NEW MILFORD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

October 13, 2026

Present: Steve Kolitz, Pastor Lee, Mike Hopp, Mary Prause, Jerry Jones, Marlene Davis, Martha McMahon, Kimberly Rothen, Bonnie Knapp, Doreen Shea, Terri Hudak, Barbara Williams, Ralph Williams, Val Kolitz, Patty Jacobson

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm; an opening prayer by Pastor Lee followed.

Steve Kolitz: recap of old business:

The legal matter concerning the Education Center – we do not have definitive confirmation that it has been resolved. Jerry will follow up for verification

Cell tower: permitted for construction; Steve has informed them of availability of the parking area during the week of Thanksgiving when the Food Barn is closed; Mike spoke with Eversource re: possible electrical access to the Food Barn

Church Usage: the request for use by "Miss Cheryl's Music Time" has been withdrawn

Food Truck – no news

Second Blessing Boutique: Val shared her report (*this report will be added to the committee reports at the end of the minutes*); more help is always needed; working on more access to payment options

Control panel for heating and cooling in the Sanctuary has been repaired; waiting on a part for the heat pump in a room in the Ed Center

A summary of the cables and speaker revamping in the Sanctuary: The target for fundraising is $6000; some donations have been received; Mary Prause will create a "thermometer" to track donations. A motion was made by Jerry Jones to use a "designated fund for music ministry" to add to the campaign. After discussion and a suggestion that we wait to use that until the campaign has ended, the motion was withdrawn. The SDA church is aware of the revamping of the wiring and it was suggested that someone be present when the work is being done.

Harlan's request for a paid singer for the choir should be presented to SPRC and the Finance Committee for approval

Discussion of Wednesday evening praise service – Jerry Jones suggested that a task force be created with possible representatives from Evangelism, Sunday School, Finance and a younger church member, as well as Pastor Lee as a member. Jerry then made a motion: "A Task Force should be started for how to grow the church with the appropriate people on it." The motion was seconded by Marlene Davis. Discussion followed with suggestions that anyone from the congregation could also serve on it. The vote to approve this motion was unanimous. Steve will prepare a plan and share it with the congregation for input from all members. The Council's December meeting would be used for this brainstorming session on ideas for growing the church. This would be similar to the "idea gathering" meeting that was held earlier in the year where the thrift shop (now the Second Blessings Boutique) idea originated.

Reports:

Jerry Jones – Church Treasurer: Church dinners are on target with profits of $4401; budgeted for $5000 income for the year. Discussion of the November ham dinner: no one volunteered to coordinate it

Evangelism: Blessings of the Animals will be Sunday, October 18 (Original date was rained out)

Nominations Committee – has been meeting; Pastor Lee deeply appreciates everyone who has agreed to continue serving on their respective committees. New members/younger church members are also being recruited to serve

Marlene Davis– charge conference reports are still needed; Charge Conference date: November 1 at the Newtown UMC at 3:00 pm; all reports pertaining to the conference will be submitted online

Kimberly Rothen/Jerry Jones – Finance Committee: request for approval of the audit report. Mike Hopp made a motion to accept the report; seconded by Marlene Davis. Unanimous approval. The budget for 2027 will be presented to the Church Council at the November meeting.

Terri Hudak- Sunday School – asking for more volunteers for the children's message

Marlene Davis – The Adult Sunday School class is studying the Social Principles of the United Methodist Church. Being stewards of our planet has been discussed; to that end they will be encouraging the use of mugs from home during coffee hour to replace the use of disposable cups every Sunday. More planning and information will be forthcoming.

Steve Kolitz – continuing his efforts to staff the Haunted Trail at Scarrybrooke

OPEN FORUM:

Ralph Williams has obtained permits from the town for the Trees on the Green (Sponsored by the Men's Club)

Mary Prause – would like to bring back "Not Just Eggs"

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

Patricia Jacobson, Recording Secretary

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

JERRY JONES - CHURCH TREASURER

1.) Work is beginning on 2027 Budget Development. Plan is to present to October Finance Committee and November Church Council. Below is a Historic look at our P&L from 2020-2026. It highlights that large budget deficits on the church side are not a new thing.

