

**Greensboro United Church of Christ  
Minutes of the Annual Meeting  
August 17<sup>th</sup> 2008**

Tony Acheson opened the meeting with a prayer. John Hewett was designated as moderator pro tem for the meeting. John called the meeting to order at 11:10 and asked that we keep on task in the meeting as most of us would be attending the funeral for Lewis Hill that afternoon. Dirk Lorenz mentioned that there would be a violin solo starting at 3:00pm before the memorial service that afternoon.

Judy Dales moved to accept the minutes from 8/19/07 as read. Sherral Lumsden seconded the motion. The minutes were accepted as read.

Pastors Report Tony Acheson

Tony handed out copies of the new directories of church members and friends containing their contact information. Tony also reported that the monthly newsletter is now available via email, and that we are working on setting up an expanded website. He also emphasized that there is a high priority effort into attracting new people to church, especially younger families and children in order to keep momentum going for community building. On August 31, several new members will be welcomed into the church

Church Council

Nothing further to add to the written report

Deacons Judy Dales

Judy is completing her 3 years on the Diaconate on January 1<sup>st</sup>. The Deacons are working on recording information on annual deacon responsibilities in the Deacons book so that the information is available to new deacons as members are replaced.

Mission Board Annegret Pollard

Annegret described the special offerings and special events of the Mission Board, especially the SERRV Sale. Thanks to Bobbie Nisbet for her overseeing of that. Peg Igelheart will be leaving in two weeks so they need one new person to be on the Board. Church council will fill the slot. Thank you to Peg for her service as the Mission Board secretary.

Christian Education Cara Hill

There will be another Fall Festival. Last year rain impeded the event, so this year the festival will be held near the church [on the Town Hall property] and the church will provide a rain location. The Heifer Project was a success with \$5,000 raised in a short amount of time. Teachers for Sunday School are greatly needed for help with infants, preschool and school-age children. The curriculum we use is "*The Best of Whole People of God*," and is now available online making it more affordable and less wasteful.

Investment Committee Jim Cook

Jim reported that the committee is meeting regularly and working in conjunction with Charter Trust which manages our investments.

Pleasants Fund

Andy Dales reported that the Fund benefitted from a reallocation formulation resulting in more distributions for both the Pleasants fund and the scholarship fund. In the current year 6 grants were given out and more money is available. Andy will notify Janet Long to release money for three projects that were approved.

Scholarship Committee Jan Travers

Last year \$5,000 was available. This year \$7,100 is available as a result of the Pleasant fund reallocation.

Associate Members

Last year's meeting was August 10, 2008

The following were elected:

Alan Lukens – Lecture series

Marion Lorenz – Secretary

Anne Parke – Pastoral Relations

There was a discussion about how to reach out to associate members more effectively.

A copy of minutes from the Associate Members meeting will be available in the church office in the near future and will be available via email for anyone that wants a copy sent.

Nominating Committee

Jan Travers made a motion to accept the nominations slate as published. Janet Long seconded the motion. The nominations were accepted as slated on page 10 of the report.

Thank you to those who have fulfilled their most recent positions.

Bronwyn Potter

Karen Miller and Bronwyn Masse will be playing prelude next Sunday. The choir was given a round of applause.

Trustees / Budget Andy Dales presented proposed budget

Good news:

Contributions for 2007 set a record with \$27,000 over last record. IRS had changed rules so that helped. There was also a \$19,000 surplus for 2007.

Bad news:

2008 budget is projecting a \$9,000 deficit.

Issue for 2008 & 2009 is cost of energy; there is an expectation of \$8,000 more for 2008 and \$15,000 more in 2009 for heat.

Budgeted amount for fuel is \$5 per gallon (last year we paid \$2.65 per gallon.). We will pay a premium for cost cap.

Stewardship Campaign will start in about one month. Please start thinking about how you can help.

*Question:* Can we save money by shutting down the sanctuary? *Answer:* We have a timer on the thermostat putting it down to 55 when not in use. The doors to the sanctuary need to be kept closed in order for the heat zones to work properly.

The back door with ramp needs to be accessible. Tony will remind the snow removal person to keep the ramp clear. The maintenance committee will fix the back door.

