief*. The motion was discussed and approved. It was recommended that this request be included in the Officers' Manual.

Administration Division – John Rowe, Lead Elder

Personnel: The Personnel MT met in December. Research was done regarding the level of comparable salary increase statistics for regional and local employers. The relevant information was given to the Finance MT for their use in proposing salary budgets for 2009.

Committee on Ministry: The Committee on Ministry has still not been formed. A chairperson is expected to be named in January, 2009, and the COM is expected to become operative subsequently.

Special Funds Management Committee: Three issues were discussed and voted upon at the December meeting:

1. The B-DRPC Preschool made a request for scholarship funds to assist preschool students for 2008 and 2009. The SFMC, after discussion, voted to approve this request for funding from the 2008 General Endowment Dividend in the amount of \$22,000.
2. The Mission Ministry team made a request for funds in the amount of \$4,000 to provide a scholarship to a peacemaking training program in the Sudan. The Committee, after discussion, voted to deny the request as being an inappropriate use of General Endowment Dividend funds.
3. The estate of former member Paul McCully sent a check for \$500 to B-DRPC, saying that Mr. McCully had provided for the unrestricted gift under the terms of his will. The Committee, after discussion, voted to recommend to the Session that this money be added to the Mission Endowment Fund.

Motion: That \$22,000 for 2008-2009 B-DRPC Preschool scholarships be granted from the 2008 General Endowment Fund Dividend. Motion was discussed and approved.

Motion: That \$500 in funds from the Paul McCully estate bequest be transferred to the Mission Endowment Fund for permanent investment. Motion was discussed and approved.

Mission Division – Ginny Bradford, Lead Elder, Don Stinchcomb, Elder

Mission Division met December 1, and enjoyed a brunch provided by members.

Ministry Team Reports:

Peace and Justice: Judith West, Chair

Judith reported that over \$3000 was collected for the Peacemaking Offering, the second highest on record. Twenty-five percent will go to Sharing House. Each member was asked to review the “Social Creed” that was adopted by the General Assembly. It can be viewed on PC-USA website under Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy.

Local Outreach: Luck Shepherd, Chair

Luck stated that this year has gone well with many projects underway – some still waiting for volunteers

and one just getting started (House Calls). He stated that Julie Bahnson, along with three other ladies were invited to the November meeting to give an overview of the AAC (African-American Awareness Council), a newly formed organization that hopes to provide an avenue to assist African-Americans to recognize the dynamics of economic empowerment, raise awareness of community resources, and create programs to recognize deserving citizens for their outstanding accomplishments. The organization's primary goal is to establish a scholarship/awards program designed to acknowledge and honor deserving students in grades K-12, and college level students for their outstanding academic, athletic, and community service involvement. The AAC also seeks to reach out to young African-American professionals through a mentorship and support system. Upcoming events include Mentorship Program, 2009 Trailblazer Awards Celebration and 2009 End-of-School Awards/Scholarship Banquet.

Sharing House Food Collections: Ruth Waugaman and Alice Dalton

December is B-DRPC's month to help replenish the food pantry. However, since the demand is great, members will be encouraged to bring food each Sunday of the year. Extra volunteers will be recruited to transport the food to Sharing House each week.

Sharing House Contact: Gail Blunt

The Sharing House Food Drive was a big success with approximately 13,000 lbs of food collected. The Pisgah Forest Rotary Club helped in picking up food donated at each grocery store and displayed the food at the gazebo by the Courthouse. Twenty-one B-DRPC members volunteered at Bi Lo for one hour each. Gail also encouraged everyone to consider Adopt-a-Family.

TCVIM (Transylvania County Volunteers in Medicine): Corinne Hachbold

There will be a Gala Affair fundraiser on Dec 4 at Quotations that will cost \$75 per person. A Smoking Cessation Clinic will begin soon. They continue to be very busy and are now open some during the day.

Operation Christmas Child: Kristen Clanton

Eighty shoe boxes were delivered to the Baptist Center. Some were filled during Mid Week Manna and others were filled by individual church members and brought to the church.

