

Grace Lutheran Church Council Minutes

October 23, 2014

In Attendance:

*Pastor Paul Bulgerin

*Pastor Heidi Borkenhagen

*Ruth Schmidt

John Conto

*Mara Schwartz

*Cindy Witt

Trudi Biefeld

*Lisa Bernd

Roger Goecks

Melanie Arndt

*Aimee Lempke

*John Walch

*Scott Donovan

*Katie Eippert

The meeting began at 7:20p.m. With President Mara Schwartz presiding. Pastor Paul opened the meeting with a prayer.

DEVOTIONAL: John Walch

Presentation by Paula Kitt from the ELCA Mission Investment Fund

After presentation discussion: P Paul, P Heidi, Ralph, Aimee & Mike Cibulka went to St. Luke's in Slinger to tour the church. They also worked with Groth Architects. They gave the group good feedback. They also used the ELCA Mission Investment Fund.

Romy gave us information on the loan process.

We will check to see if someone from the building committee can come to the November council meeting to talk about their progress.

APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 2014 MINUTES:

PASTOR PAUL'S REPORT:

2015 Stewardship: Mara did a great job talking to the congregation at all three services the weekend of October 9-12. She covered all the key points of our stewardship program well and shared her own giving story. Thank You, Mara!

The first round of commitment cards came in last Sunday. I will have a summary of their results to share at the council meeting tomorrow night. The total amount pledged with the first fifty-five cards is around \$118,000. I will go through them to determine the amount of increased giving pledged for 2015.

The envelopes that were not picked up will be mailed to members this week.

Meeting with Pastor Matt Short: On Tuesday of this week three members of the Finance Committee, Aimee Lempke, Mike Cibulka and Ralph Jeletz, along with the pastors, met with Pastor Matt Short from St. Luke Lutheran Church in Slinger. They recently completed a capital fund appeal and building program and used Groth Design as their architects. St. Luke is a church about the same size as Grace. They completed a \$1.9 million project after having raised \$750,000 in pledges. Pastor Short gave us all sorts of helpful advice on financing a building program and also working with Groth Design.

Nominating Committee: The group is beginning to talk to candidates for the council positions this week. Sarah Gannaway has agreed to serve as the chair of the Christian Care Committee. There are no open spots to fill this year for the Personnel Committee.

Holy Communion Preparation Classes: Beth Walch and I will lead these classes for our fifth graders and their parents on Sundays, November 2, 9 and 16. Our fifth graders will be able to receive the sacrament for the first time on either Thanksgiving Eve, Wednesday, November 26 or on the First Sunday in Advent, November 30.

Eighth Grade Retreat: I will lead this annual retreat at Pine Lake Bible Camp on Friday to Saturday, November 7-8.

Service of Remembrance: This annual service will be held at 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, November 2. Thanks to John Conto who is creating a new video presentation for the service.

We will be sending out a special letter to members that haven't given this year.

PASTOR HEIDI'S REPORT:

Change in Hours: I'm feeling a little stretched lately. I am really enjoying the time with my kids but it's also hard because there is more I would like to do at Grace, too. It would probably be good to sit down with Paul and other leadership again in the near future to discuss this.

High School Youth Group: Attendance has been really low this Fall. I'm planning to meet with the leaders soon to discuss how we can address this. I'd welcome any input and ideas from the council.

Continuing Education: The conference in Boulder was fantastic! I learned a lot. There were so many great ideas that I think would be beneficial to Grace. I can share some of our plans at the meeting, and would welcome the chance to discuss them more deeply, maybe at the next council retreat.

I've already begun introducing some things, sharing them with the New Members class, Adult Forum, & the Christian Ed committee.

New Women's Group: I think we will probably go with a Tuesday evening, most likely starting after Christmas. This is one of the things I would like to do but haven't had as much time to devote to it as I'd like.

Stephen Ministry: This month we discussed the future of Stephen Ministry at Grace. Some leaders have stepped down after years of service, and others are planning to very soon. We don't have many active caring relationships happening. The number of Stephen Ministers is dwindling, and we weren't able to get enough people to do a training class this Fall (we had one person interested). We all see strong value in this ministry, but if there is nobody there to lead and to serve, it can't continue. We decided to contact First Immanuel in Cedarburg to see if they would be open to combining programs. We are waiting to hear back from them to set up a meeting to discuss this.

HSYG numbers are low. She mentioned that no one's parents stay for Adult Education so they are not invested in the program

AIM RUTH'S REPORT:

Sunday School: We have begun our Bible/Memory Station focus on the 10 Commandments. Parents will get a hand-out asking them to work with their child/children to memorize the 10 Commandments. This is one of our *Keeping the Promise* units. Steven Beloin will be leading the Good News Station for the 4th – 6th graders on Nov. 2nd. This is part of his requirement for one of his classes.

Movie Idea: The 7th graders just completed their study of Exodus and watched snip-its of the old 10 Commandment movie. They very much enjoyed it. One at the class mentioned that there's a new Moses/10 Commandment movie coming out soon. Pastor Paul and I looked into it and are hoping to choose a date and time (coming out in Dec.) and try to get a group from Grace to go see it and then have some time to discuss it. Stay tuned.

