

Grace Lutheran Church Council Minutes

March 1, 2014

In Attendance:

*Pastor Paul Bulgerin

*Pastor Heidi Borkenhagen

Ruth Schmidt

*John Conto

Mara Schwartz

*Nicole Michel

*Cindy Witt

*Lisa Bernd

Roger Goecks

Melanie Arndt

Scott Donovan

*Katie Eippert

*John Walch

Aimee Lempke

The meeting began at 11:30. The meeting opened with a prayer.

DEVOTIONAL: Pastor Heidi

APPROVAL OF THE **JANUARY 2014** MINUTES:

PASTOR PAUL'S REPORT: .

Capital Fund Appeal: This has taken a great deal of the staff's time the last two months, but things seem to be running smoothly as we prepare to kick off the official "Grow In Grace" campaign this week. At our worship services this week we will show the nine minute video we have made and I am going to preach the first of five weekly sermons on themes from the campaign.

I have worked with Carl Harms on creating the video and I am also part of the advanced commitment group that is making a series of visits on members asking them to consider giving larger gifts in advance of Commitment Sunday on April 6.

Jeff Newlin is proving to be an excellent consultant for us as he takes us through all that needs to be done to have a successful campaign.

Lenten Worship: Pastor Heidi and I have met to work out the plans for the Wednesday evening Lenten worship services on March 12, 19, 26, April 2 and 9. We are using ideas from "*Sunday and Seasons*", the ELCA's worship planning book, and building upon the theme of "Making Change".

High School Mission Trip: Our trip is filled with 26 people signed up to attend. After putting out an appeal for help due to the dramatic increase in the cost of renting vans for the trip I was thrilled to have several large gifts given that will fully fund all our transportation expenses for the trip! Praise God for generous souls who support our youth ministry.

Operation Inasmuch: I first heard about this program at the 2013 synod assembly. It is designed to help congregations develop a local program to become active in helping in their local community. There will be two training session for this, one on May 3 and another on May 4 at St. Luke Lutheran Church in Slinger to help churches get ideas on how the program works and what congregations can do. I am committed to having Grace participate in Operation Inasmuch and plan a day of involvement this fall. The workshops cost \$125 and have no limit on the number of people who can attend. It is worth the cost. We can have representatives from a number of groups at Grace attend so each group can begin to plan what role it will want to play when we have our Operation Inasmuch day.

Outreach Committee Chair: Kim King has expressed interest in possibly serving in this position. She talked with Karen Janssen last week and we are following up with her.

New Members: We are not going to have a class for new members until after the capital fund appeal has concluded. This will mean late April and early May.

PASTOR HEIDI'S REPORT:

Worship: We are very close to finalizing things with Cindy Wilmeth, who will be filling the organist position. We are meeting with her on Thursday. She is committed to being at her current church through June 1, but can do most of the services at Grace, with the exception of some Lenten/Holy Week services and choir. We are working out subs and details for that, and are thrilled that Cindy is going to be leading our worship!

Education: I'm beginning the Prayer Unit with the 7th Graders this week. I am considering shortening it by one week so that they can join the High Schoolers and 8th graders for a couple of the lessons related to the Capital Campaign. Otherwise they would miss most of them.

Lutheran Olympics: This was a lot of fun and I plan to offer it again next year. Thanks to all who participated. I sent an article in to the News Graphic so we got some good press related to the games and the sermon series. Thanks to Korey Gierach for the pictures.

High School Youth Group: They have finally completed the craft kits for Children's Hospital. We will be scheduling a trip down to bring them there and go out for some dinner.

Capital Campaign: This has been a great deal of extra work and prayers. Please continue to pray for our congregation and for God to guide you as you consider what your gift and sacrifice will be.

TNT: Thanks to the Donahue's who organized a trip to Skateland for their Christian Music Skate. Our next event is going to see the movie "Son of God" in March, and we have events tentatively scheduled for the rest of the year.

Lydia Circle Retreat: I'm planning a retreat with my Lydia Circle Bible Study group. It will be May 3-4, so I will be gone that Sunday.

