

## **Diaconate Minutes - March 26, 2006** **7:00-9:00 pm WPC Room 105**

**Attending:** Carol Cunningham, Bill McAvoy, Morris Griffin, Rick Overholt, Nancy Safrit, Duck Ruffy, Haywood Holderness, Sharon Barnes, Michael Reich, Lynn Chesnut, Sally Keener

**Michael** welcomed everyone and **Haywood** opened the meeting in prayer.

### **Concerns and Celebrations:**

We shared concerns for the Suttons. Jeff's mother hospitalized in SC and awaiting a biopsy to determine if she has cancer in her lung; Mary Beck's mother, also in the hospital, had a stint installed to open a clogged artery, had a pacemaker and defibrillator installed to restore her heart rhythm, and went into acute renal failure that at least for now is under control. Also, Walt Beckwith's mother had a bad fall. Lynn shared thanks for the gifts for Campbell and celebrations for this her Baptismal day. Carol reported that her daughter Shannon is coming back from Thailand.

**The February minutes** were approved with two small corrections.

### **Joint Meeting – Session and Diaconate (April 9):**

**Haywood** asked the deacons what the Deacons needed at the joint meeting, which has been rescheduled to meet before Haywood's retirement rather than the traditional July meeting. The Deacons asked for information about the process and timelines of the interim minister and calling a new minister. Specifically questions revolved around continuity (who is staying?); the role of the church officers in the process-how can we step up at this time of change; could we have a FAQ sheet so we could give accurate information when asked. The need for frequent updated information throughout the process was emphasized, and it was suggested to have a point person to give updates monthly to keep the process clear. Haywood needs all of us as Deacons to continue our commitment to nurture and support the programs we are currently supporting with vigor and enthusiasm, and to keep the church involved in our benevolence work.

### **Mission Focus 2006 – Implementation:**

**Michael, Terry Allebaugh and Michelle Zechmann**, Adult Mental Health Specialist, lead discussion on how WPC could support the work of Housing for New Hope, especially the development of a new model program for support for the permanent residents of Andover I and II. The framework for how the Deacons can help divides into three areas listed here:

1. **Support Andover I** (corner of Liberty and Elizabeth Streets; 10 single-occupant efficiency units for singles with a disabling condition)
  - a. Help provide basic supplies for residents
  - b. Offer "team support" for a resident
    - i. All residents have a case manager
    - ii. Identify appropriate resident
    - iii. Support could include meal preparation, emotional support
  - c. All support will be provided on a low key basis
2. **Support Andover II** (permanent residents with mental illness)
  - a. Building just started

- b. Adopt a room to furnish (cost app. \$2,000)
  - c. Team support for resident to help with apt. set-up
- 3. Landscape Opportunities: Andover/Phoenix** (transitional housing for homeless men)
- a. Create common areas between Phoenix, Andover I and Andover II
  - b. Create more formal setting to discourage less desirable foot traffic

In helping the residents of Andover Houses, Michelle stressed that we would take an informal role and would always have a professional caseworker to coordinate services and provide training. The vision is to duplicate a model used with families, the System of Care model, but which has not been applied to the single adults in these housing programs. The volunteers would assist the caseworker to personally connect the community and wrap support around these people so they don't become homeless again. They have stable housing; they need personal support. *Action Items:* Terry, Michelle and Michael will develop a menu of services WPC volunteers might expect to offer, which will include common needs, and also ways to extend friendship to a population that is traditionally isolated. Once a plan is drafted, Haywood and the pastoral staff will make a call for volunteers from the pulpit, asking for small teams (3-4) to make a long-term commitment to make a personal connection with a soul in need and extend the hand of friendship. This is new ground in serving this population, and WPC could be instrumental in creating a model that other churches and civic organizations could replicate.

**Community Mission Day: May 13<sup>th</sup>:**

After discussion, it was decided to include the landscaping projects at Andover/Phoenix in our Mission Work Day, May 13<sup>th</sup>. The other opportunities to volunteer backbone and elbow grease that day will be at Camp New Hope and projects at our own church. Doug Wellemeier, project manager at Andover II, can help us with ideas for developing a path, landscaping and picnic area in the space between Andover and Phoenix Houses.

