



Council Minutes March 3rd, 2021

IN ATTENDANCE:

Pastor Paul Bulgerin	*Jodi Doro (Secretary)	*Brittany Lobner (Fellowship)
*Pastor Heidi Borkenhagen	*Scott Nielsen (Treasurer)	*Joe DelCamp (Property)
*Mark Barber (Past President)	*Rachel Langer (Outreach)	Lisa Bernd (Director of Involvement)
*James Newell (President)	*Kirstin Albiero (President-Elect)	*Jen Jacobson (Christian Education)
	Kelly Olson (Worship)	Melissa Schmidt (Christian Care)

(*) present at meeting

The meeting began at 7:11 P.M. with President James Newell presiding.

- ✓ Approval of the January 2021 minutes with amendments, Scott motioned to approve, Pastor Heidi 2nd, all approved.

Pastors and DI Reports

PASTOR PAUL'S REPORT:

My Surgery: I have informed the congregation of my back surgery on February 28. I will be out for two weeks but working from home as I am able. Pastor Heidi and I have switched around our preaching schedule for February and March. Erica Dimmett has agreed to teach the Wednesday evening confirmation classes on March 3 and 10. I am planning to preach on Sunday, March 14 and teach confirmation on March 17.

Annual Meeting: We need to get out information to the congregation about how we will conduct the annual meeting early next week. We can get the needed quorum of 65 people in the building if we use the worship center and gathering area but I'm not sure that many people will show up in person.

The ZOOM option will be necessary, in my opinion. We should send out the link to this early next week and have people let us know if they plan to attend via ZOOM. We need to decide how we will have people vote. We can use hand voting for most of the items on the agenda. For the council elections we can send out a ballot in advance (since we never have any nominations from the floor, although it is required to ask this) or just have a hand vote.

We will need to keep the meeting brief, due to COVID regulations, so I urge for a streamlined meeting. I suggest we don't discuss the upcoming pastoral transition, except in passing, letting people know that we will have plenty of discussions on this in the months to come.

In-Person Worship: The staff and Worship Planning Team are in support of returning to limited in-person worship. I have sent the draft of a possible letter/email to the congregation about this to the council executive committee for their consideration.

I think it is important to let the congregation know about this decision in advance of the annual meeting so that it is not brought up as a subject at the meeting. We should send an email to the congregation next week about this so the members have the information in advance of the annual meeting.

Nominating Committee: Joe DelCamp has accepted the position as chair of the Property Committee. We have filled all four council spots. My thanks to the members of the Nominating Committee for their work.

Confirmation: Since we are not having in-person Lenten worship services or meals, Erica Dimmett and I have decided to run our regular Wednesday evening confirmation classes through Lent on Wednesday evenings. We normally take a break from regular classes during



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Lent. This means that our Wednesday evening classes will end on March 24 instead of in early May.

Special Offering in 2021: We may want to consider having a special offering in 2021, perhaps to give thanks as we pray the pandemic is brought under control. This might be a good and uplifting thing for Grace, a way of celebrating coming through this difficult time. I encourage the council to consider this later in the year.

Boundary Waters Trip: We are moving ahead with plans for the high school Boundary Waters trip in July. Wilderness Canoe Base, the Bible camp running the trips, feels they can have safe trips even with COVID. We hope that by July things are looking much brighter. We had a ZOOM meeting for those interested on February 9 and had fourteen people attend.

PASTOR HEIDI'S REPORT:

Ash Wednesday: We are set for Ash Wednesday Worship this week. I'm very much looking forward to welcoming people into the building for a safer and unique worship experience using the "Seven Symbols of Ash" interactive, reflective worship.

Wednesday Lent Services: Plans are mostly set for our "Wilderness Wednesday" Lenten services. Each week will focus on a different Bible story or verse that revolves around the wilderness. We'll use Holden for the services. Thanks to Katie Eippert for being our video editor.

Holy Week: I am forming some plans for Good Friday and Easter Sunday that we will discuss at Worship Planning Team next week. I'm hoping that we will be able to do Easter Sunday outside. Pastor Paul is planning Palm Sunday and Maundy Thursday. I will be ready to lead those if he is still recovering from surgery.

Worship: I'll be taking over all the preaching while Pastor Paul recovers from surgery. I baptized Addison Martinez on January 31, and co-officiated at Paul Singer's funeral.

Visits: I've been checking in over the phone and was able to set up a visit with one very happy shut-in. It feels good to be returning to normal, even if it's slowly.

Lydia Circle: We had only two people come in person for our first blended online/in person meeting last month. I think this was partially due to a bad snowstorm that night, so we are giving it a try again this month to see if we get more people in person. We are beginning a new study called "Names of God."

Synod Assembly Online: The main change from the Synod Assembly was the combination of the 10 "Mission Clusters" into 6 conferences. What was the "Northern Lakeshore Cluster" is now the "North Conference." This won't affect too much for people at Grace, but will change who pastors meet with for semi-monthly gatherings and the pool from which we make nominations for things like synod committees and possibly larger ELCA representation (things like the ELCA Church Council or Churchwide Assembly).

