

## Grace Lutheran Church Council Minutes

August 28, 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. Pastor Paul opened the meeting with a prayer.

**DEVOTIONAL:** Cindy Witt

Building Committee: Dave and Janet – John Walch made a motion that we bring to the congregation a recommendation from council to hire Groth Design as our Architectural firm. Scott Donovan seconds the vote and it was carried.

**APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 2014 MINUTES:**

### **PASTOR PAUL'S REPORT:**

**Operation Inasmuch:** September 7 is coming closer and the planning team organizing our Operation Inasmuch day is very busy. We have a dozen different projects for the day. Some, like the river cleanup, will have a lot of participants, while some of the home repair tasks only require a couple of people. As of today we have about eighty people signed up to help.

We have had a family offer to pay for all the costs related to the meal at church and also the meal at the senior citizens' center.

Those of us planning the event have been contacting people encouraging them to participate.

I look forward to a great day on September 7 and pray it will be the first of many Operation Inasmuch days. September 7 is also the date of our national ELCA's "God's Work, Our Hands" day where ELCA congregations are encouraged to get out into their communities to help others.

**Sky Ranch Mission Trip:** Last month's high school trip was a very good experience. Our teens and adults worked hard at Sky Ranch and accomplished all the work goals they were given. On Sunday, August 24, members of our mission trip will share their experiences with the congregation during the worship service. My thanks to John Conto who has created a beautiful video of the trip to show in the worship service.

**Our New Organist:** Eryn Durlam has started her duties as our organist and choir accompanist. I think all who have met her are happy to have her on our staff and appreciate her musical skills. In September we will set a date where we will officially install her as our organist. Once again, my thanks to Scott Donovan and the search committee for all their hard work in finding a new organist for Grace.

**Fall Stewardship:** Our stewardship Sundays will be October 5 and 12. With all the time devoted to the capital fund appeal in the spring we are only dedicating two Sundays to our fall stewardship. We've also moved it to October from November to give the council more time to plan for our 2015 giving and budget.

At the heart of this year's stewardship will be the need to give our church staff raises. The pastors and AIM took salary cuts this year and the rest of the staff did not receive raises, so it is important, after spending so much time and energy on the fund drive for our building (for which the church staff worked very hard), to make sure that we show equal concern for the staff. I have asked our council leadership to talk about this in worship on one of the two stewardship Sundays.

**Staff Supervision:** With Pastor Heidi moving to  $\frac{3}{4}$  time I will assume pastoral supervision of the music staff and will conduct their performance reviews later in September. I conducted reviews for the office staff in July.

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

**Change in Hours:** After Labor Day I will be in the office 3 days per week. Things have been working out so far for the summer, and I'm anxious to see how things go with the Fall schedule change and the programs beginning again.

**College Student Gathering:** We had another good gathering at the Highland House in July. I will offer this again next summer- it was fun for the youth to reconnect, to share news and talk about what faith life is like for them at college.

**High School Youth Group:** The leaders met and planned out the first half of the year. We are excited to welcome Pat Murack as a leader with the group (with support from his wife, Chantal, as well). They joined last spring, and I know they will be a great addition to the group!

One of the things we're planning is a trip with the youth to Alice's Garden, which Lisa talks about more in her report.

**TNT:** Thanks to the Peterman's for hosting a cookout. We had a couple who has been visiting Grace attend, which was great.

**Lydia Circle:** The ladies chose to do the companion book to the one we did last year. It is called "*The Good and Beautiful Life: Putting on the Character of Christ.*" I put an announcement in Grace Notes for anyone who would like to join. We begin our study in September.

**Vacation Bible School:** I was with the 2-year-olds (and some 1-year-olds) for the week of VBS. Thanks to all the wonderful volunteers who helped so many kids have fun learning about God's wonders- especially to Katie Eippert and Korey Gierach, who put in many hours, and to those who took time off work to be there- Kerry Feutz and Erica Dimmet.

