

IN ATTENDANCE:

*Pastor Paul Bulgerin	*Darlyne Holle	*Aimee Lempke
*Pastor Heidi Borkenhagen	*Trudi Biefeld	John Walch
Ruth Schmidt	*Lisa Bernd	*Peg Lade
*Jim Mulholand	Sarah Ganaway	*Katie Eippert
*Kerry Feutz	*Alissa Burgos	*Laurie Gosselin

The meeting began at 7:25pm with President Darlyne Holle presiding.

Devotion: Katie Eippert

✓ Approval of the February 2016 minutes

PASTOR PAUL'S REPORT:

Grace's Possible Involvement in a Synod Stewardship Pilot Project: I was contacted this week by Sandy Chrostowski from the synod staff to see if Grace might be interested in being one of five synod congregations to participate in a two year stewardship pilot project underwritten by a grant from the Siebert Foundation. "Stewardship for all Seasons" involves a team from each congregation working with a professional fundraiser to "learn basic principles and effective methodologies to carry out productive stewardship programs" and to promote year-round giving by members.

**for more info see the New Business section of the minutes.*

"Sharing Our Faith" Series in April: We are going to spend four Sundays (April 10, 17, 24 and May 1) on this sermon and adult forum series that holds up the importance of personal and congregational evangelism to our members. The series offers some basic, concrete lessons on how individuals can better share their faith; invite others to get to know Jesus and also how congregations can become better at welcoming people. The timing for this is perfect as we prepare to move into our new church building.

A letter will go out to the congregation about his right after Easter and I will be talking about it in worship for the next three Sundays. I ask council members to make the time to attend the four adult forum sessions on Sunday mornings that tie into the sermon series.

Grace Play: The play went well. Our cast and crew put in a lot of hard work to make it a success. About 440 people attended the two performances on March 6. Linda Muth, from All Peoples, asked me if we could possibly bring the play there sometime in April. I am currently checking to see if our cast would be interested in this and if we could find a date where they would be able to go to All Peoples.

24 Hour Famine: The Famine lock-in for all students in grades 4-12 will be held at Grace on Saturday, April 30 and Sunday, May 1. We are starting to promote the event this week. Students will go without food for 24 hours, learn about hunger in our country and around the world, conduct a food drive in our neighborhood and also raise money to be given to our ELCA's Lutheran World Hunger program.

Clara Kinnet: We are celebrating Clara's 100th birthday at the 10:30 a.m. worship service on Sunday, April 24.

PASTOR HEIDI'S REPORT:

Worship: It's been a busy time during Lent and now nearing Holy Week. I am working on a Ten brae service for Good Friday and finding readers for that. Let me know if you are interested in reading!

I'm continuing pre-marital work with two couples whose weddings I'll be doing this summer.

Women's Retreat: Publicity is out for the retreat on April 16. The theme is "Lavender Springs Spa", and the study focuses on the Psalms. We won't be able to use Grace that day, as they are planning to be carpeting at painting at that time. I reached out to Pilgrim UCC in Grafton, and they are opening their space to us, and maybe some of their ladies will be attending. Thanks to Pilgrim!

Publicity/Grace Community Crew: One idea that has been brought up by someone planning to join GCC is that Grace host a craft fair and invite artists/people from the community to come. I said we could discuss that at council.

**for more info see the New Business section of the minutes.*

High School Youth Group: We had our first meeting at the Eippert's house on Sunday. We had many of our "regulars" there. I met with Pat Murack to go over some plans for the final weeks. We're going to discuss some of the "big questions" of faith.

Lydia Circle Retreat: I will be gone April 30-May 1 for our annual retreat at Pine Lake. We will be using the Lavender Springs retreat material so I can get more use out of the money and prep time by doing it twice.

Vacation: I'll be taking the week after Easter off (Tuesday, March 29-Thursday, March 31).

AIM RUTH'S REPORT:

Sunday School: Last Sunday I gathered with the Kindergarten students and their parents for The Lord's Prayer Keeping The Promise Celebration. It was a great time together. Listening to the kids, it's wonderful to see what a great job these Christian parents are doing.