Trustees had no additional comments on the budget.

Judy Dales moved that the budget be approved. Janet Long seconded the motion. The motion passed.

#### Other Business

Sally Lonegren asked that everyone remember when they are getting ready to leave this fall please bring extras to the food shelf in Hardwick. Peg Igleheart pointed out that there is freezer and refrigerator space at the food shelf. Trish Alley mentioned that fresh food is also always welcome there.

Closing Prayer

Motion to close made by Judy Dales, Cara Hill 2<sup>nd</sup>

Meeting adjourned at 11:59

*Respectfully Submitted, Diane Fixx, Clerk*

## Report of the Pastor

This past winter brought with it the milestone of my having completed ten years as your pastor. So as I write this annual report I am aware of looking back over not only one past year, but also one full decade. It is amazing how quickly time flies, and how much faster time appears to pass when looking backward rather than forward.

The time since our last annual meeting has been full. The church has taken in some new members but has also lost some members to death or relocation. We seem to have weathered the financial crisis going on in the world around us as well as could have been hoped or expected. This is due in part to the good services of our investment committee, and in great part to the ongoing generosity and support of our membership in their pledges and contributions to the church.

There have been some important specific projects and events over the past year. We have established a new website which we believe will both keep the congregation better connected with one another, and also help us do a better job of communicating what we offer to those around us. Our church school grew this year in attendance and participation. In the winter we had an outstanding Confirmation Class and Confirmation ceremony. In the spring we began an ongoing Bible Study group, and during the summer had a study group on the topic of the relationship between spirituality and religion that was well attended and richly stimulating.

During the past year, we were also fortunate to have received a gift of \$10,000 toward the purchase of a new piano for our sanctuary. [The piano that has been in the sanctuary for many years does not belong to the church, and recently had had some major restrictions put on its use.] In January the Trustees appointed a committee to research the purchase of a new piano, and as of this writing that committee appears to have come close to completing its work.

For me personally, this year has had some of the highs and lows from which none of us is immune. Our daughter Emma's cancer diagnosis was an unexpected and painful surprise. On the happier side of the ledger, we are deeply grateful that the medical news since then has come back encouraging and hopeful. And we also were blessed profoundly by the magnificent wedding weekend in July in which Emma wed Colin Koch, a young man we love greatly and have been more than happy to be able to include in our family.

I have continued to feel deeply blessed by your love and support. As a congregation, you are the best.

Your Pastor,

Tony Acheson

## Report of the Board of Deacons

The members of the Board of Deacons have enjoyed a busy year serving the congregation. We started the year last August with members Sara Behrsing, Cilla Bonney-Smith, Penny Bretschneider, Judy Dales, Ken Johnston, Sherral Lumsden and with Anne Parke from the Associates Members. In January, having completed three years on the Board, Penny and our Chair Judy became inactive deacons while Sue Coffey and Jan Travers joined the Board.

Our weekly activities center on our Sunday worship service. We wish to thank all of the members of the congregation who have helped by serving as greeters/ushers. This is a wonderful opportunity for all church members to serve in a short term, enjoyable, meaningful and purposeful activity. If you would like to be a greeter for a Sunday, please see any Deacon, or call the church office. Each month we have a head Deacon who organizes that month's greeters.

December and Advent are always a busy time in the church. The Ladies Community Christmas Luncheon on December 6<sup>th</sup> had a more inclusive flavor this year, with the addition of a Kwanza and Hanukah tables. We thank all of the ladies of the church who annually create this marvelous community-oriented activity.

While we as Deacons organized the festive activities of preparing seasonal decorations, including decorating the church and the tree, we are especially delighted as members of the congregation join us. The more that church members and their families join in the church activities, the more that we all grow and enjoy the Christian fellowship of the church.

The Cabin Fever Follies were back in February this year. We had a new design of having a family pot luck dinner before the show. This year's leaders were Trish Alley and Cassandra Brush. Everyone had an enjoyable time. Thank you to all of the performers.