AIM RUTH'S REPORT:

Confirmation: As lifted up in the Christian Education Report, Pastors Paul and Heidi and I are working on implementing some changes in our Confirmation Ministry. We have already begun using a new DVD series *Re:form* and will be finding ways to use it more next year. The biggest change would be moving our time of year for the right of Confirmation and plans for following up with those Confirmands during the rest of the year.

Big thanks to the Committee for all their time, discussions and prayerful thoughts as the Committee joined Pastor Paul and I in our struggles with decisions on our Confirmation requirements. The Committee decision on this can be found in the Christian Ed. report.

Sunday School: Karen Bulgerin, Kate Peterman and I have been working this month on our Children's Focus for the Capital Fund Appeal. Sunday will also be our big kick-off, as we gather with Preschool – 6th graders and their families for *The Amazing Case* and our *Building Block Bank Adventure*. We will be spending the whole month of March on the appeal and will have a celebration on March 30th, Children and Youth Sunday.

VBS: Our first big order is going in next week. Katie is keeping me on my toes as we plan for our exciting *Workshop Of Wonders* VBS week. Mari is stepping down after leading our Art area and providing many decorations over the years. We are so grateful to her for sharing her incredible talents with us.

RSI: Extra meetings and an exciting time!

Vacation: Jim and I are leaving on March 13th for time with Jen and Ian and our grandkids, Jamey and Josephine in Hawaii. I will be back in the office on Tuesday, March 25th. We've scheduled our

trip when Jamey and Joey have their spring break so we can spend more time with them. We are sad to miss the Capital Fund Appeal Dinner and the Council Dinner. I'm making sure everything is covered while I'm gone.

DIRECTOR OF INVOLVMENT: No Report

PROPERTY:

We had some problems with the boiler; a relay, a transformer, and an air evacuation valve were all replaced.

With the large leak we had in the roof in the choir area a roofing contractor was brought in and they discovered a three foot long section of roof seam that had separated. The rubber roof that is on the choir area is long past it's life span and will need to be replaced this spring or at a minimum a large repair job is needed.

Snow removal and salting will be higher than budgeted for this winter, how much higher is not known until this winter is over.

This spring a roofing contractor will be brought in to address the multiple roof leaks in the church.

FELLOWSHIP:

For January, we hosted the Israel trip slide show presentation with Pastor Paul as the presenter. We had 34 people attend and had a fun time. Pastor Paul put together an interesting slide show with some beautiful pictures and did a great job explaining the sites. The Israeli refreshments and the display table/souvenirs were enjoyed by all as well.

We did not plan anything in February.

For March, we have a trip planned to the Milwaukee Domes on Saturday the 22nd arriving around 9:30 a.m. When people arrive, they can pay me their admission cost at the front door, take a scavenger sheet and then go straight in to see the annual garden train floral show and explore the other two domes as well. At 11 a.m., we would like to meet up in the front lobby and have a seat at the table and chairs, while the Fellowship Committee hands out a snack with a water bottle or juice box to everyone. That would be a good time for some fellowship to go over scavenger sheets and talk about what everyone saw and liked. People can drive their own vehicle, carpool or we could rent a school bus.

Also for March and April, I created and coordinated all the information, scheduling and advertising for sponsoring groups and the congregation for the Lenten meals. Lenten meals are made and served by church groups at 6 p.m. before the Lenten service each Wednesday in Lent, starting on March 5th.

For April, we are co-hosting the All Church Event (Campaign Party) with the ACE Committee on Sunday, April 6th after the second service (11:30 a.m.) till about 2 p.m. This will be a HUGE baseball-themed event with catered food for lunch, other snack-type concessions, the entertainment for all ages is a Comedy Sportz Show, baseball toss and beanbag toss games, a bounce house, and a photo opp with Bernie Brewer.

Our next meeting will be in March.

