



Council Minutes March 25th, 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 7:01 P.M. with President James Newell presiding.

- ✓ Approval of the February 2021 minutes with amendments, Joe motioned to approve, Kirstin 2nd, all approved.

Pastors and DI Reports

PASTOR PAUL'S REPORT:

Back Surgery: I continue to recover well from my back surgery on February 25. I have been given permission to resume some limited pastoral duties. I preached on March 21 and will lead the final confirmation classes on March 24. I hope to be involved in all the Holy Week services and lead the ninth-grade mini retreat on Sunday, April 11.

My thanks to Pastor Heidi and Erica Dimmett, as well as the rest of the staff, for their extra work during the time I have been out recovering from surgery.

Retirement Letter: I was told by the synod staff that a four-month advanced notice is good to inform a congregation of a pastor's retirement. I will send a letter to the congregation in mid-April informing them of the timetable for my retirement. The letter will also briefly let them know that I will not be involved with things at Grace after I retire and the good reasons for this.

Confirmation: We finish our Wednesday evening confirmation program for this year this week. I plan to review all the lesson plans for seventh, eighth and ninth grade confirmation and leave complete plans and materials for whoever is leading confirmation this fall.

Organizing Information: One of my goals over my final months will be to organize files for a number of congregational activities so that plans are available for the fall. These will include "God's Work Our Hands" (which I recommend be picked up by the Fellowship, Outreach and Christian Care committees), the work of the Nominating Committee, the Service of Remembrance in November, Graduate Sunday and general information for running a stewardship program. I plan to have these ready for those who will be leading them.

Worship Plans: The Worship Planning Team meets on April 6. One of the topics will be to decide upon our worship schedule plans once we are able to worship outside again. The staff recommends having both an inside and an outside worship, weather permitting, during the remaining Sundays this spring following Easter.

Special Thanks Offering: One topic we have discussed briefly is whether or not we would like to have a special congregational offering to celebrate the reduction in the pandemic. We can decide if this is something we would want to do, when to do it, how to run this and where the funds would go – to the regular budget or some other ministry.

Discussion – Four years ago we were part of pilot for all seasons with synod. Special appeals youth fund was held in 2017 and is still being used. Help through the Stimulus money received.



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Council can look at a specific area of ministry to tie into a special offering, if we decide to do one.

PASTOR HEIDI'S REPORT:

Holy Week: I'm planning Good Friday and Easter services this year. Good Friday will be a Tenebrae Service, with 50 people attending and an online option as usual. Easter will have 3 services with a 6:30 a.m. traditional, 9:00 a.m. Celebration, 11:00 a.m. (traditional, hopefully outside!). My thanks to the worship leaders, tech volunteers, and planning team for all the extra effort that goes into this week.

Worship: It's wonderful to have some people back in the sanctuary now. I look forward to having more options for this and for outdoor worship in the coming months.

The synod is offering a class on technology and worship. Dustin Lobner and Katy Koppa have agreed to attend. Part of the class includes an opportunity for technology grants. We hope we will be able to qualify for one and will keep council updated on any plans and grant money that becomes available.

Visits: I've been able to visit some of the shut ins again. It means so much to them as they have been so isolated the past year. Please keep our shut ins in your prayers!

Lydia Circle: We had great attendance for our combined in person/virtual meeting again this month. Around 15 in person and 4 online.

Mt. Meru Coffee: Jeanne Dries coordinates the sale of the Mt. Meru Coffee at Grace. This coffee comes from farmers in Tanzania, which is a partner synod of Greater Milwaukee. Jeanne asked about setting up the coffee display now that worship is happening again at church. This involves putting out bags and pods of coffee people can buy, as well as order forms. There is no person standing there to sell, it's self-serve/self-order. I wanted to check with council to gather your input on if we are comfortable with this right now.

Continuing Education: I had hoped to do a class on conflict that the synod was offering later this month, but it was cancelled. Through the Pastoral Leadership Program that I had participated in at Marquette, I got an opportunity to go to a retreat center in Oshkosh for free, so I will be doing that April 12-14. I'm going to do some reading and some prayer and reflection time.

