

Grace Lutheran Church Council Minutes
November 19th, 2015

In Attendance:

*Pastor Paul Bulgerin	*Darlyne Holle	*Aimee Lempke
*Pastor Heidi Borkenhagen	*Trudi Biefeld	*John Walch
Ruth Schmidt	*Lisa Bernd	*Scott Donovan
*Jim Mulholand	*Sarah Ganaway	*Katie Eippert
*Mara Schwartz	*Melanie Arndt	*Laurie Gosselin

The meeting began at 7:20p.m. With President John Walch presiding.

DEVOTION: Sarah Ganaway

APPROVAL OF THE OCTOBER 2015 MINUTES

PASTOR PAUL'S REPORT:

Stewardship: We currently are at about \$50,000 in increased pledged giving for 2015. We still have a good number of pledge cards out. A letter is going out this week to all those who have not yet turned in their cards.

I still have to factor in the giving for the new members who are joining in early December, obviously an unknown number at this time, and a % increase in our non-pledged giving. I usually figure this in at about half of the rate of pledged giving increases.

With the more concrete budget numbers we now have we know that we will be looking at around an \$80,000 increased need, not the \$66,000. It is important to remember that all throughout our stewardship program we have been using the \$66,000 as a *minimum* increase and letting people know it may be more than that.

My plans are to send a letter out to the congregation, after we've met at council this week to discuss the 2016 budget, letting people know where we stand with our current pledged increase and also about the larger budget number.

In this letter I will remind members about the *minimum* \$66,000 number and let people know we now have more specific numbers know that we know about health insurance and church insurance, as well as some other items. The letter will ask people to consider additional giving for 2016, reminding them that we have voted overwhelmingly to support the building program and it will be a very good thing for our congregation. The letter will also hold up that 2016 is the most crucial year for the budget so even a one year special gift will be a great help.

I am also going to send out a letter to those members who made a pledge for 2016, but kept the amount the same as 2015, asking them to consider revising their 2016 commitment and making a pledge.

I am still looking for council members who can help me make some follow up phone calls to people after Thanksgiving asking them to please return their commitment cards.

Nominating Committee: We have a nominee who is apparently willing to serve as president-elect. We need to finalize things with this person in the next few days. We continue to look for a chair of the Worship Committee and Council Secretary. The Nominating Committee is meeting again after worship on November 22 to go over more names for potential candidates.

Jubilation Choir: Last week I spoke with several members of the choir whom I overheard discussing some concerns about Joyce's leadership of the choir. I asked them to write these down for me. I then spoke to Joyce about them. Joyce is going to discuss these issues with the choir at tonight's (November 18) rehearsal. Pastor Heidi will be in attendance for this and we will share follow up information with the council.

New Members: We are starting classes this Sunday and will receive new members on December 6.

First Communion: I taught the Holy Communion Preparation classes for our fifth graders on November 1, 8 and 15. These six students will receive the sacrament for the first time on either November 25 or 29.

Eighth Grade Retreat: Jessica Korrison and I led the discipleship retreat for our eighth graders at Pine Lake Bible Camp on November 6-7.

2016 High School Mission Trip: Our youth group is going back to Sky Ranch Lutheran Camp in northern Colorado for their 2016 mission trip. We went there in 2012 and 2014 and both were excellent trips. Our teens will spend the week there working on construction and other projects that help out the camp with its mission. The dates for the trip are July 8-16, 2016.

PASTOR HEIDI'S REPORT:

Worship: I'll be preaching for Time and Talents this weekend. I have a couple spiritual gifts surveys for people to fill out if they would like help knowing where they might best serve (one is online and one is a hard-copy for those who don't use a computer).

I'm looking forward to Advent and Christmas, as always. I'm preaching Christmas day and putting together a special hymn service for the Sunday after Christmas (one service at 9 am!).

HYPE Youth Group: We started studying the book of Philippians this month.

Education: I filled in for AIM Ruth and taught a confirmation session. It was fun to be with the kids and guides!

