

## Grace Lutheran Church Council Minutes

January 21, 2010

### In Attendance:

√ Don Zank	√ Dave Polka	√ Roger Goecks
√ Pastor Paul Bulgerin	√ Sue Bremer	√ Jim Scott
√ Paula Race-Mantel	√ Bob Dries	√ Jon Eifert
√ Mariah Zack	√ Lisa Bernd	√ Ruth Schmidt
√ Pastor Heidi Borkenhagen	□ Janet Sladky	

The meeting began at 7:25 p.m. with President Dave Polka presiding. Pastor Heidi opened the meeting with a prayer.

**DEVOTIONAL:** Paula Race-Mantel shared the devotional.

### APPROVAL OF THE December 2009 MINUTES:

There was a motion to approve the corrected December minutes. The motion was seconded and carried.

### PASTOR PAUL'S REPORT:

**Annual Meeting Preparation:** At the annual meeting each committee chair has the opportunity to give a brief oral report on the work of their committee. If you choose to do so please do not simply recite what is written in your report, but share plans or goals for the coming year. There will be an opportunity for members to ask questions of each council member.

Bob Dries and I have talked about the budget portion of the meeting. Bob will highlight that we received more offerings in 2009 than in any other year and that we were able to finish the year with a \$3,500 deficit, much better than we thought at the November and December council meetings and only about \$1,500 more than the budgeted \$2,000 deficit for 2009. I think that is very good news considering the recession.

**Nominating Committee:** We have filled three of the council positions, President-Elect, Council Secretary and Worship Committee. We continue to work to fill Parish Education and to find someone to take the unexpired term for Christian Care.

Ron Schottler has agreed to serve on the Endowment Committee.

**Administrative Assistant's Position:** I have been forwarding all the resumes I have received to the Personnel Committee. I have also been sending an email note to those who have submitted a resume. Several church leaders are meeting on January 19 to go over all the resumes we have received.

**Sabbatical Plans:** I will give a brief report at the annual meeting on my sabbatical plans. I have been pleased at the number of encouraging comments I have received with regard to the sabbatical. I continue to work to raise money for my trip and for other sabbatical activities.

**February Sermon Series:** Pastor Heidi and I are planning a three sermon series on verses and themes that people think are in the Bible but are not. We will preach on "God will never give you a greater burden than you can bear", "God helps those who help themselves" and the comment often heard at funerals, "God needed another angel". These ideas may be considered truthful or comforting, but they can be neither because they are not biblical. The sermons will be preached on February 7, 14 and 21 and there will be an adult forum on the last two. Paul Ihlenfeldt's class runs through February 7.

**New Members in February:** We will receive new members on Sunday, February 28. We ask council members to attend the chili lunch at 11:30 a.m. that day. The orientation session is going to be held at 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, February 21.

**Council Mini-Retreat:** At our January 21 meeting we need to look at dates for our half-day council retreat and also select items we need to discuss and for which we need to plan at that retreat.

#### **PASTOR HEIDI'S REPORT:**

**Worship:** It was my honor to participate in the funeral of Bud Snider. He was on my call committee and was very dear to me. I am sad that I won't be able to participate in Art Schwartz's funeral, as it conflicts with a preaching workshop that I've been planning to go to for a long time. On January 31<sup>st</sup> I will stay up at Pine Lake with the 9<sup>th</sup> Graders and lead them in worship up there. On February 7<sup>th</sup> I will be at the Quake with the Junior High and High Schoolers. I wish that I didn't have to be gone 2 Sundays in a row, but that's how things fell this time around. I do really look forward to time with the youth, though, as these are important times for faith and relationship-building.

I worked up the themes for the Wednesday Lenten Services. They will center on how the Bible instructs us to live together as God's people in a community (with themes of forgiveness, love, patience, etc.). I think these will be good reminders for us all, and also be good material for the skits that the confirmation students do.

**Education:** I will be leading the 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Confirmation Prayer Unit on Sundays in February and one in March. The Lydia Circle meets next week and we will be looking at some options for a new study, as the one we were using this year wasn't filling people's needs. I'll be doing the Bible 101 class again for new members in February.

**High School Youth Group:** The leaders reported a pretty good turn out for the movie event in December. We've continued to have strong attendance through the month, with just over 20 kids in class every Sunday. There's still room for improvement, but we are going in the right direction! The leaders met to plan lessons and events for the remainder of the year. At the youth's request, we will be having a Games/Lunch social event in February. March brings the Lock-In and Palm Sunday Brunch, and we are planning a trip down to worship at All People's again this spring. I have some people who are interested in going to the event on teen dating and relationship on February 13<sup>th</sup>.