Siebert Lutheran Foundation Planning Committee: I am serving again this year on the committee that plans Siebert's annual ministry conference. Siebert is a pan-Lutheran group that does a lot of good through grants and ministry support throughout Wisconsin. We meet (virtually) every couple months to plan this conference which is open to anyone. I will let you know more details about it as the conference takes shape, and would love it if any of you would join in. It's free!

Discussion: Ash Wednesday - 80 people went through; which all were happy.

Lydia Circle - 10 in person/5 virtually

Update on Synod meeting: Marcia Vrankin volunteered to go along with previously signed up Kirstin Albiero and Lisa Bernd. This will be virtual.



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DIRECTOR OF INVOLVEMENT: (Lisa Bernd)

Update: I met with Joe DelCamp (new property chairperson). I walked him through the building & showed him all that I knew. I am so happy that he said yes to this position. I spoke with Jon Freeland & updated him on starting weekly worship & cleaning. We met with Brandon from Northwoods Cleaning Products to make sure we have the best products to clean & sanitize the worship center & the rest of the building to make sure everyone stays safe.

Annual Report: I compiled, put together then printed & mailed out the annual report to all members.

Building: Blood Drive – The blood drive on February 23 was full again!! They collected 33 units and helped save up to 99 patients in need! There were 2 first time donors and 3 double red donations. I love that we are helping our community by hosting blood drives. Our next drive is April 27.

Roof Leak – There was a leak in the roof in the worship near the multimedia area. Crandall came in & fixed the leak. There was a crack in the rubber. It was sealed & appears to be fixed. The roofer said it probably cracked because of the severe cold & he will recheck it in the spring.

Smell in the Building – In buildings you need to pour water down the open drains to prevent a sewer smell from coming out. We dump water in those drains every month & sometimes more depending on the time of the year. It keeps the smell from entering the building. After using the kitchen a few times in February, we noticed the smell had returned to the building. We dumped water & still could not make it go away. I called a plumber thinking that it could be some other issue but while he was checking pipes & other places that could be causing issues he sent me to look for more drains. And I found one hidden. So that was the issue with the smell. We dumped water in it & we have been good since. It has been added to the list of drains to add water to monthly.

Broken Pipe – There was a broken pipe in the Sunday School Room closest to the kitchen. Pure Mechanical came in & fixed it. The next day P & C came in & extracted the water from the carpet. Joe DelCamp came in & will be fixing the drywall for the room.

Counting: I am counting the offerings every Monday with Katie Eippert & taking it to the bank. I also continue to process e-giving & Vanco donations.

Attendance Report

Attendance was discussed.

Committee Reports

CHRISTIAN CARE: (Melissa Schmidt)

No report provided

FELLOWSHIP: (Brittany Lobner)

No report provided

FINANCE: (Scott Nielsen)

P&L

- Revenue was \$45k (\$5k unfavorable to budget)
- Expenses were \$51k (\$1k favorable to budget)
- Deficit of \$6k (\$4k unfavorable to budget)



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Grace Lutheran Church Income Statement - January 2021

	January Actual	January Budget	Delta Budget
Total Revenue	44,570	49,430	(4,860)
Expenses			
World Mission Subtotal	3,804	3,542	263
Rostered Ministry - Subtotal	20,484	20,639	(155)
Non-Rostered Staff Subtotal	11,468	11,292	176
Our Church Home Subtotal	13,518	14,050	(532)
Worship & Service Subtotal	1,494	2,464	(970)
Total Expenses	50,768	51,986	(1,218)
Surplus / (Deficit)	(6,198)	(2,556)	(3,642)
Amount To / (From) Contingency Fund	(6,198)	(2,556)	(3,642)
Suplus / (Deficit) After Contingency Transfer	-	-	-

Balance Sheet

- Cash fell \$13k in the month to \$177k
 - Contingency Fund fell \$6k to \$110k
 - Project Funds fell \$7k to \$67k



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Grace Lutheran Church Balance Sheet - January 2021

	January 2020 Starting Balance	January 2020 Ending Balance	Changes
Assets			
Cornerstone Checking	102,312	88,900	(13,412)
Cornerstone Money Market	88,155	88,165	11
Total Cash	190,467	177,066	(13,401)
<i>Contingency Fund</i>	116,474	110,276	(6,198)
<i>Project Funds</i>	73,992	66,789	(7,203)
	190,467	177,066	(13,401)
Total Assets	190,467	177,066	(13,401)
Liabilities			
Mortgage	1,782,991	1,778,635	(4,356)
Total Liabilities	1,782,991	1,778,635	(4,356)

Principal Payment	4,356
Interest Payment	6,609
	10,965

- 1) **Change in financial report format (exhibits above and more details in attached Excel sheet)**
- 2) **Eventual change in Revenue forecasting**
 - a. Will not evenly spread budgeted revenue across the 12 months, will seasonally adjust it to give us a better indication of being ahead/behind vs. "well December will catch us up"
 - b. Awaiting data from Arcelia to better forecast revenue and ultimately show easy to understand trending and analysis on giving
 - i. Data needed
 1. Historic monthly giving data (and if able to break down by type...envelope, loose, automatic, etc.
 2. Historic data on overall pledged amounts vs. actuals by year
 3. Pledged amount for 2021, split by members with automatic deposits set up vs. not