Confirmation Camp: Even though I will be retired and not attending camp this year, I'm doing all the registering and planning for camp. This year we have six girls and 2 boys going from our class of 12.

Getting Ready: In-between working on my regular duties, I'm getting things better organized to hand over when I leave. Kristin Nielson, from the synod office, and I have been emailing to discuss my exit interview. You will hear more about it at the meeting. I sincerely hope most of you are able to participate in this special time we can have together. I'm also beginning to read *The Graceful Exit* by Mary Lindberg.

DIRECTOR OF INVOLVEMENT:

Nothing new to report this month.

FELLOWSHIP:**PROPERTY:**

The Building project is humming along nicely. There are craftsman everywhere it seems in the building. The roof is on, windows are going in, offices and other spaces are framed out, with rough electric in place along with drywall going up. The kitchen is closed in and mechanicals are being installed. HVAC ducting is being run. The exterior is sealed and Styrofoam insulation is in progress. It's nice to be able to walk through the new spaces and see exactly how big they are going to be once complete.

Other than the building project, I have nothing new to report.

CHRISTIAN CARE:

Katie Eippert made a suggestion about having a bulletin board in our new space that lists all of Grace's groups and who the contact is for each of them so that people can have easy access. I think it's a great idea and will be exploring how we could facilitate that.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION: No Report**WORSHIP:**

WPT met on 3/8/16 – two absences due to the re-scheduled meeting.

There will be a separate meeting during the week with Eryn and Pastor Paul and Pastor Heidi to go over all music for Holy Week and also discuss wi-fi and all coming technology in the new building.

Pastor Paul, Pastor Heidi and Beth presented their worship plans for upcoming services.

We all offered congratulations to Pastor Paul and the whole team of people who put on the play! Very beautifully done!

Vince presented his concerns about losing up to 4 people in his group. He is trying several methods to recruit members for his team. Pastor Paul suggested a letter, possibly a targeted one. Vince also talked about software that is available to present visuals that coordinate with the music. Upgrades to our present systems are due with the new building.

Deb is working on the project to relocate the bell area within the sanctuary.

Our next meeting is April 5th, 2016

OUTREACH:

Baby Bottle Boomerang: This was a success with \$878.37 being collected for the Seed of Hope Medical Center.

APC Hams: Over 30 hams were collected and given to APC along with \$333.43 in cash donations. Several boxes of canned goods were also given to APC after their attendance at our March 9th Lenten Meal and Service.

St. Vincent DePaul Meal Program: On April 23rd, the 8th grade confirmation class will be preparing and serving the supper meal for St. Vincent DePaul Meal Program at APC. On Apr 6, the class will be discussing what the menu will be and how to get the food donations.

FAMILY PROMISE: Two new families have gone through the intake process, but that does not mean that they will be admitted into Family Promise. By this Friday, we will get an update from our case worker.

Other than that, our week is nearly complete with volunteers and meals. We have a few new members helping this time around and had no problem with finding members to help on Easter Sunday.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

1. Our offerings through February were AHEAD OF budget (by \$1,571.61), and our total income for the year to date has outpaced our expenses (by \$12,830.19), so our total budget cash increased by \$7,891.64 in February to a total of \$14,888.68 as of month-end. This is GREAT! For the last three years, we have been behind budget in February each year, (by \$12,003 last year, by \$15,158 in 2014 and \$5,833 in 2013).
2. It is interesting that we are ahead of budget so far despite the fact that we have spent above the budget amounts on the Rostered Salaries and Pension and Insurance lines – by \$5,862.00. That is a logical outcome for the moment, since we will have higher expenses in those areas for the first 5 months of the year (until Ruth retires), then should under spend the straight-line monthly average starting in June – when we will start to catch up for the year, both since we will no longer be paying insurance benefits and the possibility of lower staff costs for the new employees that will be replacing Ruth. During the first two months, our non-rostered staff expenses are lower than budget by \$2691, partially offsetting the higher Rostered staff costs, but after May, the new employees will be charged against this line, so these costs will go up for

June through December. All logical, and indicating that we are fairly close to budget overall when the entire year is considered.