**Continuing Education:** The synod has very generously offered to pay most of the way for Lisa and me to go to a conference out in Boulder at the end of September. The topic is "Killing Sunday School & Birthing Cross + Generational Ministry." Cross Generational ministry is a new thing in the church- from what I understand, it aims at making every church event educational and involving all ages. I will learn more at the conference, and will report back.

**Locks of Love:** I will be working on some publicity for this in the coming weeks.

**St. Ben's Walk:** As Trudi reported, we didn't get anyone to commit. I sent messages to the TNT group, had announcements in the bulletin and Grace Notes, and a sign up sheet on the bulletin board.

**Family Camp:** We had a great time, with a group of 3 "grandmas" from Grace coming as a group. It would be great to have more people come. We are considering doing the slightly longer one next year, which is at a different time, to see if this attracts more people (it is a bit pricey for a weekend).

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

**Vacation Bible School:** WOW says it all. The Workshop Of Wonders was a huge success, ministering to 90 students and 45 staff. Big time thanks to Katie Eippert for her outstanding work as Director. Thanks also to Korey Gierach for her outstanding decorating.

**Confirmation:** I've met with 7<sup>th</sup> graders and their families who are beginning our Confirmation ministry this year. We have a class of 16. I'm still looking for males that will serve as Guides. We've been blessed with at least three and possibly four women Guides. I'm ordering more of the new DVD series, *re:form*, which we started using in Confirmation and the High School class last year. The new sections include some of the Old and New Testament stories we teach in Confirmation.

**Sunday School:** I could say WOW here too even though that's not our theme. See Katie's Christian Ed. report for details on staffing and a new food adventure. I have met with our new K3 and K4 teachers and am meeting next week with our K teachers. I will have a meeting with our 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers next week also and an Orientation meeting with the Rotation Staff on the 8<sup>th</sup>. We are hoping to welcome a K3 class of 11. I've had one Keeping the Promise gathering and am holding a second one on the 9<sup>th</sup> for families that couldn't make the first one. I will be meeting with Eryn soon to plan our Sunday School music.

**Operation Inasmuch:** I'm serving on the Planning Team for Operation Inasmuch and have been putting together an awesome Talent Show for the Senior Center. We're waiting to hear back if we'll have an audience or not. Praying it will be a GO!

**Women's Brunch Bible Study:** Members of the group met over the summer for a wonderful lunch outside at Dockside Deli. We begin our regular meetings on Sept. 11<sup>th</sup>. The women have chosen the book *DO YOUR BEST AND Trust God FOR THE REST* by James W. Moore for this year's study. It looks fabulous!

**Grace Institute Spiritual Formation Classes:** I have now attended five of the eight classes at the Shalom Peace Center in Dubuque. We've had some very interesting special presenters and our small group of five is growing closer and closer each time we meet. It is a wonderful opportunity to focus on my relationship with my Lord.

## **DIRECTOR OF INVOLVMENT:**

**VBS:** I helped Katie & her staff get ready for VBS. It is always so much fun to see VBS theme come to life around the church.

**Counters:** Aimee & I are still working on finding one more counter for the second Sunday of the month. Aimee has been having counter training sessions each Sunday with the counters so that they are filling out the counting sheets correctly. We have been having so many errors each week that we felt it was necessary to address these issues. Having Aimee meet with the counters each week gives the counters the ability to ask questions & get any issues they may be having answered right away. Thank you Aimee for doing this.

**Cross Generation Ministry Seminar:** Pastor Heidi & I will be attending Killing Sunday School & Birthing Cross + Gen Workshop Conference in Boulder, Co September 27- October 1. It is on what worship and education would look like if it were blended together and designed for the generations coming down the road - the post-television era folks - rather than just for the generations going down the road?

We received assistance from the synod so it will not be costing us much to go. I am looking forward to going & bringing back ideas to spark a new way of doing things at Grace.