**Easter Offering:**

Half of the Easter offering always goes to One Great Hour of Sharing and half to a dedicated mission selected by the diaconate. After discussion, it was decided to use this offering to replace a shelter at Camp New Hope.

**Haywood** passed along heartfelt thank yous from Mary for the deacons' continued support for Project Graduation. The deacons quickly returned appreciation to Mary for the countless hours she has given to this project for years.

**Assimilation Committee Update:**

**Sally** reported that the Barnabus Group continues its work; the majority of the newest Inquirers' Class members already are connected to a Barnabie, and the rest will in the next few days. Visitors are being called each week. The new Meet and Greet initiative, coffee after both services, is slowly but steadily growing in efficiency of implementation and in popularity. The next step is to get an organized sign-up campaign for hosting. Assimilation Committee has begun another new initiative, the "Did You Hear" cards in the pews that invite immediate involvement of members at the moment they hear something in the announcements or Sharing our Mission that triggers their interest to help or learn more. Assimilation committee members will

follow-up on cards placed in the offering plate and will keep the pews stocked with the handy blue involvement cards.

**Michael** reported that the website revision committee continues its research.

#### **Congregational Care Committee Update:**

**Bill Scott** was not able to attend, but the caregivers have been commissioned.

#### **Fellowship Committee Update:**

**Bill McAvoy** reported that the Ash Wednesday Pancake Supper was a success and thanked all who helped. He highlighted the **Lenten Lunch (April 5)**, which he and **Nancy** are coordinating. Volunteers for the soup, sausage and sandwich lunch are still needed; sign-up.

#### **Global Missions Committee Update:**

**Bruce** was not able to attend, but global mission highlights include the women returning from a mission trip to the coast and the Youth planning a coast mission trip this summer. **Nancy** had a report from Durham congregations in Action concerning a movement for a petition to our state representatives to urge getting out of all investments that deal with Khartoum and the Sudan. Nancy will pass her letters and information to Bruce for Global Missions to explore and consider.

**Carol** reported that the **CROP Walk** was a big success with approximately 60 walkers - church members, Youth and Scouts. Money needs to be in by April 15<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Local Missions Committee Update:**

**Katrina Evacuee Task Force:** Although absent due to the hospitalization of both his mother and Mary Beck's mother, **Jeff** reported in that "Katrina relief task force is now helping Kendrick, his brother Sammy, and his mother Lucy. The team continues to be amazing. It is hard work, they are devoting many, many hours to this project. The team has decided to support the family through June. The team hopes that all three will have jobs, right now none do. Kendrick has dropped out of school at the team's request, so he could attend jobs-for-life. Unfortunately, we're not sure there are enough students in job-for-life to continue with the current class. The team flew Kendrick to New Orleans for his son's christening, after which he will bring his son back to Durham." He continued, "The church owes a tremendous debt of gratitude to the team, please let them know how much you appreciate their efforts when you see them. This has probably been one of the most challenging, frustrating, time-consuming, sustained efforts ever undertaken by our church volunteers." **Rick** updated Jeff's report that the task force is creating a document of what they did and lessons learned that will be finished shortly. Sammy is going back to New Orleans and will not be under our care.

**IHN:** **Carol** reported we will again host IHN on April 23-27. We have a partner church, but we need volunteers for that week. Sharon will be helping with sign-up sheets after church Sunday.

**Shelter Meals:** **Rick** reported we need sponsors for the April 25<sup>th</sup> shelter meal. He also said they need coffee mugs at the shelter and suggested deacons each bring a mug to the joint session meeting.

**Nancy** reported from Durham Congregations in Action that there will be a 2-day training for mediators through the Durham Mediation Service, April 24-25. Sharon accepted the information sheet and will confer with Jeff on possible action items.

**Deacon's Corner:** Sally will submit information about the need for volunteers for the April Shelter Meal and an announcement about the May 13<sup>th</sup> Mission Work Day.

**Closing Prayer** was offered by Sally. The meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.

**Next meeting: April 9 (joint meeting with Session)**  
**April 23 (regular Deacon meeting)**