2.) I took a look at our deposits for the Thrift Shop and they show $2,976 through 9/5/26.

3.) I also looked at Craft sales and they have generated $1,949 of income this year.

4.) I previously reported that Dinners have generated about $3,700 so far this year.

These have been much needed and appreciated. Thanks to all who contribute to these results.

5.) Unfortunately, as of this writing there is no new news on the leasing of the Ed Center Space, and no work has commenced on the Cell Tower. Both of these are needed and could bring us a balanced budget if income is fully realized.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jerry

MARTHA MCMAHON – SPR

SPRC will be working on evaluation for Pastor Lee and reports for the Church Conference

DOREEN SHEA - CONGREGATIONAL CARE

We continue to visit and make calls to check in on others.

PASTOR LEE

The Nominations Committee has been meeting. We are still in the process of recruiting church leaders and committee members for next year.

CAROLYN NUZZI - EVANGELISM

We organized a “Light Luncheon” after worship service on Sept. 20. It included a trivia game whose subject was Connecticut facts and history. It was surprising what people knew and didn’t know. Although the Oct. 2 Korean BBQ was not sponsored by this committee; it did take up Ohyeun and Carolyn’s time and can definitely be seen as a community outreach activity.

The Blessing of the Animals on the NM Green is planned for Oct. 11, but as of this submission, the rain date of the 18th will probably be used.

TERRI HUDAK – SUNDAY SCHOOL

There are 12 students registered this Fall in Sunday school. Of this group five are Elementary school age4yr-10yrs) and the other seven make up the Middle school age(11-14yrs). There are three regular teachers that alternate Sundays and age groups. Mrs Ohyeun Lee, has been working with the Middle school on a textbook from Cokesbury and The Elementary school age are using the Godly play curriculum that has a Montessori foundation and there is a“Doorperson“ volunteer that walks the children down to the class and assist the teachers as needed.

I have been trying to follow the Liturgical calendar as closely as possible with the Godly play lessons. For example, the Creation story used in the Elementary class paired well with the sermon on “Owners or Stewards” (Genesis 1:24-31) Celebrating the beauty of God’s creations and offering blessings to the animals and creatures God has created and lovingly placed in our lives.

I have reached out to some of our church leaders to help teach our youth. These are men that have had children and teenagers themselves. “Life lessons “ might be what every teen should experience. This is what we hope will help to keep the teens interested and coming back for more!

The children are participating in church as Acolytes, Church bell ringers, and as Communion stewards. The puppetry ministry has come to a halt however, since our Puppeteer has decided that he doesn’t want to continue to do it. With respect for this individual’s efforts, we give him pause and hope he might reconsider if the desire returns.

Respectfully submitted,

Terri Hudak

Sunday school superintendent

VAL KOLITZ - SECOND BLESSINGS BOUTIQUE

Second Blessing Thrift Shop continues to operate strongly. Our goal remains $500 per weekend, or $2,000 per month. While we have fallen short of this target in most months, we remain committed to it.

We are deeply thankful for the many volunteers who have stepped forward to support this ministry. We could still use additional help in the coming months, as two of us will be stepping away temporarily.

Looking ahead, we will be closed on Thanksgiving weekend, Christmas weekend, and possibly New Year's weekend. These closures will reduce our receipts. At the same time, once the fall and holiday seasons pass, we expect less competition from other local events, which should help boost sales.

We continue to receive multiple donations of mostly high-quality items each week. We carefully sort and price each item to reflect its value while remaining affordable. To maintain high standards and protect our reputation, items that do not meet our standards are discarded—some clothing is placed in the bin across the driveway—and we also maintain a free section. Everything is priced to sell, and we have begun offering deeper discounts on items that have been in inventory since the shop opened.

We advertise aggressively on Facebook and are expanding our presence on Instagram. We encourage members of the congregation to share our posts on their own platforms.

One high-school student has already completed half of her community-service hours with us, and we would welcome one or two additional students. We will be careful in selecting those students.

As space allows, we continue to bring additional items upstairs from the lower level and fellowship hall.

We are also willing to open before or after meetings or church services if there is interest.

We are grateful to our congregation and community members who have generously donated items, and to all of our volunteers who make this ministry possible.

Respectfully submitted,
Valorie Kolitz