**50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration:** As you know, next April will be our 50 year anniversary at Grace. Starting in September I will be getting information out to get a group formed to plan this awesome event. I am looking forward to being part of this exciting group.

**Sunday School & Confirmation:** I have been getting name tags, attendance reports, check lists, etc., ready for Sunday School & confirmation. I can't believe how fast the summer goes that the fall programming is starting. I will be mailing out reminder postcards next week. I will also be sending out registrations soon.

**We Miss You:** I am sending out We Miss You postcards to members we haven't seen in a while. Just personal message to let them know we noticed that they weren't here.

**New Members:** We will be receiving new members in October this year. We have families already waiting to become part of our Grace family. It is always a blessing to have new people join us. Three of the families have children. More children is a wonderful thing.

**Trunk or Treat & Christian Care:** As of right now we do not have a person to head up Christian Care. I have thought of who to ask & came up with Tina Arnold, Julie Balistrieri, Sherry Bublitz, Sarah Gannaway, Sarah Newell, Melissa Schmidt or Kerry Wise. I think all would do a great job. Plus all of them have great ideas & could certainly tackle Trunk or Treat.

**Virus Software:** Ed is working on getting our new virus software installed.

**Summer Schedule:** Ed & I will be ending our summer schedule starting the week of September 1.

**Discipleship Group:** At the synod assembly, there was a discipleship group that I met with. They are a group of people from all different churches in the area that have a job similar to me. We met in July for the first time & established what are group will be, what our meetings will cover & found out that Rhonda Hill, from the synod office, be our mentor. I really enjoyed our first meeting & think I will get a lot of information from this group. I hope with my new connections, I will be able to bring new ideas to Grace.

**Alice's Garden:** I had the privilege to visit Alice's Garden this summer. Venus Williams, the "head farmer", at the garden spoke at the synod assembly & I fell in love with her & her message. So much so that I have kept the synod assembly brochure on my desk since so I did not forget about it. They are located just off of 22<sup>nd</sup> & North Ave.

Recently, the synod had a cross generational event at Alice's & Pastor Heidi, my boys & I went. The gardens were beautiful. We got to wonder through the 60 garden plots (40% are for people in the neighborhood), taste some of their produce, walk the labyrinth & share lunch with other visitors. We had such an enjoyable morning there that we went back a few days later for a community potluck supper.

If you have the opportunity to visit the garden & meet Venus, take it. I am trying to figure out a way to incorporate the garden in to my life more next summer. I don't know what or how but I know that I will figure it out

### **PROPERTY:**

I'm happy to report that all of the roof leaks have been found and repaired. Dennis spent hours on the roof uncovering areas to find the leaks and then patching them. These repairs have been accomplished without hiring an outside contractor. We had bids of about \$4,500.00 to perform this work.

Dennis installed the new door in the furnace room off of the Sanctuary leading to the outdoor alcove. This door was replaced due to extreme wood rot. The surrounding wood around the doorframe was also replaced due to rot.

Carpet cleaning is taking place, now that VBS is over.

Weeding has been done around the church.

We lost the small tree that was in the corner of the building by the Library windows, it was infected by disease and died.

### **FELLOWSHIP:**

We hosted the VBS Brunch on Sunday, August 17<sup>th</sup>. There were ~100 people in attendance and we served waffles and yogurt parfait with build your own toppings and breakfast sausage. It looked like everyone enjoyed the food, especially the kids had fun with the variety of sweet and tasty toppings! It was a nice change from the usual ice cream social.

We do not have an event planned for September.

For October, we might host a Saturday bingo night with fun prizes preceded by a salad and pizza dinner with desserts.