**Mission Trip:** We had one person who dropped out due to a sports commitment. I have contacted someone who is on the waiting list. I don't think we'll have a problem filling the spot. We will be selling the Grace mugs again in February as we still have some left over. The chili dinner fundraiser is this Sunday and we already have plans underway for the Palm Sunday Brunch fundraiser as well. Karen Janssen brought up the idea of a rummage sale to raise funds so I will be looking into that. The vans are reserved.

**TNT:** We are heading to a basketball game on February 13<sup>th</sup>. I'm also looking into some Bible studies that would be appropriate for this group, perhaps scheduled in April or May.

**Caring for Creation:** People are using their Grace mugs during coffee hour, which is good to see and will also help us cut down on cups we need to buy. We will be showing the movie "Wall-E" after worship on February 21<sup>st</sup>, accompanied by lunch. We will be meeting in February to discuss details and to plan an event for Earth Day in April.

**Vocation and Education Meeting:** Our next meeting is February 25<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup>, so I will be gone for the next council meeting if it is on that Thursday.

**Coaching:** I had an introductory meeting with Pastor Diane Loberger. We went over the goals and expectations we have for our coaching sessions. Each session we will make goals and evaluate our progress. I am meeting with her again on Thursday (day of the council meeting). This is going to be a very good thing for me. My main goal is to be the best pastor I can be for you and coaching is definitely going to help me.

**Continuing Education:** On Saturday, I am attending a workshop in Milwaukee by a much respected Pastor and preacher, Susan Briehl, on "Preaching on Luke". Luke is the main gospel used in our lectionary this year. It is offered for free, and I couldn't pass it up. I'm also heading to Wartburg Seminary at the end of the month for a "Preaching Lent and Easter" class. The cost for this is only \$50. I went last year and found it to be very beneficial.

**Interviews:** Last night we chose people to interview for the office position. We had a lot of good applications. We are in the midst of scheduling the interviews for the week of January 31<sup>st</sup>. Please keep this process as a part of your prayers.

#### **AIM'S REPORT:**

##### **Sabbatical Gleanings**

I will be presenting some of what I learned during my UW Madison class both at the Women's Brunch Bible Study and at the Synod AIM meetings. I am glad to have these opportunities. It certainly won't compare to the excellent presenters I learned from. I do hope that at least in some small ways I can pass on some of what I learned.

##### **Anti-Racism Training**

Council members, Dave Polka and Janet Sladky, along with Joyce La Loggia and your rostered staff, met after the Synod Assembly last June and decided it would be good to look into some anti-racism training for our leadership at Grace. I have been in conversation with Pastor Paul Bauman, who actively serves on the Synod Anti-Racism team. There is a two person team that would be willing to come to Grace for this introductory awareness training. We will need to decide if we want this to be part of our Council Retreat or if we want to set aside another time. We will have to get back to them with dates.

Point of Order: The remainder of this report contains work and salary information that is not privy to open discussion and has been removed from the January 2010 minutes.

#### **DIRECTOR of INVOLVEMENT:**

This month I have two funeral luncheons. Bud Snider's was on January 16 and one this Saturday for Art Schwartz.

I along with Christian Care, will be welcoming new families to our Grace Family this February. I, again, ask that the council members, especially Parish Ed, Fellowship, Outreach and the Church Council President be at our New Member Orientation on Sunday, February 21 at 7:00 p.m. This is a great opportunity to get to meet our new families and let them know what wonderful things our church has to offer them.

I have started doing my "new" jobs this month, plus I continue to do what I can to help in the office until we find our new person.

#### **OUTREACH MINISTRIES:**

We served at St. Ben's this past Monday. We continue to deliver food donations to All People's Church. All People's will be joining us for a Lenten meal and service.

#### **CHRISTIAN CARE:**

No report.

#### **PROPERTY:**

New hand sanitizer dispensers have been placed throughout the church.

The snow piles have been moved back to allow for future plowing. This was done at no charge by a potential new member.

Ice damming has been occurring on the Sanctuary roof, this has been relieved by applying magnesium chloride to the roof to melt the snow. A future more permanent solution will be to install heat tape on the roof this fall.

We are still experiencing problems with the new door lock, these issues are being addressed.

New air sanitizers were installed in the 4 bathrooms, these work with our Organix air freshener cans we already have in stock.

Pastor Heidi reported excessive heat in her office, Best heating is working on the problem, most likely a stuck valve.

