

Grace Lutheran Church Council Minutes

May 28, 2015

In Attendance:

*Pastor Paul Bulgerin

*Pastor Heidi Borkenhagen

*Ruth Schmidt

*Jim Mulholand

*Mara Schwartz

*Darlyne Holle

*Trudi Biefeld

Lisa Bernd

Sarah Ganaway

*Melanie Arndt

*Aimee Lempke

*John Walch

*Scott Donovan

*Katie Eippert

*Laurie Gosselin

The meeting began at 7:20p.m. With President John Walch presiding. Mara Schwartz opened the meeting with a devotion and prayer.

DEVOTIONAL: Mara Schwartz

APPROVAL OF THE **APRIL 2015** MINUTES

PASTOR PAUL'S REPORT:

Financial Help with Adult Mission Trip: I would like to ask the council for some financial support for the adult mission trip to Moore, OK at the end of June. What has happened is that we have two unfilled spots for the trip and are required to pay a \$200 per person cancellation fee for them.

When we first looked at the trip earlier this year I talked to people at church to gauge interest in the trip. After doing so I reserved eight spots thinking that was a good number for a group from Grace. However, one person who did sign up cancelled and several others who had said they thought they would go ended up not being able to do so. By the time I found out about this we were stuck having to pay the cancellation fees.

There are also several other costs related to registering for the trip. I do not want the group members, who are paying \$400 per person along with giving a week of their time to others, to have to make up the shortfall for the trip. I am asking the council to consider helping with \$400-\$700 in assistance. We could use money from the pastors' fund or another undesignated gifts and memorial fund for this.

Adult Mission Trip: We have six people who will be participating in the Moore, OK trip. Our group is leaving on Saturday, June 27 and will arrive in Moore on Sunday, June 28. We will work as volunteers in the community, helping with tornado recovery work, from June 29 to July 2. Then we'll head home, driving the whole way back on July 3.

Summer Preaching: I have worked out the summer preaching schedule to cover all the dates when I am on the adult mission trip, the Boundary Waters trip or vacation. My thanks to AIM Ruth, Howard Vrankin and Beth Walch who will preach and lead worship while I am gone.

Food for the Poor Pastor on July 12: I have arranged for a pastor from this organization, which raises funds to fight hunger around the world, to preach on Sunday, July 12 when I am on the Boundary Waters trip. We had a pastor from Food for the Poor preach several years ago. Jim Schmidt has agreed to pick the pastor up from the airport on Saturday, July 11 and drive him around while he is here. We will need to pay for a hotel for the pastor on July 11. He will preach at the 9:00 a.m. worship and then lead an informal adult forum session for those interested after the service.

Looking to Fall Stewardship: Since we have a major challenge ahead of us as we prepare for our stewardship for 2016 and the costs of the building program, I plan to send out several letters over the summer to Grace members talking about what this means for individual and congregational giving.

This will help build a foundation for our fall stewardship which will take place the first two Sundays in October.

God's Work Our Hands Sunday on September 13: I have contacted the volunteers who helped with last fall's "Operation Inasmuch" day to see if they are willing to be part of the planning team for this fall's congregational day of service. I was pleased to see that almost all of them said they'd help again this year. I am also starting to advertise this for others who might be interested in getting involved with the planning.

I will hold the first planning meeting with the group in early June to start work on arranging work sites and projects for the day.

We will start to promote the day and have sign-up sheets available beginning in early July.

PASTOR HEIDI'S REPORT:

Worship: I baptized Parker James Dzikowski on May 24. I used some of my learnings from the conference I attended as a part of my sabbatical in my sermon on Pentecost. I am working to plan some special liturgies for worship on June 14 when we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the first baptism at Grace. We will welcome Hazel Utecht into the family of God through baptism on that day! We are so blessed to have so many baptisms at Grace.

Summer Schedule: Just a reminder that until I begin my sabbatical, I am on my summer schedule of 2 days per week in the office (after Memorial Day until Labor Day).

HYPE Youth Group: I'll be meeting with some of the leaders in June to discuss plans for the year. There will be a couple youth helping us plan things and lead the group next year along with Pat and Chantal Murack. A huge thank you to the Eippert and Gierach families for their years of service and dedication to our youth. They are both stepping down because it's getting harder to lead and get to events with their children around, and they are getting involved in other areas where their kids are.

TNT: The Memorial Day cookout was great, with a new family attending the group. Chris Eippert is planning a Chinooks game June 14, Pat and Chantal Murack are hosting a cookout August 22, and Brooke Napiwocki is coordinating a Summer Sounds event in July. I'm looking in to doing another event with All People's in the Fall- either joining them for worship or a service event.