### **CHRISTIAN EDUCATION:**

- Sunday School
  - Staffing—All positions are filled!
  - Ruth is meeting with Eryn to discuss leading music with kids
  - Sunday School starts Sept 14
  - Theme: Serving in God's Diner
    - First Sunday of the month there will be "Bible themed" food for the kids to eat (families will be asked if they could help donate) and there will be a collection of food items for the food pantry and monetary donations for world hunger taken
- High School Youth Group
  - Leaders met to discuss fall plans.
  - Muracks will be joining leadership team of P. Heidi, Geirachs and Eipperts. Welcome and thanks to Pat and Chantal!
- Confirmation
  - Still looking for one more male guide.
  - 16 7<sup>th</sup> graders will be starting confirmation this fall.
- Junior Youth Group/KFC
  - Barb Eckert and Jon Eiffert will meet to discuss KFC plans.
  - Students will be offered a youth Adventure Bible (\$5 cost per child)

- Vacation Bible School
  - 90 students and 45 volunteers spent the week at Grace
  - Students donated many items for Family Sharing, Ozaukee Women's Shelter, St. Joseph's Hospital and Habitat for Humanity
  - Next year's VBS tentatively scheduled for Aug 10-14 with G-Force as the theme
    - BIG QUESTION—How will the building project affect VBS?
- Next meeting—Oct 16 at 6:30

## **WORSHIP: No Report**

## **OUTREACH:**

### July

On July 9<sup>th</sup>, 10 members, “tons” of meatballs, and 4 bags of food for the food pantry went down to All People's Church for their Wednesday Night Alive. Not as many people were served as were prepared for, so the food was frozen for use at a later time.

July 18<sup>th</sup>, 3 bags of food were taken to Family Sharing. Pastor Heidi volunteered to be the St. Ben's Walk chairperson. Due to circumstances, no one was able to participate in the walk.

### August

August 8<sup>th</sup>, 9 members helped serve the meal at St. Ben's. There were 333 adults and 41 children served that evening. (That was a slow night). Our next date is Oct. 16<sup>th</sup>.

With the help of VBS, 3 boxes and 2 bags of food were given to Family Sharing. Also 1 HUGE box of dental supplies and toiletries were collected for Advocates. The next drive will be for children's coats, (small adults sizes also), hats, mittens, and scarfs for All People's Church has started. An article is included in Grace Notes. Delivery will be in October.

## **FINANCIAL REPORT:**

Things are looking good from my perspective. I am still looking for a counter for the second Sunday of the month. Lisa, Ed and I worked together to modify the counting sheet. The offering that is coming in for the Grow in Grace campaign co-mingled with the traditional offering seems to have caused a problem for the counters. I have met with the counters the last two Sundays to try to clarify the process.

Here are the Notes from Ed for the month of June.

1. Total Grow in Grace Income for June was \$18464.86, and expenses were \$424.12 – so a net increase of \$18040.74. I did not make any transfers from our checking account into our Money Market in June. Note: Those totals include the Rummage sale, which netted \$2096.48 (\$2209.66 income minus \$113.18 expenses).
2. Transferred Men's Softball league fee of \$250.00 from Miscellaneous (specials) account to Fellowship (budget) account. That was actually paid to the league in April, so I made the transfer via a journal entry.
3. Heidi Salary and Housing Allowance were reduced to  $\frac{3}{4}$  amounts for June. This also resulted in a reduction in the charges that the ELCA charges for Heidi's Health insurance, since that is based on standard hours (now 30) and also salary/housing amount.
4. Part of the Grounds and Maintenance expenses for this month were \$405.00 to Jim's Maintenance (our mowing/snow-plowing service). That was for 9.0 hours of 'Spring Cleanup' which was mostly 'repairing' the area of the lawn that snow was repeatedly pushed back on during the winter. That was caused by Lowell Liebenstein going onto that ground with his backhoe when the ground was not completely frozen. That could be avoided in the future if he could be 'coached' to not do that.

**VPT: No Report**

**OLD BUSINESS:**

-Finance Committee – This committee has been formed and will be meeting soon.

-Christian Care Council Member – Still Looking

**NEW BUSINESS:**

-Budget (2014 and 2015)

**CLOSING PRAYER:** Pastor Heidi