Staff Support: The church staff is feeling exhausted and stressed after all the extra work and emotional labor of the past year (I know we all are feeling it). I would like the council to discuss ways to thank and support the staff for all the creativity and care they have given in many different ways. Grace is a good congregation but caring for and supporting their staff is a large growing edge for you. We had a staff support team for a while, and I think there is a need for that to get going again.

Discussion: Mt. Meru Coffee - ok to have this put back. Staff Support – check in with how doing, try to assist with congregational issues, monthly check in, remember anniversary. Previously run by Melissa Schmidt and Valerie Buckman. Looking for a person/place for staff to go to; listen to. Personnel committee is responsible for hiring, policies, handbook, job descriptions – not looking to be a related party.

DIRECTOR OF INVOLVEMENT: (Lisa Bernd)

Building: Voting: The Village of Grafton will hold its last vote of 2021 on April 6. They will be setting up on Monday, April 5, holding voting on Tuesday, April 6 & cleaning up on April 7. 2022 will have four election days.

Blood Drive: The blood drive on April 27. I hope we can continue our huge turnout.



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Boiler Room Water: There was a puddle in the boiler room. Jon looked at it & did not know where it was coming from. Pure Mechanical came in to check & it was just water from the broken pipe issue. There was no new issue & no repair was needed.

Thrivent Grant: I applied for a Thrivent Grant through the Wrolstads to get us some additional supplies to sanitize the worship center & the equipment.

In-Person Worship Center Prep: Katie & I got the pews in the worship center roped off & ready for people to sit for our in-person services.

Worship Assistants: I have been finding people (using the time & talents sheet) to fill the worship assistant & camera person spots since January.

Insert: Now that we are worshipping in person again, I started doing a bulletin insert again.

SignUp Genius: I have been making all of the signups for the weekly worship services & the Holy Week services.

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)

With the Pandemic limitations slowly being relaxed, we are attempting to bring back socially distanced outdoor activities. I still have not been able to obtain the Fellowship folder from Wendy Freeland but have received two ideas so far.

- For the month of April, we are planning the event “Helping Our Neighbors and Feeding Our Souls.” This entails hosting a combined service and fellowship event. We will be collecting food and monetary donations for All People’s Church and plan to gather around fire pits for fellowship and singing. The event will be open to the community and will take place in the church parking lot/lawn area. The anticipated date for this is Friday, April 23rd, and a Thrivent Grant is being applied for to obtain fire pits and other materials. We are hoping the directors from Pine Lake will come down and join us as well!
- The previous Fellowship Chair Wendy emailed me with a reach out from the Lakeshore Chinooks baseball team. I have been able to obtain their playing schedule and would love to make an event in early June for Grace to attend a home baseball game. Stay tuned for details.

FINANCE: (Scott Nielsen)

P&L - Month:

Revenue was \$59k (\$10k favorable to budget)

Expenses were \$50k (\$2k favorable to budget)

Surplus of \$9k (\$12k favorable to budget)



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Grace Lutheran Church Income Statement - February 2021

	February Actual	February Budget	Delta Budget	February '20 Actual	Delta Prior Year
Total Revenue	59,417	49,430	9,987	48,361	11,056
Expenses					
World Mission Subtotal	3,279	3,542	(262)	3,804	(525)
Rostered Ministry - Subtotal	20,540	20,639	(98)	20,178	363
Non-Rostered Staff Subtotal	11,790	11,292	498	10,678	1,112
Our Church Home Subtotal	13,292	14,050	(759)	15,445	(2,153)
Worship & Service Subtotal	1,457	2,464	(1,007)	3,591	(2,134)
Total Expenses	50,358	51,986	(1,628)	53,695	(3,337)
Surplus / (Deficit)	9,059	(2,556)	11,615	(5,335)	14,393
Amount To / (From) Contingency	9,059	(2,556)	11,615	(5,335)	14,393
Surplus / (Deficit) After Contingency	-	-	-	-	-

