



Council Minutes November 21st, 2019

IN ATTENDANCE:

*Pastor Paul Bulgerin	*Jodi Doro (Secretary)	*Kelly Olson (Worship)
*Pastor Heidi Borkenhagen	*Lynda Lalley (Treasurer)	Wendy Freeland (Fellowship)
*Mike Moran (President)	*Jen Jacobson (Christian Education)	*Lisa Bernd (Director of Involvement)
*Mike McGraw (Past President)	*Kelly Klug (Outreach)	Sarah Brogni (Property)
*Mark Barber (President Elect)	*Melissa Schmidt (Christian Care)	

(*) present at meeting

The meeting began at 7:29 P.M. with President Mike Moran presiding.

Reflection led by Pastor Heidi

- ✓ Approval of meeting agenda – motion Pastor Paul, 2nd Kelly Klug
- ✓ Approval of the September 2019 minutes – motion Lynda Lalley, 2nd Mike McGraw

Pastors and DI Reports

PASTOR PAUL'S REPORT:

“Reconciling in Christ”: So far we have had four sessions to discuss and hear about RIC and what the Bible says, and doesn't say, about same-sex sexual acts. We will take all the time that is necessary to discuss this so that all members feel that we have adequately discussed this and people have had an opportunity to share their thoughts on the matter.

I have one additional session set for November 24 and then we can work to set up additional meeting times, some of which can and should be outside of Sunday mornings, to continue.

Pastor Heidi said that a draft of a possible RIC statement has been written and we can decide when we would like to put it out in front of the congregation for initial discussion on it. At our staff meeting we discussed having another forum in January to have a preliminary discussion on a draft of an RIC statement.

Stewardship: The responses so far, which total about 65% of our 2019 pledged giving, have been positive. We are up about \$20,000 as of now over 2019 giving. We still have a lot of pledge cards still out and there are a number of variables to consider which could affect our final total giving.

Our 2020 anticipated giving will also include income from Scrip and, if the congregation is officially selected as the new polling place for Grafton, income from that.

I would appreciate help from any council members to make some follow-up phone calls to members who have not yet returned their commitment cards. A calling script will be provided.

Worship Attendance: Our attendance has been a lot better the past month. We had over 320 in worship on Reformation weekend, 245 the first week in November, 283 the second and 295 this past weekend. The Worship Planning Team is looking at several ways to encourage worship attendance. It was about this time last year that attendance started to improve.

Endowment Committee: I met with the committee on Sunday, November 17. Our investments are doing quite well this year and the committee will come to council with a recommendation to disburse \$6,000 to various groups and organizations.

Nicaragua Mission Trip: We have eight people signed up for the February 3-12, 2020 trip. My wife Karen, daughter Samantha (who is a member of the COE board) and I will be going on the trip. While there we will learn more about the planned renal disease education program Meg and the COE are working to develop.



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Nominating Committee: There are no further updates from the committee. Two of the four spots have been filled.

PASTOR HEIDI'S REPORT:

Worship: I met with Eryn to plan the special Advent service on the 12th and the structure of the Choir Cantata services.

I will be doing the memorial service for Brady Gullicksen at the Milwaukee Ale House. His family wanted to do a celebration of his short life. Please keep them in your prayers.

First Communion: We ended up with 20 kids in the 2nd grade and up class, and one in the class for younger children. All the classes are completed and I'm now meeting with each child/family individually to make sure they understand what we learned. First Communion dates will be Thanksgiving Eve or December 1.

There is one child who was not able to attend do to current family circumstances. I said I would be happy to meet with them when the timing is right for them, as they are eager to have communion.

Christmas Sing-a-long: We got a keyboard (Thank you, Holle Family). More publicity (flyers, Facebook Event, Good News/Grace Notes, announcements) will be going out at Grace and around town to promote the event.

Reconciling in Christ: I attended the RIC Summit on November 2 with a couple of members. It was good to hear about how other congregations are going through the process, and to gain a broader understanding of what RIC means in different locations. As Pastor Paul said in his report, we have a lot to discuss and learn, and I think we should take more time to keep the conversation going.

Pastor Bill Beyer preached and led Adult Forum on November 10. There were many people there for both worship and the forum, and he shared some good background on what this means in the wider church and for the LGBTQ community.

The team met to discuss the welcome statement on November 19. They were all very much on the same page, and have a statement to present. We can look it over and discuss at council.

Synod Assembly Planning: I am serving on the team to look at how we incorporate the anniversary celebrations of the 50th Anniversary of the ordination of women, the 40th anniversary of the first woman of color, and the 10th anniversary of the ordination of LGBTQ people in committed relationships in the ELCA.

Crossways Board: I attended a retreat for the Crossways Camps Board on November 8-9.

DIRECTOR OF INVOLVEMENT: (Lisa Bernd)

Annual Report Articles: All of the church council annual report articles are due to me on Sunday, December 15. You can email them to me at di@gracegrifton.com.

Stewardship Information: I have been entering all of the pledge cards that have come in to the office. After they are entered, I give Pastor Paul all the information & the updated pledge list.