The Maundy Thursday soup dinner and communion is always a very special religious event. It brings the members of the church together to experience the feelings of the disciples when they had dinner with Christ. If you and your family did not get to attend this past year, the Deacons hope that you can attend this coming year. We are working with Tony in planning some changes to the evening that we will be telling you about in the coming months.

The Deacons worked in supporting the Lenten Bible study series and the Bible Study Thursday evening classes led by Tony. They read Mark and then part of John, going a chapter or two each night through the book. The attendees enjoyed the classes. Following Tony's special Thursday morning summer series on spirituality and religion, we plan to return to John in the fall. If you have desires for other adult studies, see a Deacon or Tony.

The Deacons welcomed to membership the following members of the Confirmation Class as they completed their studies led by Tony: Keilah Figueroa, Katherine Gilmartin, Martin Gilmartin, Peter Gilmartin and Ainsley Launer. Also in the class were Morrow Hill Barnes, Ellen Emers and Nathaniel Launer. This was a wonderful group and we hope they will continue to meet together this coming year and become part of the active membership of the church. Adult members received on August 12, 2008 were Anne McPherson, Cathy Pollard, John Rohnert and Helen Twiss.

Joining our fellowship through baptism this year were Haven Oak Hill Barnes, son of Maria Hill-Barnes, who was baptized on April 5; Molly Elizabeth Larrabee, daughter of Martha (Marcy) and Jason Larrabee and grand daughter of Jan Travers on July 12; and Morrow Hill Barnes son of Maria Hill-Barnes; in Caspian Lake on July 26.

Celebrating marriages in the congregation this year included Heloise Williams to James Bellizia, son of Cilla Bonney-Smith in our sanctuary on July 26, 2008, Kristin Miller [son of

John and Karen Miller] on August 17, 2008 Erin McKeen to Andy Johnston [son of Ken and Janney Johnston] on March 28, 2008 in Bloomington, IN and on July 18 Emma Acheson, [daughter of Nancy Riege and Pastor Tony Acheson] to Colin Koch in Charlotte, Vermont.

The Deacons organized the church's hosting of the Ordination of our church member Rhonda Myers on June 21. We offer a huge thank you to all of the church members who joined in the celebration by preparing so many great tasting dishes for the celebration dinner. A double thank you to Judy Dales for her exquisite, creative work in making a colorful stole for the congregation to present to Rhonda. We give Rhonda our best as she serves in her first call as a pastor to the UCC congregation of Torrington, CT.

Several of our church members passed away this year. They included Lewis Hill on August 12, 2008, Arlyne Lovett, who was buried on August 17, 2008, Bill Carter on November 26, 2008, Ruth Hunsberger on February 7, 2009, Alberta Stehle on February 10, 2009, Dorothy Ling on April 5, 2009, Ralph Fisher on April 5, 2009, Taffy Todd on April 28, 2009, Ralph Troiano [Trudi Osterhout's son-in-law] was buried on July 11, 2009. The Deacons were privileged to join with some of the families and with the great support of the cooks of the church in celebrating their loved ones' lives with a reception in Fellowship Hall. We thank the congregation for this timely support; we could not do it without your help.

For the July 4<sup>th</sup> barbeque the Deacons get to sell tickets and serve the food. This year due to rain and high winds we moved the serving and seating from under the tents into Fellowship Hall. With the great chicken from the cooking crew, the coleslaw from the Friday slaw making volunteers, the brownies from the congregation cooks and our new stools we enjoyed serving all. We are thinking of continuing to offer inside stable floor seating next year, even if we move the serving and many seats back outside under the tents. Let us know what you think.

For many of our church-wide activities, we are repeatedly indebted to one of our special church members who volunteers to tirelessly phone people and keep the food flowing to the church. We thank you, Madeline Gebbie. Whenever she calls, if you can, please say yes.

This year we asked all members to create a name tag. We are using them during coffee hour following the service. This has been very helpful, especially during the summer.

One part of the church service that offers all of us joy and inspiration are the flowers. Along with joining us by purchasing the special Christmas and Easter flowers, church families can purchase flowers for Sunday worship to honor loved ones. Please contact the church office about your desires. We appreciate and need your support of this program. Throughout the year people call the church office or speak to a Deacon to volunteer to prepare the flowers. Sometimes we purchase the flowers. Lately one very artistic Deacon has been creating many of the weekly beautiful arrangements. We thank you very much Cilla Bonney-Smith.