P&L - YTD:

Revenue was \$104k (\$5k favorable to budget)

Expenses were \$101k (\$3k favorable to budget)

Surplus of \$3k (\$8k favorable to budget)

Grace Lutheran Church Income Statement - February 2021

	Feb YTD Actual	Feb YTD Budget	Delta Budget	Feb '20 YTD Actual	Delta Prior Year
Total Revenue	103,987	98,860	5,127	106,500	(2,513)
Expenses					
World Mission Subtotal	7,083	7,083	0	7,608	(525)
Rostered Ministry - Subtotal	41,024	41,277	(253)	40,356	668
Non-Rostered Staff Subtotal	23,258	22,584	674	21,844	1,415
Our Church Home Subtotal	26,810	28,100	(1,291)	28,890	(2,080)
Worship & Service Subtotal	2,951	4,928	(1,977)	7,169	(4,218)
Total Expenses	101,126	103,972	(2,846)	105,866	(4,740)
Surplus / (Deficit)	2,861	(5,112)	7,973	633	2,227
Amount To / (From) Contingency	2,861	(5,112)	7,973	633	2,227
Surplus / (Deficit) After Contingency	-	-	-	-	-



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Balance Sheet:

Cash increased \$9k in the month to \$187k

Contingency Fund increased \$9k to \$119k

Project Funds flat at \$67k

Grace Lutheran Church Balance Sheet - February 2021

	February 2020 Starting Balance	February 2020 Ending Balance	Changes	
Assets				
Cornerstone Checking	88,900	98,374	9,474	
Cornerstone Money Market	88,165	88,175	10	
Total Cash	177,066	186,550	9,484	
<i>Contingency Fund</i>	<i>110,276</i>	<i>119,335</i>	<i>9,059</i>	<i>Feb 2020 Operating Deficit</i>
<i>Project Funds</i>	<i>66,789</i>	<i>67,215</i>	<i>425</i>	<i>Feb 2020 Project Fund Change</i>
	177,066	186,550	9,484	
Total Assets	177,066	186,550	9,484	
Liabilities				
Mortgage	1,778,635	1,774,278	(4,356)	
Total Liabilities	1,778,635	1,774,278	(4,356)	
		Principal Payment	6,623	
		Interest Payment	4,342	
			10,965	

OUTREACH: (Rachel Langer)

No report provided

PROPERTY: (Joe DeCamp)

No report provided – comments; still working with Lisa & John on learning his duties. Working on drywall repairs when able.

WORSHIP: (Kelly Olson)

No report provided – comments; as far as I can tell from the Livestream, indoor worship is going well. Thank you to Pastor Heidi and the worship/music leaders, tech team and staff for all the effort in planning the services for Holy Week.

Next WPT meeting is April 6th when we will discuss worship plans for spring and summer.

YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY COMMITTEE: (Jen Jacobson)

We met in-person on March 22nd our main focus was on needs/changes for an In-Person VBS, with a quick update on other Youth activities. Erica, Katie, Sarah and myself were in attendance.

Vacation Bible School (VBS) – We are planning and hoping to hold an in-person VBS Monday to Friday, August 9-15. We will have to making changes to the program.

- General information
 - In February/March Katie surveyed our regular Volunteers to find out their comfort level for both themselves and their children (where applied)
 - We are using the 2020 curriculum that we purchased in in January 2020 that we didn't use last year. All the curriculum, CD's, and miscellaneous supplies from