Lydia Circle: The retreat at Pine Lake was wonderful! There were 15 people signed up, but one was ill and could not attend. The ladies enjoyed it very much and we plan to continue this event next year.

Women's Book Group: We will conclude our study of "Carry On Warrior" by Glennon Doyle Melton in June. Lisa Bernd has offered to lead a study for the groups during the summer, and I've given her some ideas. Thanks, Lisa!

Synod Assembly: I'll be attending synod assembly on Friday, May 29-Saturday, May 30.

Sabbatical: See my attached report on my sabbatical details. I truly am honored and humbled by the support of the leadership and the people of Grace in this gift of a sabbatical. Thank you.

AIM RUTH'S REPORT:

Confirmation: Each class is special in its own way and the 12 youth, who affirmed their baptismal promises this May, were one of the best groups ever to work with. I pray they will keep their promises and stay connected to their Lord and His church. On Sunday, July 12th, I'll be meeting after church for orientation with our new Confirmands who will begin in fall. This looks to be a small class.

Sunday School: This was another year in which we were truly blessed with outstanding volunteers. Special thanks to Kerry Feutz and Erica Dimmett who make my job so much easier. A donation is made each year from our education budget to a worthy cause, in honor of our staff. This year, we are going to donate \$75 towards school supplies for All Peoples.

Women's Brunch Bible Study: Our twice a month women's group had a great year. We had good discussions on the book, *Do Your Best and Trust God To Do The Rest*. We finished our study with a lunch at Baltica Tea Room in Port Washington and we've made plans to meet for lunch in July.

Confirmation Camp: I attended a Crossways Camp meeting to better prepare for the changes in camp this year. Four of our students will not be attending this summer. One is because of family vacation plans and three are girls who are very fearful of this kind of experience. It's sad they're not going because this week is a time when the class really bonds in a new way. The fourteen going are sure to have a great week.

Vacation Bible School: Letters of invitation, with registration forms, are being sent to all those non-Grace members who attended VBS last year. Katie continues to do an exceptional job as we work on staffing. I will do a special announcement in worship on June 7th.

High School Graduates: Lisa (Grafton) and I (Cedarburg) have written out the Grad Grams to our seniors at Grace. I've ordered and wrapped their gifts for the special service on May 31st. I will be in IL that day for my granddaughters' dance recital.

Synod Assembly: I look forward to attending Synod Assembly with Pr. Paul, Pr. Heidi, Lisa, Darlyne, and Jim. It's always a great opportunity to reconnect with others in the Greater Milwaukee Synod. This year I will be recognized for 25 years of rostered ministry (2 years in the Missouri Synod and 23 in the ELCA). *Recognition is taking place at opening worship on Friday morning – Short Council Meeting, right?!?!?! I'm really looking forward to the treat of hearing Eddie Lacy speak on Friday night.*

Spiritual Formation Classes: I attended the eighth and final Spiritual Formation Class this May. This has been a great experience for me, I have learned much and I will truly miss gathering with the rest of the group. It's especially hard to leave my small group of six as we have grown so close over the years.

DIRECTOR OF INVOLVMENT:

Ugandan Kids Choir: I have received the contract from the Ugandan Kids Choir. They will need housing for August 4, 5 & 6. Before I sign the contract do you think that it is feasible that we will find housing for them for 3 nights?

50th Anniversary Celebration: The fun continues with our special service on June 14. This service will honor the first baptism. Steve Petersen was the first baptism at Grace. We will be baptizing Hazel Utecht that morning. What a wonderful way to start our next 50 years. I have asked people to send in their baptismal photos. Ed is putting together a power point to show all of the photos that were sent in before the service. After the service, we will be having an ice cream social. It should be a fun morning!

Planning for the 50th Anniversary Picnic continues. We are calling to find a caterer, getting fun facts for an insert, planning games, making invitations, plus much more. The Bishop will be preaching that morning.

For the month of June our service focus will be Big Brothers/Big Sisters Berry Big Run. They need lots of volunteers to make this event a huge success. I will have the signup information in the Gathering Space on Sunday, June 7. Pastor Paul will also be introducing the organization to the congregation that morning.

50th Anniversary Art Piece: Earlier in our planning, I mentioned that we would be having an art piece made for the new building. Kandy Gibson has sketched a rough idea of what she will be making with us & for us. We will give people in the congregation the opportunity to buy one of the 50 tiles available to “scratch” a design in. Kandy will be at church on Sunday, August 2 & August 23 to help people make their tiles. She will then use that as a frame to her tree piece. I am hoping the price of the tiles will help pay her fee.

This is going to be a beautiful way to remember our anniversary year.

Women’s Book Study: Next month is our last Women’s Book Study Group. We will finish up that last section of our book. Many of the women in the group would like to continue with another book in the summer. I said I would be happy to do another book for the summer. I will offer it up to all the women in both groups & the congregation.