TNT: Brian and I are hosting another Hot Chocolate Party December 18, and a trip to a UWM basketball game will be in January.

Mt Meru Coffee: Jeanne Dries, who heads up the Mt. Meru Coffee sales at Grace, talked to me about a few things she'd like to do to enhance the program. This is a partnership with coffee growers in Tanzania, which is a partner of our synod (similar to how we are partners with Circle of Empowerment). Jeanne would like us to serve Mt. Meru coffee for coffee hour when we have the construction completed. Most congregations that sell the coffee do that, and it's a great way to support a mission as we enjoy delicious coffee. She would also like there to be a place for a permanent display in the new church. We can discuss this at council, and/or refer to the appropriate groups.

Christmas Hymn Sing: I contacted the Milwaukee Ale House to ask if we could hold a Christmas Hymn sing there some time in December but never heard back. I am going to contact the Water Street Brewery and see if I have any luck. If you have connections anywhere or ideas, let me know!

AIM RUTH'S REPORT:

Please excuse me from the meeting tonight. I sincerely wish I could be with you. I have a call into my surgeon just to be sure everything is as it should be. In case you don't know, I developed a 7in long blood clot in my leg after surgery, which set me back a good week in healing. It seems I have increased swelling again in the last week and want to be sure things are still on track. Sitting at a desk comes with quite a bit of pain these days.

Thanks to Heidi who taught Confirmation for me last week. I came last night and taught the class. The women's brunch bible study group met at my house this morning and that went well. I'm planning to lead the 4th-6th grade Sunday School station on Sunday.

My plan was to write the Sunday School Christmas Program from home and I am still hopeful about that. I need to have it completed for next week Tuesday when we will have our first practice. There are 25 students who want to have special parts in the Pageant. So far the pain has been too bad to work on it.

The Advent Children's Message hand-outs have been ordered. Each week the kids will receive a piece to create a foam nativity ornament.

I hope to lose some pain and gain some flexibility in the next couple of days.

DIRECTOR OF INVOLVMENT:

Service of the month: Operation Christmas Child. This month our service is Operation Christmas Child. OCC is where people pack boxes filled with items to be sent overseas to children in need. They are filled with socks, small toys, gum, hard candy, soaps, tooth brushes, etc. This is a service we have done for a few years. Terry Crevensten heads this mission for Grace. She does an amazing job getting everything organized. As of right now we have 15 boxes packed & ready to go.

Women's Book Study: I am enjoying another month of my women's book study group. We are reading "Bad Girls of the Bible". It is an interesting book. I have learned a lot of new things since I started prepping for this study. I have about 12 women on Wednesday evenings.

Time & Talents Packets: I am preparing the Time & Talents packets to be handed out this Thursday & Sunday. I have tried to highlight some of the items that really need help this time by putting them in red.

Pledge Cards: I have been entering in the pledge cards as they arrive. I then pass them on to Pastor Paul with the current pledge account information.

Trunk or Treat: We had a great turn out for Trunk or Treat. Again, we got very lucky with the weather. Thank you to the KFC kids. They made games to play & helped with all of the other activities.

Women's Casserole Supper: Thank you to Laurie Gosselin for working so hard to make the casserole supper a huge success. Laurie's cousin taught the women how to make a live wreath. All of the wreaths the women made were beautiful. Many were posted on Facebook.

Statements: The first week of the month, the statements went out. I will also send them out at the beginning of December so that people know where they are at before the end of the year.

Funeral: I organized, purchased & served the food for Vivian Morey's memorial service. Truly that is one of my most favorite parts of my job.

COE Mailer: I stamped a congregational mailer for COE.

Construction: I continue to go to bi-weekly construction meetings. It is been quite an exciting learning experience for me. Going to these meetings has helped me answer questions for different people at church, helped with the scheduling of events at church & helps get the correct information out in the weekly construction Grace Notes. The people at Catalyst & Growth are really great to work with.

FELLOWSHIP:

Fellowship team is finalizing plans for Thanksgiving Eve Pie Social. Wendy Freeland is the contact person.