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- the creator are already paid for out the VBS account. We will still need craft, science and food supplies, these are typically provide by in-kind donations and Thrivent Grants
- VBS does not come out of the church budget it has been funded by the registration fee, Thrivent Grants, and in-kind donations from members.
 - Guidelines – We will follow current guides and are using the current ones to help us plan. To help guide us Katie shared some information she got while attending a web meeting for youth leaders, where she was part of a special break out room for VBS. We will also make sure VBS follows any of the Grace's guidelines put forth for Worship and other gatherings. We also are looking at the examples of what has worked for the schools and camps.
 - Slim VBS to 75 Children Participants 3k-6th grade & estimated 22 Volunteers – 7th graders +, and adults (Previous VBS were 120-150 kids with about 50 volunteers a day).
 - Plan to minimize the risk, 3 high risk areas have been identified
 - Eating – Daily Snack and end of week Family picnic – still needs to be planned
 - Have water bottles verses cups they fill up
 - Singing/Music – See below comments on Tent to be able to move this outside
 - Drop off & Pick up – See below Comment on Tent – hope to keep this process outside to minimize the number of people that enter the church (Crossways camp won't allow parents into the cabins when their children are dropped off, schools minimize parents entering the buildings as well)
 - Create 3 Rules & Classifications (something Crossways is doing and we felt would work well with VBS)
 - Rules to minimize Risk
 - Masking
 - Outdoors
 - Distancing
 - Classifications
 - Class (small group) – Follow at least 1 of the Rules
 - Cohorts (classes that travel together – 2 grades) – Follow 2 of the Rules
 - Community (when we are all together Opening/closing, drop off/pick up) – Follow all 3 Rules
 - Registration/Group size
 - 75 Children Participants & estimated 22 Volunteers (Previous VBS were 120-150 kids with about 50 volunteers a day).
 - Registration will be staggered as followed
 - Open for Members and those related to volunteers starting May 1st
 - Open to the community June 1st
 - All Registration fees will have to be paid upfront (prior years they could pay the fee on the first day.) Fee is \$20 per kid, Family cap of \$50



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- 1 CD per family will be given out (Previous years a free shirt was given to each kid for families that register before a deadline to encourage early registration which helped with planning. Those free shirts costed the VBS program \$5 each) NOTE: we previously purchased the CDs and with a lower capacity we don't think we will be able to sell them (at cost for \$5) all as in past years, plus it gives us an alternative to the "free" t-shirt
- Stations – a day follows a rotation – everyone is at Opening and closing but break out either by class (by grade level) or Cohort (2 classes together) for different stations, below is our tentative plan for those stations
 - Music – held outside, hopefully under a tent (previous years in Worship Center)
 - Snacks – always the last 10 minutes of Music – at tables under the tent (Previous years in part of Fellowship Hall)
 - Science – Outside by the kitchen (Previous years mostly outside in the same spot but would move into back part of Fellowship Hall if need to be inside)
 - Crafts – In the All Purpose Room (Previous years same space)
 - Recreation – Outside – sometimes on John Long Middle grass area (Previous years same space – move to Gathering space if raining out)
 - Bible story – encourage them to find a spot outside when weather permits (Previous years in a Sunday School Room)
- Tent – Our biggest challenge this year is moving outside for the Opening/Closing worship and Music because of weather. If indoor worship is capped at 40 plus leadership, we can't all fit and safely spread out in the Worship Center with 97 people, it also is safer to for singing to be outside. Our solution is to rent a tent. The company Katie called first for Tent information was very helpful with giving us details and helping to determine the size needed. However, this is costly and not in the budget.
 - Reasons for the Tent
 - Gives us a space to safely come together
 - Allows us to spread out more if it is raining (not everything will need to be moved inside)
 - Protects us from the weather – Light rain, sun/providing shade
 - Used for
 - Drop off/pick up location easy for parents to know and prevents them from going into the building
 - Opening/Closing worship
 - Music
 - Snack
 - Tent Rental details
 - Tent Size: 40x80"
 - Cost – total \$2,123
 - Tent \$2,100 (this is their normal daily fee but they will rent it to us for the whole week for this price)
 - Delivery and set up \$275
 - Giving us a discount of \$252

Other Group updates



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- Youth Groups
 - Will have 2 in-person events in spring
 - Confirmation classes are ending this week and Affirmation of Baptism will be on Sunday, May 2nd.
 - Boundary Waters Trip is in the planning stages
 - Confirmation Camp is in the planning stages at the Camp and Erica is kept up date by them
 - Hope to have Summer events
- Sunday School
 - Faith Kits seem to get less views each month – hopes to return to in-person this fall
 - Had March's Family event on Sunday, March 21st. About 5 families gathered outside and created the Easter Story with pebble art, a video was posted on Grace's Facebook page.