Summer Hours: Ed & I are beginning summer hours this week.

FELLOWSHIP:

Fellowship is planning the picnic. And began to look and plan for events in the months ahead.

PROPERTY:

Spring clean-up was held Saturday May 23rd 2015. We had a total of 5 people including myself and my wife Marie along with Roger, Larry, and Ed. I found it astonishing the average age of the volunteers showing up was 76 years old if we take away the two youngsters, both Marie and I, our average age of volunteers is 76 years old. I think we’ll have to rethink how we attract some young muscle for the next clean-up after our construction.

Jim Scott had trimmed the pine trees on the north end of the property. We put the hoses out and raked lots of pine cones and needles. Marie cleaned up the garden on the east end of the property next to the awning. We have a dead tree there that will need to be removed. In light of the upcoming construction we will want to move some of the perennials into other gardens around the property that could use a bit more life. I will look for assistance in moving these plants in the next few months. There is also a very nice maple tree that will be in the way when construction begins. It’s small enough to consider moving. I will put feelers out to see what the cost would be to relocate that tree. At Jim Scott’s request, I rebuilt the auger for the small snowblower.

CHRISTIAN CARE:

No report for Christian Care this month.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION:

CEC did not meet this month. Ruth's report speaks to any ongoing education areas.

WORSHIP:

The meeting was opened with a prayer by Pastor Paul.

Affirmation of Baptism service will be held on Sunday, May 17. Bells are playing "Let it Go" from the film Frozen, and Heidi will do the children's message on the Frozen theme.

Summer Schedule will start on May 24 at 9:00.

September 13 is our "God's Work, Our Hands" service at 10:00 followed by lunch and service projects. We won't go back to two services until Sunday, September 27.

September 20 is the anniversary service and Bishop Jeff Barrow will be our guest preacher. (I was hoping for Captain Jack Sparrow.)

Graduate Sunday is May 31 at 9:00.

The May services planning was completed:

Week one: Pastor Heidi preaching on "Doubting Thomas"

Week two: Pastor Paul's theme is "Protect Them in your Name" Affirmation of Baptism

Week three: Pastor Heidi theme "Advocates"

Week four: Pastor Paul "The Important 3:16s"

Initial planning for June services was reviewed

There was a discussion of Holy Week services, and comments were very positive.

There will be an attempt to have special music at many of the services during the summer, even though the formal vocal and bell choirs will be on vacation until fall.

Scott asked that the theme of evil in the world and how Christians respond, be addressed in worship due to the current persecution and martyring of Christians in the world.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 2, 2015.

OUTREACH:

Nothing to report. There have been no extra outreach projects during the month of May because of the 50th Anniversary's monthly donation programs.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

1. I switched pension/health insurance payment with Portico to online payment, and since they did not process the transaction until late in the month, the debit did not occur in April, but instead was actually processed in May – so the pension/health insurance costs in the monthly report remain the same as they showed in March, but will probably be caught up with two payments in May.
2. Our offerings through April continue to catch up on budget expectations – we were \$8487.00 behind at the end of March, and are now only \$2,985.00 behind at the end of April.
3. We went over budget in the Convention/Leadership Retreats account this month – due to the charges for Synod Assembly which were \$1855.00. We have spent \$2059.51 and the total annual budget for that line item is \$1775.00.
4. The Grounds and Maintenance budget expenses continue to stay well under budget – we have spent \$3,581.00 so far, with the projection for this time of year being \$5,967.00. I would credit almost all of that to the efforts of Dennis Bruss. He continues to save us on repair costs by taking on a lot of jobs himself – the latest example is repairing/replacing broken tiles in the worship center, essentially doing the work with only minor supply costs. This is a job that I estimate we would have had to spend well over \$1000.00 to have a contractor come in and do. He deserves some recognition for his efforts.
5. Building fund net balance increased from \$277,696.00 to \$291,999.00 over the month.

That is it for the month – nothing very exceptional otherwise.

VPT:

The VPT met with Katie Eipert and Kerry Fuetz from CEC and Pat Murack from CEC and HYPE to discuss current needs for the youth education and ministry programs. This helped the VPT get a better understanding on how the new positions could be structured to best serve the programs.

The next meeting is scheduled for June 1st with plans to organize thoughts and direction for the new positions.

Janet Sladky announced that she will be stepping down from the VPT. No one from the VPT has stepped forward to take Janet's role as Chair at this time. The VPT discussed the desire to find an additional person to join the team.

Business Old & New:

Health Insurance Rebate

Funds for Adult Mission Trip

News/Notes/Sharing:

CLOSING PRAYER: Pastor Heidi