

Grace Lutheran Church Council Minutes

December 18, 2014

In Attendance:

Pastor Paul Bulgerin	*Cindy Witt	*Aimee Lempke
*Pastor Heidi Borkenhagen	*Trudi Biefeld	*John Walch
*Ruth Schmidt	*Lisa Bernd	*Scott Donovan
*John Conto	*Roger Goecks	*Katie Eippert
*Mara Schwartz	*Melanie Arndt	

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

DEVOTIONAL: Mara Schwartz

BUILDING COMMITTEE PRESENTATION – John Walch made a motion to move forward with the survey, soil test and civil work to be done. This was second by Scott Donovan and carried.

BUSINESS OLD & NEW:

-Vacation carry over to new year for staff (9 possible changes to handbook) – John Walch proposed existing vacation time be used by 5/31/15 and that we ask personnel to explore options for the current vacation policy in the future. This was second by Scott Donovan and carried.

-Changes to Praise Team Directors job description – Scott Donovan made a motion to move forward with the revised Praise Team Directors position description as presented to council. This was second by John Conto and carried.

-Budget for 2015 – Will meet again before the annual meeting.

APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 2014 MINUTES

PASTOR PAUL'S REPORT: No Report..Pastor was out sick.

PASTOR HEIDI'S REPORT:

Change in Hours: Still adjusting to this and struggling to get things done and add new things in the time I have.

Vacation Time: It is very hard to get all vacation time used up at the end of the year with it being Christmas/close of year and a very busy time in the office. This is a perennial problem, though it is particularly accented for me this year since I cut back in June and wasn't able to use much of my vacation in the summer as I usually do. I have quite a bit left (even after I take some away based on my new schedule) but have not been able to take it. I'm wondering if I could get council approval to carry some days over (I could take them in January), but I think we should consider changing our vacation days to end each year at a time that isn't as busy at Christmas so that our work and our family life don't have to suffer either way.

Worship: The Advent Hymn Sing was well-received. If we do it again, I have some ideas for changes. Thanks to the musicians & office staff who did extra work to help this happen! There will be a Christmas Hymn Sing on December 28 (Note: One Service that day at 9 am). We will have one and possibly two baptisms that day.

This month I baptized Nola Pearl Hicks.

A huge thanks to the Jubilation Choir, Joyce and Eryn (& her family) for their wonderful cantata this past weekend!

Thanks also to Beth Walch for stepping in to help with Thanksgiving Eve when Ruth had to be with Jim in the hospital.

High School Youth Group: We'll be doing some new things in the new year- half of the time will be spent on devotions/lessons, and half on games.

FAITH5: Lisa and I met with the test families for the FAITH5 program. They tested it out for two weeks. I'll be gathering feedback from them soon. We will begin promoting the "Holding Your Family Together" class this Sunday. It begins January 18 and goes for 6 weeks.

I'll be presenting some plans that we have for doing FAITH5/Cross+Generational Ministry for Lent at a workshop the synod is doing on January 17.

Continuing Education: I attended "The Art of Conflict Transformation" in early December in Madison. The goal of the class was to help us engage conflict in a way that facilitates "both/and" thinking & "win-win" situations. It was fantastic, and I've already put it to good use many times. Thanks to Pastor Paul for letting me use \$300 of our combined \$450 continuing ed budget for this. It was very worth it. I'm hoping to share some of what I learned with the council, perhaps at the mini-retreat.

New Women's Group: There are many women interested! We are planning two groups. I can only commit to leading one, but I will help the other group as much as I can. I sent personal invites to many, especially to new/newer members, and many of them are coming.

TNT: We are having a Hot Chocolate Party at my house Friday, December 19, with many people signed up.

AIM RUTH'S REPORT:

I'm experiencing an extra busy December with **Sunday School Pageant and Children's Candlelight** in the same week. Things are looking good for both of them. Planning and putting together these two services takes ideas and time, that's for sure. Have terrific kids, Sunday School staff, parents and Children's Candlelight volunteers making these services possible, along with Ed, who turns the services into powerpoints. So terrific having Eryn working with the songs and bells. You won't want to miss it!!!!

I did the planning and buying for the **games for the Shower** for Mary, Joseph and Jesus and Kerry Feutz and Erica Dimmett are organizing parents to do the set-up during the practice on Saturday.

Finished up first half of **Confirmation** year.

Had a great Christmas party with **Kids For Christ**.

Am enjoying all the kids and their comments at **Children's Messages**.

Women of the Brunch Bible Study enjoyed our Advent/Christmas lunch and gift exchange at Messina's.