OUTREACH: (Rachel Langer)

No report provided

PROPERTY: (Joe DelCamp)

No report provided

WORSHIP: (Kelly Olson)

No report provided



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YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY COMMITTEE: (Jen Jacobson)

Katie-

Family Faith Initiative Update

Family Faith Kits

- I continue to coordinate one Family Faith Kit each month. February's kit focused on Valentine's Day and sharing God's love.
- The Eckert Family is helping me put together the March kit.

Family Faith Activities

- I have tried to organize an Outdoor Fun Day throughout the month, but the weather hasn't been very cooperative. I've rescheduled twice, so we're hoping for above zero windchills on Sunday, Feb 28. Families can come and play outside at Grace.

Lasagna Meals - Per a suggestion from Pastor Heidi, I put together a small group of volunteers to make lasagnas for families at Grace. On Feb 3, we ended up making 40 lasagnas for families, individuals and shut ins. We had Thrivent grants to pay for most of the ingredients.

5K Lord's Prayer Event

- We had our virtual Lord's Prayer event on January 24. The families are now working on teaching their child the prayer at home.
- Each family will record their child saying the prayer and I will edit it together and we will share it with the congregation on March 14.

Lent

- I have started editing the online Wednesday Lent services, and will continue to do that throughout Lent.
- I also assisted Pastor Heidi with the Ash Wednesday event. It was a very meaningful event, and so wonderful to see so many folks come through.

VBS Update

- I surveyed past volunteers and many are comfortable participating in some sort of modified in-person summer VBS event. At this point, we are thinking of allowing a max of 75 students (this is half of 2019's total). We will open the registration to Grace families and volunteer's children first, to ensure our Grace folks are able to attend. Although I normally love that VBS is a way to welcome our community into the building, we believe this is the safest way to do it this year. Certainly, as we get closer, if we feel it is safe to increase attendance, and I am able to secure enough volunteers, we could always increase the total attendees.
- We are also exploring moving many of our activities outdoors—such as our large group openings and closings each day along with the music station.
- It will continue to be a work in progress, but I'm hopeful we can find both a fun and safe way to offer this incredibly meaningful faith experience to our kids and volunteers.

COVID Vaccines

- Joan Tuttle, Meg Boren and I have been working with several members of the congregation to help them get COVID vaccination appointments. Joan and Meg have made many phone calls to those without computers or internet access. We



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even have a volunteer driver to take folks to appointments, if they cannot get their themselves. Those that we are helping are very grateful for the support! Children's Messages—I continue to do children's messages each week.

Other Business

Financial initiatives (same as previously communicated)

ACH Campaign – looking to launch a campaign to encourage further sign up, add to Grace Notes and shooting for a goal for new members to sign up.

Quarterly Statements – look at changing the way the quarterly statements portray where members are compared to pledged amount.

Scrip - Let's declare a goal and then track & publish it.

Amazon Smile – look to promote this more. Similar to Amazon but .5% of purchases go to charity and look to publish the monthly amounts received.

Vanco / Venmo – Further discussion to be had on options for cashless donations.

In-person worship survey results

Sharing some of the results of the survey. As of this afternoon, we've had 57 surveys completed. I rounded numbers up on the percentages. Here are some of the highlights.

- 1. With the church resuming in-person worship (at 25% capacity) in March, how likely are you to attend?**
 - 37% Very Likely
 - 30% Most Likely
 - 18% Possibly
 - 16% Not at all
- 2. In addition to a Sunday service, if we resumed Thursday evening services (at 25% capacity), what is your interest in attending Thursday services?**
 - There isn't a lot of interest in this in the survey- 6 people responded yes.
 - 1 person stopped by the office to say she was interested in Thursday Services.
 - This is also a group where many don't have internet, which is also worth considering. There have been about 4 of them coming to our Sunday services (If you are new to council- we invited members without internet to come to the recordings).
- 3. If you are not comfortable attending in-person worship at this time, under what conditions or parameters might you consider attending?**
 - The biggest indicator was "When I am vaccinated." 60% said this.
 - The other categories (when 50% of population is vaccinated, when 70% is vaccinated, and when this is all over) were fairly evenly distributed among the remaining respondents.
- 4. Please let us know how many people in your family.**
 - This question was mainly to give us an idea of how many people would be interested in in-person worship.
 - Very Likely to Return- represents 41 People
 - Most likely to return- represents 46 People

As we see how this goes, and how the Covid cases and vaccination rates proceed in the future, we can consider adding additional services (Thursday and/or Sunday, as well as outdoor services once it gets warmer).



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Council meetings going forward

Will stick with virtual for now and maybe try to sprinkle in a few in person or do some outside meeting.

Closing Prayer: Pastor Heidi