For this next year, in addition to those items mentioned above, the Deacons are thinking about some new activities and changes. We would like to bring back a Community Breakfast presented by the Men of the Church. Let us know if you would like to join the crew or when you think it should occur. Would you like to have us create an Easter sunrise service? We are also investigating if we can arrange to have volunteers for greeting/ushering join a list, so they and we would know more than just a few weeks in advance when they would like to serve. Let us know what you think. We continue to seek members who need transportation to church on Sunday and drivers to bring them. Please call the office if you ever need a ride to church.

*Respectfully Submitted, Kenneth Johnston, Chair*

## Report of the Board of Missions

Bobbie Nisbet, Chair

John Rohnert Co-Chair  
Annegret Pollard

Clive Gray  
Lisa Hewett

The Mission board continues to support the wider church through a broad variety of projects.

In April the board collaborated with the Democracy Reading Group to present the documentary, Eye Witness in Palestine. The evening began with a well attended pot luck dinner. Following the documentary, Tony moderated a thoughtful discussion on the plight of the people of Palestine.

Children and families in disaster stricken areas of our own country and countries around the world continue to receive relief through “Gifts of the Heart”. Our church contributes school, layette, and health kits, along with monetary contributions. These items, along with like contributions from other members of the UCC, are collected around Mother’s Day to be distributed to areas of need.

The Mission Board provides a unique opportunity for our wider church community to purchase unusual and unique items from artisans from around the world. Purchases from SERRV sale sponsored by SERRV International provide a brighter future for the artisan and farmer partners and their families. If you missed the sale in August, there will be another in November.

Fair Trade items continue to be available in Fellowship Hall. Currently offered are coffee, (decaf and regular), chocolate bars, and cocoa. Requests are welcome.

One Great Hour of Sharing, Strengthen the Church Offering, Blanket & Tool Sunday, Neighbors in Need, and Share our Joy are special offerings collected throughout the year. These offerings help to support the UCC, and families in need in our area, as well as around the world.

The Greensboro UCC, through the mission board, sends donations to local and national organizations. These donations help to strengthen our children, seniors, families and our earth.

The Mission board continues to coordinates with volunteers to deliver donations to the area food shelf.

*Respectfully submitted, Bobbie Nisbet – Chair*

## **Report of the Board of Christian Education**

2008 - 2009 was a successful year for our young people within the church. Church School began in September, concluded in May and attendance was average. We had approximately 12 children of many ages throughout the school year.

In October of last year we held a children's festival. It was so cold that day that no one came out to the pony rides and the food. We have scheduled it in September this year to avoid difficult weather.

The annual bake sale before Thanksgiving went well. We had very few children come and help but we managed to fill the orders anyway. The money we earned benefited the Summer Camp Scholarship fund for 2009. We gave away 1,700 dollars to children in the community. 600 of that was in the fund and the rest was generously donated to make camp a wonderful reality for kids this summer.

We gave stockings to the residents of the Greensboro Nursing Home and sang carols to them as we do every year. We had several adults help decorate the stockings and get them stuffed and ready. Alma Rowley put her sewing skills to use and stitched up the stockings on her sewing machine for us.

At Christmas time Cara Hill directed the church school children in a musical called "December In Our Town." Children in 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade were invited to come and join us from the surrounding communities. The program was advertised in local schools. The theme was multicultural and touched on many different celebrations that occur in December, including Christmas, Chanukah, Las Posadas, and Eid Al Adah.

Winter time was quiet as always. a good time to really think about what the church means to us personally.

Reverend Tony Acheson conducted a Confirmation class for the Junior High and High School age members of our congregation. It was a successful class and the youth really learned a lot about their own spiritual journeys. We are very excited about the future of community based programs which we are working on for youth this year.

*Respectfully Submitted, Cara Hill, Christian Education Director*

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## Report of the Board of Trustees

Membership: Andy Dales, Chair; Mike Coffey, Vice Chair; Janney Johnston, Secretary; Jerry Brown, Associate Members; Paula Ratchford; Ed Stehle.

