

Web Site Working Group

Report to Church Council - June 20, 2006

REVIEW OF MAJOR OPEN ISSUES

Sunday Sermons: We expect to have recent sermons (perhaps those delivered during 2006) online by the end of the July, depending on the authors' available time. We may need a little assist to help this program run smoothly for subsequent sermons.

Council Minutes - Online Version: The Council previously voted to create a stripped-down version of its Minutes to be placed on the web site starting with the February Minutes. So far, we have not received this information.

Council Meeting Agenda: Last month WSWG proposed that the Council authorize posting of its Meeting Agenda on the web site to help facilitate member participation in the issues facing our church.

Further, we suggested that the Council urge its constituent Boards, Committees and other organizational units to follow suite, when appropriate.

In any case the value of posting agenda is determined by the timeliness of the posting. We also suggested that such agenda be posted at least one week in advance of the meeting to give individual members of our community sufficient time to see it and consider their interest in the topics to be discussed.

Permission Forms: Our database tracks approximately 80 lay leadership positions filled by 66 different people. As of the date of this report we do not have Permission Forms from 29 of these 66 people (about 44 percent). Note that there are some organizational units for which we have no staffing information. Among these are: the Pastoral Relations Committee, Personnel Committee, and except for Ellie Harple, we don't know who else is associated with the Women's Fellowship.

Communications Group Concept: The WSWG introduced the idea of organizing the churches' internal and external communications efforts around the concept of a Communications Group at the Council's February meeting.

At the May Council meeting, we suggested chartering an independent study of this concept as to its appropriateness, usefulness and viability to our congregation at the earliest opportunity.

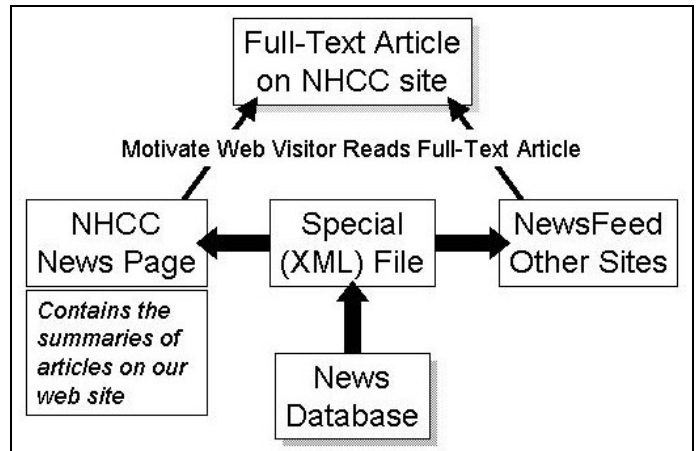
OUR "NEWSFEED" EXTENDS OUR 'REACH'

We have now fully automated the NewsFeed section. The importance of this section cannot be overstated. Items posted to the supporting database automatically show up on other sites, including the Connecticut Conference site. People looking for information about local churches through the CT Conference site, will have the opportunity to see our NewsFeed.

We are the only UCC church in Connecticut that has a NewsFeed! This function extends our reach into a larger community of interested people. People who are just passing through or are making a permanent move, can more easily find us!

However, for the NewsFeed function to be effective, the news posted in the database must be fresh and timely...and written reasonably well. A volunteer is sorely needed to become the managing editor for this function. The person serving in this role must be reliable and be able to observe and 'see' the hidden stories associated with our activities and accomplishments. While it would be nice to have an accomplished writer doing this, it's not

necessary! We expect only that he or she has a passion for storytelling and has some ability to tell the story clearly.



How NewsFeeds Work

HOW CAN THE WEB SITE HELP YOU?

Our web site is a new and very unique communication medium. As such, we may forget to include the possibilities available to us by using this new technology to help accomplish our objectives.

Recently, we were able to support the efforts of Christian Education and Christian Outreach in a minor way by creating an online Vacation Bible School registration form and a Survey instrument, respectively. We discovered this 'hidden' need quite by accident...and our response would not have been possible if our available programming time was more limited.

The point is...our constituent groups can gain a lot of value by folding the web site support possibilities into their planning.

If you have a need you even think might be possible to support on the web, just ask! If you have a problem and want to know if the web site can help solve it, just ask! The central mission of the WSWG is supporting your missions...so...just ask!

SHORT NEWS ITEMS

Calendar of Events: Linda Kirk has agreed to maintain the Calendar of Events for the WSWG. Please be patient with her as she learns how to use the system.

Serving the CT Conference: Based on the work done by the WSWG and many others outside the group, we've recently been invited to help plan a CT Conference sponsored roundtable discussion focusing on the developing a 'model' set of policies and operational procedures to help guide all the churches in the Conference.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

News Writer: To write up the stuff that will go onto our NewsFeed page.

Youth Reporter: To write about our youth activities...from the point of view of our youth.

Please review past WSWG Reports for additional volunteer opportunities. Our reports are posted online.