Time & Talents: I processed, folded & stuffed all the Time & Talents sheets for Time & Talent Sunday. All the ones I have are entered. More are trickling in. I will email every group leader at the beginning of December with their T & T lists.



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New Members: Pastor Paul, Pastor Heidi & I met on Tuesday afternoon & planned the new member classes. They will be Sunday, December 1 & 8 with the new member reception on December 22.

Building Updates: Pure Mechanical came out & adjusted the set points for the building. They also did a final adjustment for the music room.

Regular Things: I also continue doing the coffee hour dishes, weekly insert, Grace Notes, the Good News, responsibility emails, entering contributions, e-giving & the million things that come up daily.

Attendance Report

Attendance was discussed.

Committee Reports

CHRISTIAN CARE: (Melissa Schmidt)

I made welcome folders for the welcome baskets.

Will partner with Lisa to discuss some ideas on marketing to new potential members.

FELLOWSHIP: (Wendy Freeland)

I have the pie social next week that I will set up, organize, and run.

FINANCE: (Lynda Lalley)

Total income for the month was \$44,324 (does not include the \$20,000 from contingency) – (was \$54,368 in September) – we should average \$50,130. For the month of October, we were behind by (\$5,805.87) and year-to-date (\$20,715.16).

Budget Expenses for the month of \$55,691 were a little high (we should average \$53,523 or lower).

Budget expenses of note for this month include dishwasher repairs (\$1,079.42), Church Insurance renewal has increased (\$114.25), and extra office expenses for getting the pledge and T&T mailings out. The WeEnergies bill dropped a bit from \$1,577.77 in September to \$1,301.15 this month.

Total income for the year is currently behind total budget expenses by \$23,998.

Our budget cash went from -\$43,450.88 at the end of September to -\$34,818.43, increasing \$8,632.45 in October, that includes the \$20,000 that was transferred from the contingency account. We budgeted using \$40,000 from contingency and have used \$30,000 of that.

OUTREACH: (Kelly Klug)

No report provided

PROPERTY: (Sarah Brogni)

We did order a new nativity scene, it's a little smaller than we thought. But the previous one was fairly large. I'm hoping to put that up after a little re-enforcement.

The snowblowers were serviced by my husband and myself. I will put a schedule for the snow removal season this weekend.

WORSHIP: (Kelly Olson)

Attendees –Pastor Heidi, Eryn Durlam, Vince Olson, Debbie Donovan and Kelly Olson

Encouraging Worship Attendance

The team discussed ideas & ways that we can encourage regular worship attendance.

- We might want to let members who are not regularly in worship know that their Grace family misses them and that whatever they might be struggling with in terms of church attendance, their Grace family can/will support, pray, listen and help.
- The focus should be on encouraging them to attend by highlighting how being in worship can help them in the challenges all of us face and have a positive impact on their everyday life.



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A personal note or a phone call from someone on Council or another member of the congregation, to 'check in' would be better.

Further discussion led to other ideas:

- 1) Create an email series, that breaks the letter up by point/topic, highlighting the positive impact regular worship can have in their everyday lives, building their faith and relationship with God.
- 2) Create 6 – 10 short 30 – 60 second videos inviting/interviewing members of varied ages, including Sunday School kids, to share their thoughts on why worship is important to them, answering questions, such as:
 - a. Why do you come to worship?
 - b. What makes worship worthwhile for you?

These videos could be sent out as Grace Notes and played on the screen prior to services

December/Advent/Christmas Worship

Sunday 12/1: Advent Week 1 & FIRST COMMUNION – “*The Proper Dress Code for the Times*”

Thurs 12/5: Advent Week 2 – ‘*John the Baptist- the voice in the wilderness*’ Special Music: Jubilation Choir (scaled down Cantata)

Sunday 12/8: 8 & 10:30—Choir Cantata

Thurs 12/12: Holden (out in Gathering space)

Sunday 12/15: 8:30 & 10:30 -- Children’s Christmas program

Sunday 12/22: Advent Week 4 (Using Advent 3 Texts) – ‘*What we expect vs. what we get*’

Tues 12/24: Christmas Eve – ‘*Quiet Pondering in a Hectic World*’

Wed 12/25: Christmas Day – Service of Carols—‘*Beautiful Music Right from the Start*’

Sunday 12/29: Christmas 1 – Christmas Hymn Sing/ELW 4

Eryn asked if any other instrumentalists might be available to play/accompany some of the hymns

January/Epiphany worship details are still being worked out. Refer to the WPT Google doc for updates

Miscellaneous Announcements/Updates

Debbie-- Handbells will play at Lasata on 12/9

Vince-- the Praise Team is working on several pieces for an upcoming ‘secular’ Sunday

Eryn--Jubilation Choir is participating in the Festival of Psalms at Mount Carmel Church with a number of choral ensembles and instrumentalists on Sunday, Nov. 17th.

She is almost done with the recordings she is preparing as a gift of appreciation to those who sponsored ‘keys’ for the purchase of the new keyboard.

There are approximately 5 unpaid pledges for the new keyboard. Kelly will request the list of names from Arcelia and follow up on it in December.