No other issues have been brought to me attention.

#### **WORSHIP:**

Pastor Paul opened with prayer and reported on the continuing effort to find a nominee for WPC chairperson. He also reported that Ilona's progress continues, but she can not commit to a return date. Cindy will work with us, though there is an understanding that if she receives an offer for other employment, she certainly must do what works for her in entertaining such.

There was extensive discussion regarding the Christmas Eve services. Copious notes were recorded following the same for review regarding 2010 services. Foremost were concerns regarding PowerPoint operation and usher teams. Coordination of music and the number of selections will also be addressed. The services were very close to one hour (4:30 was actually 55 minutes), including communion. Comments about the services were positive, with the focus next year on coordination, and some details.

It was agreed to have one service the Sunday following Christmas again in 2010. More information about the single service will be made available.

One further comment that was shared was the desire to have an abbreviated bulletin, without printing the words to the hymns, so people can follow the service format. It will also serve the need to print future service times in a format people can take with them.

Another lengthy discussion centered around the desire/need for more than one service in the summer. There is a chorus of people who prefer the Celebration service and they would like to see it available year round. The pro and cons were discussed, along with the logistics challenges and need for leadership. The Celebration service is made up largely of volunteers who look forward to summer breaks. It was decided to raise the issue at the annual meeting for a sense of direction and commitment.

Service and theme schedules for services through the first week of February were reviewed and Pastor Heidi introduced the themes for Lenten services. Some details were inserted and questions/comments from the committee were sought.

Comments regarding the services December 20 that included the children and the choir were all favorable and the hope is that this format can be used again in the future. Questions regarding the font size for the PowerPoint were brought up. It seems to be an issue only for the small screen serving the west side of the church. No recommendations were made.

A personal note:

This is my final meeting as chairman of Worship Planning Committee. I expressed my sincere appreciation for all of the work, the talent, the sharing of ideas, the honesty and trust, and the fellowship the members of this group have allowed me to be a part of for three years. I will now join them as a member-at-large and hopefully add to their deliberations under new leadership. So, to Vince, Jan, Joyce, Ilona, Cindy, Janell, Pastor Paul, and Pastor Heidi. Thank you and God bless. ♦

**PARISH EDUCATION:**

We were very excited about the Sunday School Christmas Play. It seemed that everyone enjoyed all of the hard work that the kids put in. A special thanks to Ruth for making it happen.

JYG Quake is fast approaching. The kids are very excited. The high school is also participating in a similar activity, which is new this year for them.

**FELLOWSHIP:****Financial Report:**

There was a discussion regarding several line items in the budget that may be set very high. It was decided that we will revisit these three line items in November/December and if there is a surplus of funds we can reallocate the funds to benevolence.

There was a request for a Contingency Fund line item to be included in the written budget.

**PERSONNEL:**

The next meeting will be in February.

**ONGOING BUSINESS:**

**Office Administrator Opening Update:** Pastor Heidi, Pastor Paul, Dave Polka, and Romy McCarthy reviewed 15 resumes and discussed; they will begin interviews on Sunday, January 31st. They have chosen six individuals to interview, four of which are from our congregation. Those who were not chosen for an interview will be sent a polite letter declining their resume.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Council Mini-Retreat:** Typically the mini retreat is held in February. Some possible dates are 2/6, 2/13, 2/20, 2/27 or 3/6. Please check you calendars and following the Annual meeting we will get together to pick a date.

**Stewardship Council Position:** Pastor Paul has been doing the Stewardship Chair position for almost five years. This position is listed in the by laws. It will need to be decided if we keep the council position or have Pastor Paul continue to fill this position.

**Anti-Racism:** As mentioned in AIM Ruth's report there is a program for Anti-Racism training. This is a 2 person team who will come to our church and provide dialogue and discussion to better understand racism in our world today. The time commitment for this program is 2 to 3 hours. Following a brief discussion we asked AIM Ruth to ask the team for some prospective dates in April and this will be placed on the agenda for next month in order to have ample time to have the program.

**NEWS/NOTES/SHARING**

Adult Literacy Program sent a Thank You note.

A letter was received from Pastor Greg Van Dunk on behalf of All People's Church regarding their establishing a 501 C3 nonprofit expression. This will allow them to access other grants. They are looking for someone to help them with this process.

**OTHER:** The church staff was excused from the meeting. There was a discussion regarding salaries and budget.

**CLOSING PRAYER:** Jim Scott closed the meeting with a prayer.