WORSHIP: No Report

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION:

1) Confirmation

- a) After much discussion, the committee agreed that parents of Confirmation students will continue to be strongly encouraged to have their daughter/son present at all classes. Parents who do not follow this guideline and allow their child to miss many classes will be expected to take a very active role in working with their son/daughter on completing their missed work. This would include reading any materials assigned, filling in any question sheets and giving a synopsis of the discussion they (parent(s) and student) had regarding small group topics. This work is expected to be returned to the Pastor or AIM the following Wednesday.
- b) Pastor Paul also discussed some changes to the program including changes in the timing of the units and possibly changing the Affirmation of Baptism date to fall (currently is the spring)

2) Sunday School

- a) A reminder to all to make sure parents didn't check off the box that they don't want photos of their children taken in Sunday School when taking any photos. Superintendants will check with parents who check this box to make sure that is their wishes and explain what any photos would be used for.
- b) The Birthday Party for Jesus ran for a very long time because the children's program got done early and families went directly to Fellowship Hall when it was over and stayed until second service began. Everyone will reflect on potential adjustments to make for next year in terms of planning and filling the large amount of time.
- c) Will participate in the capital campaign throughout March. Students will be involved in various lessons and activities throughout the month and then will share some of what they learned with the congregation on March 30.
- d) Keeping the Promise Celebration for Kindergardeners is Feb 23.

3) High School Youth Group

- a) Will do capital campaign lessons with 7th/8th graders March 9-30
- b) Put together over 100 craft bags for Children's Hospital
- c) Hosted chili lunch prior to annual meeting and raised over \$500 to help cover some costs of mission trip to Sky Ranch in Colorado.
- d) Currently will be collecting notes and care package items for sponsorship family
- e) Will do a fundraiser for sponsorship family medical item in May
- f) No Palm Sunday Brunch this year because there will be an all church event for the capital campaign on Palm Sunday this year. May reschedule the YG fundraiser for a different Sunday.

4) Junior Youth Group & Pre-Teen Group

- a) Pastor Paul and 3 moms held a lock-in for JYG. 16 kids turned out and everyone had a lot of fun.
- b) KFC collected names of 27 college students and assembled care packages for them.

5) Vacation Bible School

- a) Theme: Workshop of Wonders
- b) Date: July 21-25
- c) May have fewer students this year b/c 4th grade class was incredibly large last year

OUTREACH: No Report

CHRISTIAN CARE: No Report

FINANCIAL REPORT:

VPT:

Vision Planning has not met recently. We are planning a March Meeting to regroup. We will be looking for additional members as Sue Wilterdink has stepped down. In addition we will be looking for a new chair to replace me. I would appreciate any thoughts on people to serve with this group. Since the building plan was turned over to the building and capital campaign, we have struggled a bit with our purpose. Areas that we have discussed include:

- Congregation communication. Are we doing the best job we can with communication. We have websites, emails, newsletters, announcements, bulletins, facebook—are these all right or do we need others or less? Are we communicating the right things—too much, not enough? How can we assure all of the members are up to speed on what is happening and what opportunities are there for them to be involved in? How should be better talking about budgeting and stewardship so that everyone knows where we are in our commitments to avoid not making budget and last minute changes.
- How do we ensure that each member of Grace is actively engaged in at least one ministry. Our feeling is that when members are plugged in they are more engaged and have a much more meaningful experience. This along with the perceived lack of volunteerism amongst our members (or at least his perception by some) suggests we explore what is working and what needs work in this area. Is the staff's involvement here what it should be? How do we determine what programs we should be offering—we are really good at adding programs but are there some that people are just not interested in anymore and how do we discontinue them? How do we better connect all people while keeping our focus on Jesus.
- Mission statement/who are we/what do we want to be? is it time to re-visit our mission statement and really use it as a focus on what we are and should be doing. Make sure that everything that we do supports the mission statement or we don't do it.

Finally, with the anticipation of AIM Ruth retiring in the next few years, we would like to look at What is the ideal level and mix of staffing at Grace with Ruth's future absence. This could be a very important decision and we want to make sure that we are being intentional at looking at our needs and not just reacting.

OLD BUSINESS:

Organist

NEW BUSINESS:

Capital Fund Campaign Update

Outreach Chair

Next Meeting Thursday March 27, 2014

CLOSING PRAYER