

IN ATTENDANCE:

*Pastor Paul Bulgerin	*Darlyne Holle	*Aimee Lempke
*Pastor Heidi Borkenhagen	*Trudi Biefeld	*John Walch
*Laurie Gosselin	*Lisa Bernd	*Peg Lade
Jim Mulholand	*Alissa Burgos	*Pat Murack
*Kerry Feutz		

The meeting began at 7:30p.m. with President Darlyne Holle presiding.

Devotion: Peg Lade

✓ Approval of the November 2016 minutes

PASTOR PAUL'S REPORT:

“Forward In Grace” Stewardship: As of today my best guess estimate of our 2017 giving is around \$612,000. This represents an increase over 2016’s estimate of \$543,000 and is, by far, the biggest giving increase in the history of our congregation.

While we still have a decent number of faith commitment cards that have not yet been turned in I have come up with this estimate by factoring in the increased giving for 2017 in the pledges already turned in (about \$85,000) and reduced that about \$30,000 to account for members who have moved in 2016 or indicated they may be moving in 2017.

I have also factored in an estimated increase from the faith commitments that are still out for those who made them and have kept them in 2016, an estimated increase in non-pledged giving for 2017 as well as a small increase in cash offerings. Finally, I have made a conservative estimate of pledges for those who joined this fall and have not yet turned in a commitment card and for the group of new members who are joining Grace early next month in advance of the annual meeting.

I will continue to refine this number as more commitments are returned.

Our phoning volunteers have contacted people twice and I am going to follow up with another letter next week to those who have not yet turned in their commitments.

Finally, as part of the Stewardship For All Seasons” (SAS) program, I have started writing personal “Thank You” letters to all members who have turned in faith commitments for 2017.

“Stewardship For All Seasons” Program: Darlyne Holle and I attended the latest meeting for this program on Monday, December 12. We meet again in mid-January and then in early March to begin to plan for the three special appeals in 2017 which are part of the SAS program.

My plan is to hold the offering to help our youth groups right after Easter (and tax season), a small appeal to raise some funds to help us better promote Grace in early summer and then the third appeal to raise funds to help send a mission group to Nicaragua in late summer. This trip would be held in 2018.

I will share information on these special appeals and how they are conducted as we receive further SAS training.

Nominating Committee: Ed Eckert has agreed to serve as Council Treasurer. Ed has formerly served as President of the congregation. We continue to look for people to fill the Outreach and Christian Care (one year on Sarah Gannaway’s term) positions.

Endowment Committee: The group met on Sunday, December 11 and voted to give \$5,000 to various benevolences outside of Grace since we were not able to increase our congregational benevolences in the 2016 budget.

2017 Church Play: We will have the first rehearsal for the play on Sunday, January 8. The date of the play will be March 19.

New Members: We will hold classes for our next group of prospective members on Sundays, January 8 and 15 and welcome them into membership on January 22. We have been seeing a nice number of people visiting over the last couple of months. Most of these are families with younger children.

Worship Attendance: Our worship numbers are up this fall over last fall which is very good to see. Attendance is more evenly divided between the 8:00 and 10:30 services this year.

Adult Mission Trip in 2017: I am starting to look at another mission trip next summer. I met with Chris Beloin, who now works for Thrivent Financial, and he will give me information about mission trips that are supported by Thrivent in which we could participate. One possibility would be to do relief work in Louisiana following this summer's heavy rains and floods. There is nothing definite yet with this.

PASTOR HEIDI'S REPORT:

Worship: I led the Thanksgiving Eve Service this year.

Thanks to all the musicians for a great service of music on December 11. I appreciated Eryn, Zach, and Deb's leadership and the chance to play flute.

I have Christmas Eve service plans finalized and am now focusing on my sermon and some small details to make the service extra special.

I baptized Liam Crevensten. We have three baptisms coming up- Emmett Thelen (grandson of the Duncombes) on January 1, and Adeline Vaccaro & Bobby Koppa on January 15. I'll meet with all the families beforehand as I always do to discuss what baptism is and isn't, and go through the service.