Katie-

- Family Faith Initiative Update
 - Family Faith Kits
 - The March kit focused on Easter. Thanks to the Eckert family for their help in putting it together.
 - At this time, I do not think I will do another kit. Normally, our Sunday School program ends in early May, and participation in the kits is declining. I think they were a great way to help families practice faith in their own homes, but I don't think I will do any more.
 - Family Faith Activities
 - We held our Outdoor Winter Fun Day on Feb 28. There were about 30 kids and adults that joined us to play outside. It was a fun and safe way to get together!
 - I held a Pebble Rock art event on March 21. Five families attended. Those in attendance created some really neat rock art. I took pictures of everyone's creations and shared them in a youtube video:
<https://youtu.be/umpNwJway18>
- Grace Meals
 - On April 19, we will be putting together another Grace meal opportunity. Thanks to Linda Borkenhagen for helping to coordinate this meal, and to the Vrankins for obtaining the Thrivent grant to purchase the food. There will be a small group of volunteers assembling the meals.
- 5K Lord's Prayer Event
 - Thanks to our 5K families for helping their child learn The Lord's Prayer! I put together a video of all the kids leading the prayer and we shared it with the congregation on March 14.
- Lent
 - I continue to edit all of online the Wednesday Lent services.
- 2nd Annual Food Drive



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- We will be holding the second annual Grace/Adult Literacy Center Food Drive this May.
- Thanks to Rachel Langer for helping to coordinate it on the Grace side this year (although I'm still more than happy to help too!)
- We hope to pick a date soon (I have an ALC board meeting on March 25 and will know more after that)
- Children's Messages—I continue to do children's messages each week.
- VBS Update
 - We are continuing to move forward with an in-person VBS for this year.
 - Registration for Grace families and volunteers/volunteer's children will begin on May 1. We will allow 75 students to participate. If there is still space available, come June 1 we will open registration to the community.
 - Erica and I attended a webinar led by the Pine Lake Camp directors. They provided a lot of guidance on safe camp practices that we can apply to VBS. In addition, we will be modeling many of the same rules the schools follow.
 - Jen will be bringing a proposal to council on the possibility of renting a tent for the week.

Discussion: New quote for a different type of tent would be \$1800 and Katie would be looking for \$250 Thrivent grant. How to go about funding this? Look at getting lots of little tents as an option but if it is raining that would create issues. Should be easy enough to fund raise this. Pastor Paul made a motion to approve renting tent for VBS. Scott 2nd, motion approved.

Other Business

Scott - Proposal for campaign to increase automated giving

Letter drafted to encourage members to switch to automated giving.

Discussion: Email, Grace Notes, and with paper letter – could look to use a Thrivent Grant for the mailing cost of this. Send out before the next envelopes go out. And then celebrate or continue to stress the goal as it progresses.

Pastor Paul - One other item for us to discuss tonight: Outreach for Hope has contacted me asking if Grace would be willing to be the host site for their annual bikeathon fundraising on September 25. We have hosted this for the past several years.

This would require some volunteer effort on our part. A meal is usually held for all the bikers. I'm not sure if they are planning on that this year due to COVID. We would not have to organize any meal, as they have a committee for this, but they would use our kitchen and fellowship hall, if they do hold it.

Discussion: Pastor Paul made motion to approve being the host site, James 2nd. Lori Mathias has helped with this in the past that we could reach out to.

Craft Fair in Nov – looking for guidance on planning purposes, looking to be at 50% and then can adjust items as needed.

Pastor Paul retirement – contacted by synod and will work through this and April/early yearly meeting – more in depth meeting of plans/ideas/goal for the year – might be especially good for this year. Try to dedicate this meeting to the plans for the year, leave reports to be what they are. April 22nd.

Closing Prayer: Pastor Paul