Pastor Heidi is considering doing a worship/sermon series based on ‘The Greatest Showman’ in the early part of 2020, similar to the ‘Moana’ series last year.

Christmas Wish List—Eryn plans to request music stands. All agreed. She will contact Ed Borkenhagen with details. Pastor Heidi reported that someone has already stepped forward to purchase lapel mics to replace broken ones.

2020 Budget

The music leaders reviewed their respective 2020 budget line items. Each was satisfied with the amounts listed in the current 2020 Plan.

Next meeting: January 7th @ 6:30 PM.

YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY COMMITTEE: (Jen Jacobson)



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We met on November 18th, Erica, Katie, Pat Murack, and myself were all in attendance. We discussed our budget and current spend today, we discussed current events and recapped the past ones.

- Upcoming Events
 - Advent Movie Night – December 6th, we are hoping our members and guest will make a tradition of watch the “The Star”. A Thrivent Grant is being used to cover the cost of the Pizza, any donations collected during the event will be given to Family Sharing.
 - Christmas Program and Birthday Party for Jesus on December 15th.
 - There are 17th older Children and Youth with speaking/reading roles in “A Star is Born” All of Sunday School will be practicing for the program from now until December 15th.
 - Birthday Party for Jesus will be take place between the two services the day of the Children’s program. We have a Thrivent grant to help cover the cost. We will collect donations for All People’s Church.
 - Christmas Eve Children’s Worship – Katie is working on review books for the Storytime theme worship.
- Past Events
 - Bring a Friend to Sunday School for Bible Olympics on October 27th – went well, Katie said it was well attended by Sunday School students and friends.
 - Trunk or Treat on October 27th. We felt the time of lunch and trunk-or-Treating/games worked out well. Despite the lack of group participation in decorating trunks we are grateful for the many individuals/families that decorating their trunks and make this a fun event for all. A Thrivent Grant was used to help cover the cost of the lunch.
 - Craft Fair on November 9th – the Youth sold food items to raise money for their mission trip. A Thrivent Grant was used to help cover the expenses of the food. Although it doesn’t raise a lot of money we feel it is a great event to for the youth to participate, not only are they helping with raising money for the Youth Mission trip but they are serving the community and helping with the bigger church event.

Next Meeting was not set but will be in January 2020.

Katie

- Sunday School
 - Bring a Friend & Bible Olympics
 - Great turnout! Thanks to all the Sunday School staff who helped that day!
 - Other important dates:
 - December 15: Christmas Program
 - Feb 16: All-Family Event (Learning about Communion)
 - Kids will also sing and play the bells in worship this spring
- Parenting in the Pews
 - We have gotten over 60 Worship Thoughts sheets turned in each month for September and October. The amount filled out on the sheet varies greatly by child and week. But it is great to see that kids are thinking a little more about worship each week.
- Christmas Program



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- Sunday, December 15 at the 8:30 (NOTE THE TIME CHANGE) and 10:30 services. We have changed the time for the past two years to help families make the morning more manageable, since we ask them to come to both services.
- We have 17 youth in 3rd-12th grade that will be acting/reading in the Christmas Program this year. All kids in 3K-5th grade will be singing and 3K-5K will be playing the bells.
- Adan Burgos will be assisting Erica and me with the Christmas Program.
- Starting Sunday, November 24 we will have full education hour Christmas Program practice. The kids will sing their songs and those in the play will practice that.
- Birthday Party for Jesus
 - Got Thrivent grant to cover the cost of food
 - Will be collecting donations for All People's Church
- Grace Movie Night—Dec 6 "The Star"
 - Second annual showing of "The Star"
 - Thrivent grant to cover pizza
 - We will collect donations for Family Sharing at the event
 - In addition to "general" advertising, I have also emailed each small group leader to encourage them to invite their members. It's a great movie for adults and kids. Folks can come alone, or invite their grandkids, friends, etc. All are welcome!
- Christmas Cards
 - Got a Thrivent grant to cover the Christmas cards
 - James Newell will be working on putting them together for me
 - Cards will go to all Grace kids and VBS families
- Christmas Eve Worship
 - I'm going to do the story time Christmas Eve worship again this year...but with different books

Other Business

RIC statement does not replace the mission statement. Looking to expand RIC discussions into 2020; will not be voting in January; not until we are ready.

Grace Wish List will be set up Saturday

Thrivent Grant listing of yearly church calendar events – connect to outreach & fundraising help with ministries and bring people into church.

Need annual reports by Dec 15th to Lisa.

Finalize budget planned for 2020 looking to follow up via emails.

Grounds/maintenance need to verify numbers without the extra bills that rolled over from 2018

Cleaning service to Custodian switch would need to make decision by May 2020 – more discussion to follow.

Yoga rental proposal to increase session fee from \$25 to \$50; motion Mike Moran – 2nd Mike McGraw, motion carried.

Lynda will discuss with Ed regarding when/how the audit gets set up

Annual meeting January 26th, annual report needs to be printed January 8th

Next Meeting Dec 19th 7:20pm

Closing Prayer: Pastor Paul