Advent Devotional: We've had to do 3 printings!

High School Youth: I met with Erica Dimmett, Pat & Chantal Murack to go over plans for the winter/early spring.

Publicity/Grace Community Crew: We took out an ad in the Cedarburg Spring Sports Schedule poster. I also promoted the Christmas Sing-a-long at the Ale House on Facebook and have had an awesome response! Many "likes" of the event from people who are not church members- well worth the \$50 spent to get our name out and invite people to come.

Women's Book Groups: Lydia Circle will be doing a 5-month study of 1 Peter beginning in January. We begin meeting at church then also, and will be promoting this all in the Good News and the announcements.

Christmas Sing-a-Long: Plans are on and we're expecting a great crowd again. Thanks to Eryn for playing keyboard.

TNT: I'm hosting a Hot Chocolate Party at my house on Friday, December 16. We're also going to the UWM Men's Basketball Game on January 14.

Annual Meeting: I will be gone that Sunday due to a one-time conflict I can't reschedule.

DIRECTOR OF INVOLVEMENT:

Stewardship Program: I am now entering all of the 2017 pledge cards in to servant keeper. Next week I will be preparing all of the new e-giving forms & switching all of our e-giving to 2017.

Property: I have been working with Mike McGraw on the heating system. We are still having issues. He has contacted the designer of the system for some help.

Jim Scott continues to help me with projects around the building.

Dennis has been working for days fixing the men's room. The pipe below the urinal is blocked & they are replacing part of the pipe that is blocked. He is working with the plumber from Basic Plumbing. Dennis has done all of the prep & post work & doing that has saved us a lot of money. He is planning on having it ready to use by the end of the week.

Time & Talents: Time & Talents are still coming in. I have been entering them & will start getting them out to all of you as soon as I am finished.

Annual Report: I have almost all of your annual reports in. I am only missing a few. I will be working on that starting next week so if you haven't, please turn in your report to me. They have to be done & out to the congregation on January 4.

Parochial Report: This is the statistical report that I keep for our congregation. I record all baptisms, deaths, marriages, confirmations, new members, etc. for our congregation. I use this information for our annual report & to report to our synod office.

Building Promotion: Has anything been worked on for building promotion or advertising the availability to use our building? We had a person inquire about using Fellowship hall early next year.

Book Study: This month I had the privilege of leading Pastor Heidi's group as well as my group. It is so fun to meet with the other women & to hear what they think about the book.

Pastor Heidi & I will be choosing a new study to start in February.

New Members: We will begin our next new member classes on January 8, 2017. We have lots of new families ready to become part of our Grace family.

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

FINANCIAL REPORT:

1. Our offerings through November are behind by \$25,687.70 (were \$21,908.32 behind at the end of October) – so slid back again. Our total income for the year is behind our expenses by \$6168.93 (was behind by \$749.79 at the end of October). Our total budget cash decreased by \$5,419.14 in September, down to a total of -\$4,110.44 as of month-end. While that all sounds negative, I think there is a positive spin on it as well. Last year, in November we were \$33,875.89 behind in offerings and \$18,992.60 behind in revenue vs. expenses, yet by the end of December we were only \$4,098.85 behind in offerings and actually ended up ahead in revenue vs. expenses by \$3260.00. So, last year, we made up \$29,777.04 in December and we have less than that to make up this year – so I am hopeful that we will get there this year also.
2. There were really no unusual/significant expenses in November to note – was a fairly normal month.
3. I am keeping an eye on income vs. expenses through the end of the year. One positive is that our budget for church mortgage is \$73,587 and we will end up spending \$52,135 – saving \$21,452 vs. the budget. That helps to offset some other overages in the 'Our Church Home' area, including Gas & Electric (higher than budget because we did not know what to expect with the new building, and also Telephone (rates went up 2 times this year – but we are switching providers sometime soon, so those costs should drop again in 2017). Grounds and maintenance costs were also over budget, with increases over last year in the supplies and general repairs and maintenance areas accounting for most of the increases – again largely due to some unknowns with the new building (more supplies for more rooms, some new cleaning equipment, new/repared vacuums, etc.) I think we will have some options as we near the end of

December to adjust things if we come out real close to our targets – so again, I am hopeful that we will have a positive report for the year end/annual meeting – stay tuned!