Baby Shower for Jesus: As you read in Katie's report, thanks to the great idea from Pr. Heidi and Lisa, we're planning a Shower for Jesus instead of a Birthday Party for Jesus, as we've done other years, for Dec. 21st. Last year I took too much on by myself and the Christian Ed. Committee, Pastor Heidi and Lisa have offered to help with set-up, PR, etc. The high school youth will be helping again too.

Sunday School Christmas Pageant: I've chosen to work with a new children's Christmas service called *Comfort and Joy for the Children of God*. Eryn and I are in conversation about the songs for the service. She has already begun working on Christmas music with the Sunday School kids. The Pageant will be on Dec. 21st at both services and will include communion. I have ordered the service kit and am anxious to see how well it will work with the number of actors that volunteer and the time frame we have to work with.

Ideas for Advent Children's Message and Plans for Children's Candlelight Service: Both of these are included in the Worship Report.

Meeting with Groth Architects: Had several good meetings with Paul from Groth and look forward to seeing ideas for new educational space. Paul feels he'll concentrate on this area first.

AIM Retreat: I attended a great AIM retreat with other AIMs from the synod. They are a great group of caring people and we can learn so much from each other. The main presentation was called *The Third Chapter* about dealing with changes, new chapters, in our life. This included a special focus on retirement.

Special Thanks: Many thanks to Grace for the gift card celebrating rostered staff appreciation Sunday. Sad to say, I was in emergency that morning and missed the fun. All is well now.

DIRECTOR OF INVOLVMENT:

Trunk or Treat & Christian Care: We are set to have Trunk or Treat on Sunday, October 26. We have a lot of confirmation student volunteers. It should be a great time. If for some reason it rains, we will move it inside to Fellowship Hall & have table or treat.

Time & Talents: This time, I promise, I will be bringing a copy of last years' time & talents sheet with me to the council meeting. Please look at it & make any updates to your section.

New Members: On Thursday, October 16 & Sunday, October 19, we welcomed 4 new families to Grace. That includes 6 children & one baby on the way! How exciting to have our church family continue to grow.

Counters: Just as I filled the two counters positions, another person stepped down. I am looking for another counter as I write this report. I will let you know when I have that position filled. The new counters will start & be trained in November.

Women's Casserole Supper: I helped the women plan their casserole supper. It will be on November 17. We will be having Kandy Gibson (the new director of the adult literacy center) & her daughter will be our speakers. They are potters & will be showing us what they do. She will be showing us the art of Sgraffito, which is the art of scratching. She will be bringing us tiles (everyone who wants to participate will purchase them for \$5.00) & show us how to scratch on them. She will then fire them for us & we will have a beautiful piece of art.

50th Anniversary Celebration: We held our first informal meeting on Thursday, October 16th. We got some thoughts down on what we would like to do but now the real work begins. We will have our first formal meeting on October 29th. We have 6 people on the committee as of now & will be adding more as we get planning.

Cross Generation Ministry Seminar: I can't thank Stephanie Luedtke from the Greater Milwaukee Synod for providing me with the opportunity to go to this conference. Pastor Heidi & I cannot wait to implement some of the new things we have learned. Stay tuned for more information.

PROPERTY:

Roof leaks appear to be contained.

Best heating was called for a heat problem in the Fellowship hall.

An 8-foot chair rack was donated to the church and will be used in Luther.

Nothing else to report.

FELLOWSHIP:

We have not met in October and we do not have an event planned for October.

Unfortunately, we decided to not host a Fall Bingo Night on Saturday, November 15th. I am having a hard time finding someone to be our bingo emcee after already asking 7 people who declined due to not being available, which might be an indicator that people are too busy to attend. In addition, I cannot commit to planning and hosting this event because my mother-in-law is in the hospital with complications of cancer and there is a lot of uncertainty there. With that said, the committee decided to not move forward with planning this event. However, we will still be hosting the Thanksgiving pie social on Wednesday, November 26th after the 7 p.m. service.

For December, we will be assisting the Christian Education Committee with the Birthday Party for Jesus on Sunday, December 21st by taking care of the snacks.

Our next meeting will be in mid-November.

****Important** – Please be aware that when I step down as the chairperson of the Fellowship Committee in early 2015, all of my committee members (Mari Goecks, Jackie Dhein and Alissa Burgos) have decided to leave as well. However, if we are needed, we all are willing to assist with the annual summer picnic. We are sorry this is the situation but we all feel it is time to let others step up with their fresh ideas and energy, while we move on to other areas in the church that can use our time and talents.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION:

Pastor Heidi and Lisa joined us to share what they learned at their conference about Cross Generational Worship.

Shared ideas of things that will be done in worship and started to brainstorm ways Sunday School can incorporate some of these techniques into the current program

Sunday School

Christmas Program will be held on Dec 21.

Program is “Comfort and Joy for the Children of God.”

