**Minutes – United Church of Ludlow**

**Annual Meeting**

**November 9, 2014**

**Attendees:**

 The meeting opened with 25 members in attendance, a quorum.

**Minutes:**

Bob Kottkamp, President of the Executive Board, called the meeting to order at 11:37 AM. Pastor Don Harpster offered a prayer. The minutes of the prior Annual Meeting of November 13, 2013 were read and on a motion by Lisha Klaiber and second by David Almond were accepted.

**President’s Perspective:**

Bob Kottkamp opened his remarks by sharing his meeting with Marge McIntyre of New Canaan, Ct. who he met at this morning’s worship service. It was his hope that as a second home owner and moving to Ludlow, she would give consideration to joining our congregation.

Moving to his Perspective, he recapped the Phyllis Agan case and the fulfillment of her wishes: the naming of the BRGN & LPV/TV building the “William and Phyllis Agan Building”, and the purchase of a walk-in freezer for BRGN.

Our deficit budget of last year, while serious, resulted in ending our fiscal year in the black and hope that our Estimates of Giving will increase.

The Outreach/Mission committee and congregation voted to direct their donations to be given in greater amounts and fewer causes naming Black River Good Neighbors, their local recipient and Malayka House their international recipient with $500 held out for discretionary need. That money was used to receive a $250 matching grant for the national UCC for making 52 school kits sent to the World Council of Churches for distribution to children in natural disaster situations.

He put forth David Hearns KIVA micro-loans given in the past, continue to be repaid and repayments are used for additional small loans across a dozen countries to enable individuals, mostly women, and families to created small business.

Our website created by David Hearns, is working successfully and Sandra Russo, Church Secretary is proficient in its use.

Use of the Agan money has enabled the Church to move forward on capital projects. The Capital Needs Assessment, prepared by a professional engineer, is available on the website. Moisture in the basement was the most pressing need to be addressed. Bids for bathroom reconstruction are being accepted. The Trustees are working on capital plans and projects and will present their findings at forthcoming Deacon Luncheons. The Church sign for the front lawn (much of which has been paid for by memorial donations), electrical projects of installing new ceiling lights and rewiring to the old sanctuary lights have been finished as reported by Andy Ohotnicky. Lisha Klaiber expressed her concerns about undertaking any project that would trigger state fire marshal violations. Andy assured her the contractor for the bathroom renovation was aware of those concerns and would be in complete compliance. Ginny Kottkamp pointed out that having the Church handicapped accessible might make egress for the Church inaccessible.

Bob reported the Church bell was rung on two ceremonial occasions this year: The 50th commemoration of Dr. Martin Luther King’s march in Washington and the 150th Civil War commemoration of the Vermont soldiers at the Battle of Wilderness, Va. in 1864.

The Church’s sponsorship of Cub Pack 17 reports 8 Ludlow boys have enrolled.

BRGN has started a “Your Money 101” in the Church, an instance of community outreach for this Church.

He thanked Johanna Harpster for her dedication to Sunday School.

He announced the Church has separated itself financially from the Ludlow Community Garden.

His election to moderator of the Windham Union Association in June brings new insight into the working of the United Church and it is his hope that members of our Church will participate. He gave thanks to the anonymous donation of a hymnal in his name.

**Pastor’s Report:**

Pastor gave thanks for the hymnal donated in his name from Rev. Bruce Bishop.

He described two adult discussion series, one in the fall and spring and announced plans for a spring, 2015 Lenten study “Looking at our Fears”. Using Megan McKenna’s book, “The Hour of the Tiger: Facing our Fears”, he will lead us in discussion in dealing with the many and varied fears all of us have as we live out our lives on this earth.”

He thanked Deacon Sandy Peplau in undertaking the Easter celebration program “Whose Cross Is It Anyway?”

**Treasurer’s Report:**

Lisha Klaiber presented the report with indications of falling donations from Estimates of Giving lower than last year’s figures. Downturn in economy and fixed incomes were discussed as possible causes. She listed Church funds in three separate accounts: General Fund, Building Fund and LP Financial Funds, which reported a net increase of about $2,500 in the period October 1, 2013 to September 30, 2014.

The Church will project a deficit of $12,250 for the coming year. On a motion from Caroline Gauthier and second by Linda Thomson, the treasurer’s report was accepted.

**United Church Women’s Report:**

The financial position of the United Church Women reported a balance of $2,773.57, with income of $748 from the flea market and luncheon and expenses of $699.11. Special thanks to the women of the Church for the hearts made each year for distribution to the Ludlow community. On a motion from Caroline Gauthier and second by Lisha Klaiber, this report was accepted.

**Outreach/Missions Committee Report:**

Sandy Peplau reported the Outreach/Mission committee’s decision to divide their $3,500 funds between Black River Good Neighbors as their local disbursement and Malayaka House as their global disbursement, reserving $500 for emergency situations. A question was raised from the floor regarding a need for disbursement for catastrophic situations such as the tsunami emergency several years back or the Haiti disaster following a hurricane. It was suggested fund raisers could be organized to cover these situations. Pastor reported local emergency situations do not warrant giving out cash. On a motion by David Almond and second by Lisha Klaiber, this report was accepted.

**Altar Guild Report:**

This report was read and on a motion from Caroline Gauthier and second by David Almond was accepted.

**Deacon’s Report:**

Sandy Peplau expressed her thanks to the Deacons for their support this past challenging year. Lisha Klaiber expressed her thanks to Sandy for her dedication working with the Deacons and on a motion by Lisha and second by David Almond, this report was accepted.

**Audit Committee’s Report:**

This report, prepared by Jean Eggleston and Lee Potter was read and on a motion from Jim Peplau and second by Linda Thomson, was accepted.

**2015 Slate and Officers**

Bob Kottkamp presented the Slate of Officers to the congregation and on a motion from Lisha Klaiber to accept the ballot as presented and second by Linda Thomson, the Slate was accepted.

The motion to adjourn was made by Jim Peplau and second by Ginny Kottkamp.

Respectfully submitted:

Pat Liao, Clerk