VPT: No Report

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION: No Report

FELLOWSHIP: No Report

OUTREACH:

207# of non-perishable food items were taken to Family Sharing from our Thanksgiving Eve service and the One Can Plan.

No formal Outreach program in December due to The Birthday Party for Jesus donations.

Family Promise-Mari

Our fifth week of hosting is finished. We had one family of a Mother, Father, and young 3yr.old daughter, plus one single older woman. All guests got along beautifully, and were very easy to host. They were the quickest guests as far as packing up on the last Sunday. I did not even have to break down or bag cots. I was extremely grateful, we were finished by 7:30am. Record time.

The church is a little warm at night to sleep. If it is set warmer for FP week, it is not needed. I myself noticed that when sleeping over in September. It is also very dry. I know when I talked to the architect early this year, he mentioned that there is a humidifier on the new furnace. Is there a way to adjust the humidity? Can guests open classroom windows to cool the room to sleep?

Our cookie sale for FP last Sunday raised \$1,144.50. We ended the year with money in our budget leftover, so we would like to add another \$100.00 to that amount. Each host church is asked to send funds to the affiliate. So we are glad we were able to send money in for 2016. It was a little bit of a challenge to do it during host week, but it worked out well. Many thanks go to all volunteers that put in so many hours this past week, both in volunteering as hosts and also in working on the sale.

Two interesting items for FP. Kelly our first Mother in the program is doing well now, living in Port, and has joined our Grace team, along with her adult daughter. She contacted me asking in particular to join our team. Also, overnights have asked since the cots are becoming really worn, if we could purchase our own inflatable mattresses. An overnighter told me that her mother has volunteered to purchase two for Grace.

We are so grateful for all the support we receive for Family Promise.

WORSHIP:

The Worship Planning Team met on 12/6/16. It was a small group as Pastor Paul, Deb Donovan and Mark Lerret could not attend.

- The meeting was opened with devotion by Peg Lade.
- We welcomed our newest members, Kathy Brown and Jane Braband to the team.
- Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, Jan. 3rd 2017
- We went through Pastor Heidi's service plans with her and then spent considerable time going over the music plans for the various Christmas services coming up: the music festival service (performed on Thursday evening and the 2 Sunday services), the children's Christmas program (Vince and Eryn working together on this one), Christmas Eve (3 services), Christmas Day (1 service) and New Year's Day (1 service).
- There is a caroling event being held on December 17th. All members of the congregation are asked to join the choir carolers as they sing at Hamburg House and Lasata. The group will meet at the church at 12:45pm.
- We discussed some possible fund raising events for 2017. One idea is a kind of musical "revue" with all kinds of musical talent from the congregation. A free will offering?
- We are also looking ahead to a celebration on Reformation Day as it is the 500th anniversary year of Martin Luther's work that shook the religious world of his day and is still reverberating to this day.

PROPERTY: No Report

CHRISTIAN CARE: No Report

BUSINESS OLD:

- ✓ The primary focus of this meeting was to discuss and approve the 2017 budget.
 - A motion was made to accept the recommendation for the Endowment Committee to give \$5,000 to Benevolence. Broken down as \$1,500 to Family Promise, \$1,500 to synod, \$1,000 to Circle of Empowerment, and \$1,000 to All Peoples.
 - The motion was seconded and passed with 11 approval votes.
 - A motion was made that any surplus budget from 2016 first go to social security offset (3.825% of SS) to rostered staff and add 1% raise to eligible non-rostered staff.
 - The motion was seconded and passed with 11 approval votes.
 - A motion was made to approve the 2017 budget with income of \$612,282 and balanced with minor adjustments as needed to non-rostered staff salaries.
 - The motion was seconded and passed with 11 approval votes.

BUSINESS NEW:

NEWS/NOTES/SHARING:

CLOSING PRAYER: Pastor Paul