Birthday Party for Jesus is being changed to a Baby Shower for Jesus. It will be held between services on Dec 21.

Parents of kids in the Christmas pageant can help set up Fellowship Hall during the last practice time on Dec 20.

High schoolers will help with activities during the event.

There will be a movie running for part of the time.

The church will be collecting “baby shower” donations during the event. We’re hoping the donations can go to Advocates of Ozaukee.

Fellowship committee will provide the snacks (requested that the snacks be “clean” finger foods—prefer things without frosting, etc, that end up getting all over the kids outfits)

High School Youth Group

Students voted on Advocates of Ozaukee as their organization of the year

Junior Youth Group & KFC

Discussed ways that all of the groups (including high school youth) can work together to develop leadership skills and role models

Next meeting—Jan 8 at 6:30

OUTREACH:

The One Can Donation is doing well. Three very full bags were taken to Family Sharing since the last report.

The upcoming donations will be taken to All People’s Church.

The coats and mitten donations for APC are coming in. So far I have two big bins of coats and hats. They will be delivered at the end of Nov or early Dec. Several donations of personal care items have come in also and they will be taken to the Women’s Shelter.

A group of 9 people served at St. Ben’s on Oct 16th. 374 adults and 24 children were served that night. The next St. Ben’s night is Jan 13th.

Deb Donovan will be collecting shoes, boots, toothpaste, toothbrushes, children’s multivitamins, and gift cards for Pizza Hut or Subway for Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. A bin is provided in the narthex and the items will be delivered in early December.

The date of Jan 24 is set for AIM Ruth to take her confirmation kids to APC for their “Kids Working to Succeed” program. 24-35 bag lunches will need to be made for that morning.

For the upcoming months, we will continue to collect nonperishable food items, hats, coats, mittens, and new will be small bingo type prizes for Lasata. Also Deb’s collection for Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Through month end of September, we are ahead of last years giving by \$1,188.

We had a meeting to start the budget process for next year but needed to meet regarding the health insurance instead. We need to schedule another meeting to get this process completed.

Notes from Ed:

1. The Health Insurance Rebate of \$6,265 appears as income on the 'Pension and Health Insurance line' this month.
2. The Building fund net balance increased to \$129,294 on \$21925.20 income and no new expenses.
3. There were no significant/unusual Grounds and Maintenance expenses this month.

WORSHIP:

Members present: Pastor Paul, Pastor Heidi, Deb Donovan, Scott Donovan, Eryn Durlam, Jan Jacques, Beth Walch

Pastor Paul's report: Annual performance reviews are being scheduled for music staff. Groups are encouraged to recruit new members. The possibility of a Youth Praise Team was raised to include middle and high school kids. John Conto is creating a new PowerPoint presentation for the Service of Remembrance on November 2. Eryn will be working with Sunday School and children's bells

Pastor Heidi's report: Heidi will do an interactive children's message on Christmas Eve. A new song will be introduced for Advent, called "He Came Down". December 28 worship will be one service at 9:00AM, and may be a Christmas Hymn theme. This year it will be a Celebration service.

Weekly Services:

Sun Nov 2: Sunday Morning Pastor Heidi is preaching. Handbells at 8:00.

"This Hope in Him" Pastor Paul preaching at the Evening Service of Remembrance, with new PowerPoint by John Conto. Handbell choir playing

Thurs 11/6 & Sun 11/0: "Be Careful and Prepared for What You Wish For" Pastor Paul preaching. Text from Amos 5. Jubilation Choir

Thurs, 11/13 and Sun 11/16: "The One Body" Pastor Paul is preaching. Time and Talents sheets. Bell Choir during offering and communion.

Thurs 11/20 and sun, 11/23: Christ the King Sunday. Sermon title: "Are You Willing to Bow?" by Pastor Paul. Do we put our actual lives where we say our faith is? Jubilation Choir.

Thanksgiving Eve: 11/26: Pastor Heidi preaching. Handbells. Men of Grace singing.

Sunday, 11/30: "Advent Lessons and Carols: Pastor Heidi preaching. Advent Wreath goes up.

Christmas planning: Deb, Joyce, Eryn, Heidi to meet to go over music for the Christmas services. Beth would like to preach on 12/11/14. Christmas Eve services at 3:00 (kids), 4:30 (Celebration) and 6:30.

Next meeting scheduled for November 4, 2014.

VPT: Met with Stephanie Luedtke from the synod office.

OLD BUSINESS:

Held an additional meeting to discuss the Portico health care choices. Opened with a prayer – Mara, discussion on health care plan for rostered staff, John Walch made a motion to offer the Gold+ plan for rostered staff, Roger Goecks seconded the motion, motion passes unanimously

NEW BUSINESS:

Vince was paid for additional services in the summer

Motion: to charge yoga \$25.00 per session to help cover custodial fees. Katie made motion, Scott seconded, 5 approved, 2 abstained

Motion: To allow Starting Point of Ozaukee to meet on Saturday, March 21 for a helping to increase girls' self-esteem meeting. Motion passed

CLOSING PRAYER: Pastor Heidi