Another reason, I'm running behind this year is the time I spent with Jim at the hospital and some doctor appointments I needed to attend. It backed me up with getting ready with things at home, all of which are not important in the real scheme of life, yet still hard to let go of. (I haven't given up on getting them all done yet) The GREAT news is that Jim is here to celebrate another Christmas

together with our family. We have so **much to be thankful for**. Thanks for all your thoughts and prayers. They have meant a lot to both of us.

Thank you, Council Members, for all your hard work. You are such a blessing to me and this congregation. May you all have a Christmas full of joy and peace and love.

DIRECTOR OF INVOLVMENT:

Annual Report: It is that time again. I need your annual report summaries now. I am still missing quite a few & would like them before Christmas.

Time & Talents: I have finished entering in all of the T & T's that we have received so far. If you haven't received your copies from me, you will so soon. I plan on having them to you before the end of the year. Once you get them, please contact the people on your list to let them know you received their information.

Counters: We have new teams of counters starting now. I asked Bob Dries if he could help train them in January & if he thinks necessary, meet with them in February. Additional information: the contribution year will close on December 31 at 12:00 p.m.

2015 Pledge Cards: All the pledge cards that we have are entered. We are still getting a few in but not very often.

50th Anniversary Celebration: We are in full planning mode for our 50th anniversary year celebration. We will be meeting on Wednesday, December 17 so I will give you an update at the council meeting. The letter to the congregation will go out on Tuesday, January 5 with the big kick off announcement on Sunday, January 11.

FELLOWSHIP:

We hosted the Thanksgiving Pie Social on Wednesday, November 26th after the 7 p.m. service. There were almost 100 in attendance and everyone enjoyed the variety of pies, coffee and milk served.

For December, we will be assisting the Christian Education Committee with the Baby Shower for Jesus on Sunday, December 21st by taking care of the snacks. We will serve mini muffins, mini donuts, nut-free trail mix, clementines and grapes with holiday punch, coffee and water to drink. Unfortunately, that will be the last event our committee will be involved in, as we all step down. Mari will focus on the Family Promise ministry as the Chairperson and I plan to support her as a committee member.

PROPERTY:

Paper products, Chemicals, trash bags, and furnace filters have been ordered.

December has been a quiet month so far for Property management.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION: No Report

WORSHIP:

Opening Prayer

Pastor Paul: Music personnel annual evaluations will be done soon. Guest preachers in coming weeks will include Courtney Bernd in January, and Beth Walch in February. Eryn will be doing the majority of hymn selection. Church play for 2015: "The Quest for the Lost Treasure of the Heart." Rehearsals will begin on Sunday, January 4. To be performed in March. Graduate Sunday will be May 31, 2015.0

Weekly worship summaries for January 2015:

Week two: First Sunday in Epiphany "The Voice, Water, and the Spirit" Pastor Paul preaching. Theme: Jesus baptism.

Week three: "Skeptical Faith" Pastor Paul preaching. Scriptures: 1 Samuel 3, and John 1.

Week four: "The Powerful Word" Pastor Paul preaching. Scriptures: Jonah 3, and Mark 1: 4-20.
High school chili lunch and congregational meeting follow the 10:30 a.m. worship

December planning"

Christmas special music is all planned. Cantata work in process. Pastor Paul to narrate.

Other discussion:

Praise team appreciation.

Thoughts from synod worship workshop: use of visual arts in worship, use of youth in worship.

Positive feedback on last week's service of hymns.

Discussed projecting both words and music.

Discussed problems with getting accurate attendance counts.

Need for input regarding budget for 2015.

Next meeting January 6, 2015. Scott will be out due to medical issues.

Meeting adjourned.

OUTREACH:

The food and the coats have been delivered to APC and Family Sharing. The December project of collecting Bingo items is in full swing for the month. I will deliver the articles in Jan to Lasata.

Our next opportunity to serve at St. Ben's is Tuesday, Jan 13th. A sign up sheet will be posted after Christmas.

Ruth's confirmation class will be assisting APC's Kids Working to Succeed Program on Feb 21st. The kids will be making about 35-40 lunches and helping the youth at APC with various activities.

As the 50th Anniversary activities have outreach/service activities each month, I will not have any extra ones except for St. Ben's or as needs arise.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

1. We paid the first payment to Groth Design Architects for '35%' of their design work. That was a payment of \$6,070.68.

2. Total YTD income is \$403,813.00 – which is \$39395.00 behind budget to this point, but \$19,489 short of expenses. Hopefully we will catch up in December.

3. We received a distribution from the Gladys and Ralph Port trust of \$29,112.50 this month – which has been credited to our Memorials account, which now has a balance of \$43,827.00.

I am working on making updates to the budget so that we can get this finalized soon.

VPT: No Report

CLOSING PRAYER: Pastor Heidi