Relay for Life: Kristen Clanton

Relay for Life calendar runs from September to August each year. The 2009 Relay will tentatively be June 8 and 9 at Brevard High School. The Kick Off for the new year will be held December 13, 9-10 am at the library with Julie's Subs donating brunch. Kristen and Faye Paden are serving on the board this year so a team captain for our church team is being recruited.

Phone Cards for Soldiers: Horty Menser

Horty is now communicating with her third contact man in Iraq. Seventy-five cards were mailed November 13 and have been received. Two hundred twenty five phone cards have been mailed since May 15.

5-cents a meal: Faye Paden

The November offering totaled \$661.97 with year-to-date being \$5161.

House Calls: Luck Shepherd

Luck stated that the team is becoming more streamlined and organized. Community and church family have benefited from needed home repairs. The day of the meeting members of the team were repairing a deck in the snow. Those members were Bill Engelson, Dick Doyle, Edwin Jones and Luck Shepherd (who stopped long enough to attend the meeting).

Habitat for Humanity: Don Stinchcomb

Forty five homes have been completed with #45 being dedicated December 6. Three are under construction. The fiscal year ends June 30 and Habitat is concerned about economic problems. They need more money and more volunteers.

Rise and Shine: Sharyn Tuers

Sue Barrett reported that Rise and Shine is going fine and will have a Christmas Program December 11 and 12 at 6:30pm at Bethel A in the sanctuary.

Worldwide Ministries: Ginny Bradford, acting chair

Guatemala Scholarships and Partnership Update: Judy Nebrig

Judy commented on the Presbytery Health Committee's and Partnership Committee's trip to Guatemala. While they were there, one of the Guatemala member's son was killed as he was riding to work early one morning. A prayer was offered for this family. Three delegates from our Presbytery team met for three days and were involved in network meetings, worshipped together and learned how well they were doing and ways to improve. WNC Presbytery, B-DRPC and Horeb are one of two oldest partnerships. A three way partnership exists with Horeb, Malawi and B-DRPC. Judy brought back letters, pictures, end-of-school grades and opportunities for some new scholarships. The WOW (Women on Wednesday) group has a special Bible study relationship with Horeb.

Alternative Christmas Gift Bazaar and Scholarship Tables:

This event will take place December 7, 14, and 21 after worship in the DRH. Volunteers will staff the tables. An announcement will be included in the bulletin each Sunday and is in the newsletter.

Possible Missionary Project for Braaksma's:

The Braaksma's have sent word that RECONCILE Peace Institute is opening February 1. They are now accepting applications for the courses. Among the applicants are Sudanese church and community leaders whom the Braaksma's have trained, who are demonstrating a high level of commitment and courage. Most are Key Mobilizers in their communities. The full scholarship is \$4,037 for one student for three months. Seven among those are Presbyterian Church of Sudan leaders – six pastors and one evangelist.

Motion: A recommendation to Special Funds Committee to request a full or partial scholarship to come from the General Endowment Funds for 2008. Motion seconded and approved.

A request will be submitted to Special Funds Endowment Committee.

The Special Funds Endowment Committee met December 11 and reviewed the request. This request was not approved from 2008 General Endowment funds.

The next Quarterly Mission Division meeting will be in March, 2009.

New Business:

The Rev. Thompson was excused from the meeting.

Motion: To increase the compensation package of The Rev. Dr. Keith Thompson.

The motion was seconded, discussed and approved. This recommendation will be presented at a Congregational Meeting prior to January 15 (payroll) for approval. The Rev. Thompson declined an increase in 2008, and it was unanimously agreed that an increase in call be given for 2009.

Motion: To schedule a Congregational Meeting on January 11 following the 11:00am Worship Service for the purpose of reviewing The Rev. Dr. Keith Thompson's call. Motion was seconded, discussed and approved.

The meeting was adjourned with a circle of prayer led by The Rev. Bob Singdahlsen.

Ginny Bradford, Elder