After Thanksgiving, we will plan the Shower for Jesus.

I'll continue to look for fellowship opportunities outside our construction walls for Jan & Feb. Most likely an Admiral Hockey Game.

PROPERTY:

The roof has been repaired over the choir area. From what I understand, there were no surprises. On Tuesday evening November 17th I received a call from Jim Schmidt there was water coming through the floor outlets in the choir area. There was heavy rain all afternoon and into the evening. This dilemma isn't new, yet a bit perplexing. Upon inspection we found the sump pump in the courtyard between fellowship and worship was not operating. After cleaning and removing the lid the sump pump engaged giving Jim Schmidt and myself an unexpected bath! I believe the sump failure may have been caused by debris from the roof repair hitting the pump and knocking the float mechanism askew. We'll have to keep an eye on this situation as we go forward.

Construction is well under way as everybody who visits Grace can see. There were some soil issues in the new addition area which will dip into our contingency. A meeting on December 1st will bring everybody up to speed. I believe the cost of additional gravel fill is approximately \$26 K. The foundation pillar for the taller roof in the new greeting area close to the old hallway outside the library showed good soil conditions. Catalyst is waiting on steel delivery expected.

We have a couple of quotes for the new furnaces and air conditioning of worship and will be looking to assign a contract shortly once I see them. With approval, we will schedule installation. Approximate cost is just under \$11 K. Right now we are looking at awarding the replacement to Randy Miller out of Saukville.

That is all for now, unless I missed something, and that can happen..... Easliy!

Hope everybody has a wonderful Thanksgiving Holiday!

CHRISTIAN CARE:

Christian Care hosted Trunk or Treat on Sunday, October 26. Upwards of 75 people attended! In addition to our regular games, we had KFC helping out with some games of their own. 7-8 trunks were decorated and there was also pumpkin painting. A hot dog lunch was enjoyed by all. Many thanks go to Korey Gierach and Lisa Bernd for their help in organizing and executing the event!

We will be welcoming New Members again on December 6. We don't know yet exactly how many families this will include, but should have a better idea after the first New Members class this coming Sunday.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION:

Christian Ed did not meet since the last council meeting, so I don't have a report.

WORSHIP:

The Nominating Committee is working on finding a new chairperson for the Worship Committee. At least one candidate has been identified.

The roof has been repaired over the choir area.

The Service of Remembrance was attended by about 30 people and featured a beautiful video by John Conto.

Upcoming services:

November 29: "Focusing on the Right Thing" Pastor Paul preaching. Lighting of first Advent candle. First communion for fifth graders. Cello and violin special music

December 3/6: Pastor Heidi preaching. Being refined, and righteousness.

December 13: Cantata

December 20: Sunday School Christmas Pageant with AIM Ruth

Christmas Eve: 3:00 Childrens, 4:30 Praise Team, 6:30 Candlelight with communion. Walsh

Quartet

Christmas Day: 9:00 service. Kids can wear their PJ's

Sunday, December 27: One service only at 9:00. Special emphasis on hymns

(No service on Thursday, December 31, New Year's Eve)

Joyce will lead Christmas caroling at Lasata and Hamburg House on 12/12.

Pastor Paul will be doing a play in 2016.

Musicians mission reviews to be done before the end of the year.

Music programs questionnaires being tabulated

Discussed noise during Bell Choir music, congestion in the entry way during construction.

Next meeting will be Tuesday, December 8, 2015

OUTREACH:

Grace was again contacted by APC for participation in their Thanksgiving Meal. Families or individuals are asked to provide a meat, two side dishes and a dessert for 10 people. An article was placed in the Grace Notes for any interested members to contact APC directly to participate in this dinner. Also help is needed to serve this meal on November 22nd.

Family Promise Update:

Articles were placed in Grace Notes as updates about the program and the needed pantry items and donation listing is up in the narthex. Mari reports that these articles have been slow to come in.