3. Building Project expenses: We paid \$\$8096.20 to Groth Design Architects, \$1180.00 to Daaco for Trailer rentals (2 months) and \$6450.00 to Catalyst for Direct project costs.
4. The cash tracking summary at the bottom of the spreadsheet shows our current position (\$14,888.68 budget cash on hand) at the end of February. If you look at the Excel file, I added a third tab (Called 'Cash Tracking-2016') that shows cash balances month-by-month. I will keep that updated through the year.
5. Our MIF loan balance increased to \$474,978.42 as of the end of February, and we have had additional draws in early March of \$529,899.13, bringing the total to the current date to \$1,004,877.55. We continue to just pay interest on that until the project is complete and the final loan amount is set.

VPT:

Meeting held 3/14/2016: Guest John Bernd was present and was included in the discussion on the Use of Technology. Committee concluded there are two issues 1) need for available support personnel primarily for office staff (computers, network, phones) and 2) need for long term planning for IT communication strategy to implement mission, encourage sense of community and to enhance worship/education.

The following recommendations are forwarded to Council for action -

- Utilize John and Ed to identify IT support personnel firm to contract with Grace.
- Implement a standing "Technology Committee" - Group would develop 5 year strategic plan and be responsible for prioritizing technology upgrades and purchases. Would develop guidelines for social media strategy, ownership for updating electronic communications, technology training and generally oversee the best use technology at Grace.
 - Looking for Council to identify how to build team. IT experience not required - marketing/communication strengths would be helpful. John has agreed to be on and also recommended Ed.
- Vision Planning looking for additional items to work on. Forward ideas to Janet.

Next Vision Planning Meeting - April 18th 7:15 pm.

BUSINESS OLD:

- ✓ The three open job positions for the Choir Director, Youth Education Coordinator, and youth-Family Ministries Coordinator have been posted and we are ready to take applications.

BUSINESS NEW:

- ✓ Pastor Heidi presented the idea of Grace hosting a Craft fair in fall 2016. This would be a great way to invite the public to see our new facilities as well as raise some money (cause TBD). More details will develop as planning kicks off.
 - The council brought this to a vote and approved Grace hosting a craft fair.
- ✓ Special guest Matt Lempke attended the meeting to give an update on the building project. His focus was discussing where we are currently at as far as meeting the targeted project budget.
 - At this point, there is a lot of confidence that we will complete the project at or slightly below the bid.
 - The original contingency fund of \$70,000 is now down to \$5,500. Much of this money went to bringing in extra gravel due to soil issues. All the major demo work has been complete so there is not concern that more than \$5,500 will be needed.
 - There were also some funds in the budget set aside for 'Owner Responsibility' items such as IT, FFE (Furniture, fixtures and equipment), building signage and window furnishings. This budget totaled \$26,000 and we have so far spent \$8,000.
 - Grace also incurred some 'Owner Direct' costs such as trailer rental and storage rental. Since we do not plan to use all the money for FFE, we are still under spending amount to cover the 'Owner Direct' costs.

- Grace has a separate fund set aside for building furnishings. We also have plans for fun events to get items for the nursery and kitchen. We understand that we will not immediately have a building full of furnishings and this will be an ongoing process.
- ✓ Pastor Paul presented information about the 'Stewardship for All Seasons' program. This is a Pilot program run by the Great Milwaukee Synod to guide pastors and congregation leaders to learn tried and true basic principles and effective methodologies to carry out productive stewardship programs. There will be 5 congregations that participate and 4 have already signed up. Pastor Paul will be meeting with the leader of this program in April to get more information.
 - No decisions were made regarding this. At this point, we are in information gathering mode.
- ✓ Devotion schedule was determined.

NEWS/NOTES/SHARING:**CLOSING PRAYER:** Pastor Heidi Borkenhagen