### **Financial Matters:**

- *Church Finances* weathered the challenging economic times of the 2008-09 recession. We are especially exposed to volatile energy (fuel) costs, which are a significant variable in our operating budget. By using “capped” oil contracts, and up-to-date cost forecasting, we avoided upsets in church operations.
- *Operating Income* Pledges thankfully increased in 2009 despite difficult economic times. In response to moderate increases in projected 2010 expenses, we will need to raise our 2010 Stewardship target by another \$5,000.
- *Capital Improvements* this year were modest. We are currently refurbishing the concrete cover over the foundation of Fellowship Hall, with costs supplemented 50% by a generous donation member. For 2010 we must tackle the deteriorating paint job of the church exterior.
- *New Church Piano* Early this year, it became clear that we would need to purchase a grand piano for the church sanctuary to replace the one currently on loan to us. A subset of the Trustees, supplemented by a few knowledgeable church musicians, developed a Piano Committee to locate and purchase a suitable new instrument. Successful fund raising is well underway, after receipt of a very generous initial donation. Final candidate pianos are scheduled to be evaluated in our sanctuary in mid August. We hope to have a new piano available shortly.

*Respectfully Submitted, Andy Dales, Chair*

## Report of The Pleasants Fund Committee

July 2008 – July 2009

Members: Michael Coffey, Sherral Lumsden, Jim Cook, Janney Johnston, Sally Lonegren, Ed Stehle, Ex Officio: Andy Dales, Janet Long (Treasurer), Tony Acheson (Pastor)

### From July 2008 to December 2008

For 2008, the Pleasants Fund had a budget of \$16,070 for grants. Prior to July 15, 2008, a total of \$7330 in grants was awarded (see August 17, 2008 Annual Report).

From July 15, 2008 to December 31, 2008, the following grants were awarded:

Greensboro Arts Alliance and Residency (Business plan development)	\$2500
Greensboro United Church of Christ (Website development)	<u>\$2500</u>
Total 7/15/09 to 12/31/09	\$5000

### From January 1, 2009 to July 31, 2009

For 2009, the Pleasants Fund had a budget of \$16,815 plus a carry over of \$3740 from 2008. In addition, the Pleasants Fund Committee continued to reserve \$1000 committed to the Northeast Kingdom Arts Council towards the cost of restoration of the Grand Drape at the Hardwick Town House, pending additional funding to be obtained by the Council.

2009 grants awarded as of July 31, 2009 were as follows:

Greensboro Early Learning Center (Multi-child stroller and storage shed)	\$1500
Craftsbury Elementary School (Artist's Residency)	\$1000
Lakeview Union Elementary School (Student Yearbook)	\$422.50
Greensboro Free Library (Chairs for Community Room)	\$1000
Greensboro Bend United Methodist Church (Foundation)	\$2500
Summer Music from Greensboro (Youth Music Program)	\$1000
River Arts (Projection screen and copier)	\$600

As of July 31, 2009, there is \$12,532.50 remaining in 2009 for new Pleasants Fund grants.

*Respectfully Submitted, Janney Johnston, Chair*

## **Report of the Scholarship Committee**

The scholarship committee is a subcommittee of the Pleasants Fund Committee. It is composed of three people, currently, Mike Metcalf, Sara Behrsing, and Janet Travers. It meets each spring to award scholarships to high school seniors who have applied for their freshman year in college or to other first year applicants. The committee also reviews and renews the scholarships of past recipients who will be continuing their college career. The amount of the scholarships is based on the money allotted from the Pleasants Fund for that year.

In the 2008-09 school year the committee gave scholarships, ranging from \$300 to \$500. Four freshman, four sophomores, four juniors, four seniors and one graduate student received scholarships, totaling \$6,100.

The committee met again this spring and awarded scholarships for those entering their first year of college. The scholarships for 2009-2010 ranged from \$400 - \$500. The committee awarded fifteen scholarships for the 2009-2010 school year totaling \$6,500.