Grace will need to purchase the mattress pads and also we would like to have a bed bug protector for each cot, 14 for the clients and 2 for the volunteers. I have ordered these through Shopko and I am awaiting the arrival of these articles. There will be a service project in January to pay for these and any further needs. Mari and I will use any remaining money from Family Promise and Outreach to lessen the costs as this will come to over \$800.00.

The first few weeks of inception, there have not been any families in need of the program. Recently, two families (two adults and two children) have been through the intake process and will most likely be in need. So we may be having clients during our 1st week of Dec 6th.

Mari has contacted the Pastors to make announcement that there is still a need for more volunteers to help during our first week. Training will be held Nov 16th, but Mari will be able to find an alternative training if you are unable to make that evening.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

1. Our offerings through October slid back again-we were \$30,695 behind at the end of August, but now are \$37,692.00 behind.
2. Looking at performance to budget, if we compare actual income to expenses (for budget accounts), our income so far is \$369,405.00, and expenses are \$394,611.00, giving a deficit of \$25,206.00. With a typical December, when we usually have a much greater income, we should easily make that up along with any additional deficit incurred in November. We have actually underspent the budget so far by \$12,056.00, since the projection to this date is \$406,667.00 and our actual expenses are \$394,611.00. The most significant area of overage is on the 'Pension and Health Insurance' line – where we have spent \$60,962 though the projection to date should be \$53,097. The main reason for that is that we will not get an IRS Health Insurance rebate this year – we are not eligible for it as we have been the last 3 years. That would have been about a \$6500.00 credit had we been eligible, and I think that had been figured into the budget. There are two significant areas of savings right now – the Mortgage so far has been \$9682.00 (projected to this point is \$13,833) and since we have paid it off, the only thing that would be applied to that would be new loan payments, which have not started yet (except minimal interest payment), and Grounds and Maintenance (\$7,125.00 so far with a projection of \$14,917 to date). A good deal of the savings there have been due to work that Dennis Bruss has done very inexpensively, along with holding off on any major projects due to the building program.
3. We spent \$5,356.04 in Groth Design charges in October - \$4,778.00 for 'construction administration fees', \$557.46 for printing and postage and \$10.58 for 'travel expenses'.
4. Other payments in October that are related to the construction project included: \$541.25 to 5 Corners Storage for usage of the Storage unit where we put all the furniture, etc. to hold until the building is done, \$2891.45 to Comnet to move phone/internet lines and to wire the trailer with phones/internet, and \$100.00 to James Imaging to move the copier out to the trailer. All of these charges were paid from the building fund.
5. We made the first interest payment on the Mission Investment Fund building loan - \$186.26. This appears in the monthly report as the 'Building Fund Interest Payments' line, and also as a new line in the summary of the 'Capital Fund Drive' at the end of the report, labeled 'Building Fund (MIF loan) – Interest paid'.
6. I created new specials accounts for 'Copier Lease Credit Carry-over' so that I can use some of the credit we received from James Imaging (paying for buyout of Ross Imaging copier payments) to use for that purpose in 2016. I put \$1000.00 of the credit in to hold over (original credit total amount was \$4091.56). By using a specials account, I can carry that money over to next year (can't do that with a budget account). What this will do is bring us fairly close to our copier budget for both this year and next year, since we will have a couple remaining payments on the Ross buyout in 2016.
7. I am still working on a way to easily portray the various portions of the building program income and expenses so that is easier to report on. Just getting back to work on that now due to being very busy with the move and settling into the trailer. I hope to have a draft for you to look at sometime within the next week or so.

VPT:

I reviewed the Youth Ministries position with Pastor Paul, and we were able to come to an agreement on job responsibilities for the position and who is teaching confirmation (Pastor Paul). We also agreed on proposed start dates.

The job responsibilities have been turned over to the Personnel Committee to be turned into job descriptions. We had one round of questions that needed clarification, and they will be working on them again at their meeting tonight.

The VPT will be meeting in December (TBD) to discuss new members and a new committee chair.

Business Old and New

-2106 Budget

News/Notes/Sharing

Closing Prayer – Pastor Paul