The exciting news this year is that the scholarship applications will be posted on the church website. They can then be filled out and e-mailed, or downloaded and sent in by mail. With today's increasingly technologically oriented young people, it seemed to be a good idea to put this whole process on line.

*Respectfully submitted, Janet Travers, Chair*

**Report of the Investment Committee  
July 31, 2009**

The recession and turbulence in the financial world adversely effected our investments. After reaching its lowest point in February 2009, \$1,193,642 the value of our holdings has recovered somewhat.

	Market value	Estimated annual income
June 30, 2008	\$1,563,642	\$59,925
June 30, 2009	\$1,344,189	\$51,479

Our investment mix changed due to the market decline.

	Fixed Income	Equities	Cash and equivalents
June 30, 2008	48%	45%	7%
June 30, 2009	58%	35%	7%

The change in percentages was due to the lower market value of our equity holdings. Our investment manager, the Charter Trust Company currently plans to increase our percentage of equity holdings somewhat but does not expect a rapid recovery. They have also invested in some inflation protected securities. We and they are cautiously optimistic about the future.

For investment purposes our funds are managed as a single pool with the objective of maximizing total return, i.e. the sum of income and increases in market value, consonant with an appropriate level of risk. Separate accounts are maintained, however, for each of our five investment funds. The value of each fund and its percentage share of the total were as follows as of June 30, 2009.

	<u>\$</u>	<u>%</u>
Pleasants	831,440	61.9
Endowment	314,029	23.4
Capital	177,334	13.2
Music Endowment	15,692	1.2
Christian Education	5,695	.4
Total	\$1,344,189	100.0

Respectfully Submitted – James Cook, Chairman

*Respectfully Submitted, James Cook, Chair*

## Report of the Nominating Committee

BOARD OR POSITION	NOMINEES	TERM TO END
DEACONS	JUDY DALES	2012
	MICK COFFEY	2012
TRUSTEES	BRIAN GILMARTIN	2012
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION	CARA HILL	2012
MISSION BOARD	CLIVE GRAY	2012
CONFERENCE DELEGATES	MARION BABBIE	2010
	SONIA DUNBAR	2010
NE ASSOCIATION DELEGATES	KAREN MILLER	2010
	JOHN MILLER	2010
CHURCH COUNCIL, AT LARGE	ANDY DALES	2012

*Respectively submitted,  
Jan Travers  
Nancy Hill  
Tony Acheson ex off.*

## Report of Church Council

Church Council serves to coordinate and share information between the boards and committees of the Greensboro United Church of Christ. Since the August 2008 Annual Meeting Church Council assisted in the sharing of ideas as boards and committees worked on their specific concerns throughout the year. As a result much of the work of the Council is reported in the business of other church bodies. This report covers those significant items that may not appear elsewhere.

This was a relatively uneventful year for Church Council. We met 5 times this year, on the second Tuesday of each even numbered month, missing our February meeting due to scheduling conflicts and no pressing issues. This was the second full year of our new church calendar with August Annual Meeting and things seem to be running smoothly.

Judy Dales volunteered to replace Diane Fixx as Clerk in April 2009 following Diane's resignation.

Many church members contributed to our Chicken Bar-B-Que on July 4<sup>th</sup>. We moved indoors to accommodate the damp weather and soggy lawn, which saved considerable time and effort setting up and seemed to work well. Several expectant customers were disappointed to find that we had miscalculated and run out of chicken for those who had made reservations. We will make adjustments to how reservations are handled next year to prevent that from happening again. Thanks to everyone for contributing by helping, eating or both.

We are all glad to see the new Church web site at [www.guccvt.org](http://www.guccvt.org). Please make an effort to have a look at it. I expect that the calendar will be a welcome feature.

Church Council members include the Moderator, who serves as Chairperson and representatives appointed by the Diaconate Board, Board of Trustees, Board of Christian Education, Mission Board, and Associate Member Board, plus two Members-at-Large. Ex-officio members are the Clerk, Treasurer and Pastor. Meetings are often attended by others who share their requests, insights, needs and concerns. Thank you to everyone who attended Church Council meetings this year.

*Respectfully Submitted, Paul Fixx, Moderator*