



## Council Minutes September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020

### IN ATTENDANCE:

*Pastor Paul Bulgerin	*Jodi Doro (Secretary)	*Wendy Freeland (Fellowship)
*Pastor Heidi Borkenhagen	Lynda Lalley (Treasurer)	*Sarah Brogni (Property)
*Mark Barber (President)	Rachel Langer (Outreach)	*Lisa Bernd (Director of Involvement)
*James Newell (President Elect)	*Melissa Schmidt (Christian Care)	*Jen Jacobson (Christian Education)
*Mike Moran (Past President)	*Kelly Olson (Worship)	

(\*) present at meeting

The meeting began at 7:09 P.M. with President Mark Barber presiding.

Opening Prayer Mark Barber

✓ Approval of the August 2020 minutes with adjustments from Pastor Paul – Paul motioned to approve meeting minutes, second by Mike M; all approved.

### Pastors and DI Reports

#### **PASTOR PAUL'S REPORT:**

**Worship:** We are continuing with outside worship through at least Sunday, October 18, or as long as the weather allows. We continue to have about one hundred people attend on Sundays. The Worship Planning Team, John Bernd and Dustin Lobner have all discussed our options for worship once the weather turns colder. We have purchased some equipment which will enable us to livestream worship services led by the worship leaders inside.

**Inside Prayer Service:** We held our first inside worship service on Thursday, September 17. We had fifteen people attend. Attention was paid to all the health and safety procedures we could put into place. We've used this first service as a trial to see what would be needed if we were to start limited worship services again. The Worship Planning Team will continue to discuss options for worshipping inside.

**Affirmation of Baptism Service:** After consulting with the families of our students who were to have been confirmed in May, we are going to hold an inside Affirmation of Baptism service, for the families only, at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, October 25. All the families agreed to do this. We will limit the number of people each family can have in attendance, so we stay at the 25% occupancy limits in place right now.

**Confirmation:** In-person classes began for the seventh and eighth graders on Wednesday, September 16. All eight of the seventh graders attended. Two of the eighth-grade students are attending online via ZOOM while the rest are coming to class. We are holding our sessions in the fellowship hall in order to have the students seated in a safe manner. Everyone is wearing masks.

**Stewardship:** The theme for next month's stewardship program is "Giving for a Bright Future". The first letter, which lays out the theme, shares how leadership will keep budget increases to a minimum and also discusses some of the changes coming up with the pastoral transitions in 2021, will be sent on Thursday, October 1. The two Sundays of stewardship emphasis will be October 11 and 18. Packets will be mailed out on Monday, October 19.

**Personnel Committee:** The committee has met twice. The members are Steve Buchman (chair), Alissa Burgos, Lindsey Nielsen, Dave Polka, Sandy Luetgen, Mike Moran and me (in an ex officio capacity). The members of the committee will decide upon terms at their next meeting on September 23.



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So far the committee has been working to get organized, review all current job descriptions and they are now meeting with all staff members to discuss and update their job descriptions.

**“God’s Work Our Hands”** – Four projects were done on Sunday, September 13. Due to the coronavirus, this year’s GWOH day was much smaller than previous years. Volunteers did yard work at church, helped sort items at Family Sharing, wrote uplifting chalk messages to the staff and patients at the Aurora Medical Center and cleaned up two stretches of the Milwaukee River in Grafton.

*Discussion: Nominating committee will begin to fill spots of Lynda, Mike M, and Wendy.*

### **PASTOR HEIDI'S REPORT:**

**Worship:** After meeting with our tech crew, John Bernd and Dustin Lobner, we decided to do online worship again beginning October 25, but in a different format. This will be recorded in the worship center at Grace and livestreamed on YouTube, as well as recorded so people can watch at other times. We have purchased new equipment for this, and also applied for a grant from the synod to help cover much of those costs.

Some of the music groups (choir and bells) are looking into doing recordings to include in upcoming services. John and Dustin are working on how to incorporate those.

**Advent/Christmas:** I have begun looking at plans for how we will celebrate these important times in the life of the church during the pandemic.

I am going to put together another Advent Devotional written by Grace members. I think this will be a nice way to connect with our Grace family. The theme will be hope.

I met with Katie, Erica and Jen Jacobson to share some thoughts for an Advent kit. We will offer these for both families and “grown-ups”. They will include items like a small advent wreath and candles, honey and gummy bugs (for John the Baptist), the Grace Devotional, a craft and other items. I’m also looking at making a CD/mp3 download with music from our groups and Bible readings from the Advent/Christmas season.

I have been in touch with Jean Fugate about possibly using the barn that she and Tom have on their property for Christmas Eve services. I’ve always wanted to do a Christmas service there, and this year seems like a good time to do it. There’s a possibility of bringing heaters in to make it warmer. They do have a grassy area people could park, but obviously if there’s snow we would have to think of something else. We could also do some brief indoor or outdoor services at church, but making sure we do it safely. This is all in the very beginning stages, but something we’re looking in to and discussing as a worship team. I’d love to get council’s feedback on this also.

**Calls to Members:** I have updated a list of members to check in with by phone. This isn’t the full congregational list, but a group that includes elderly people, health care workers, and others that we know may need a check in because of other reasons.

**Lydia Circle:** We are beginning in person meetings this week. Most of the group was comfortable with meeting at church with masks on.

### **DIRECTOR OF INVOLVEMENT: (Lisa Bernd)**

**Custodian:** Since my last council report, I contacted custodians to be interviewed & prepared for the custodian interviews. Erica, Pastor Paul & I conducted the interview & found a great candidate to become our new custodian. Jon Freeland started as our custodian on September 8. He has been tackling some projects that needed to be done around the building before he starts the cleaning part of his job.



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Jon & I met with our representative from Northwoods to get information on cleaning products to keep our building clean & safe.

**Vanco Zoom Meeting:** I recently had a zoom meeting with a representative from Vanco (a financial organization). They work with the ELCA to provide on line banking services. We have used them before we switched to Cornerstone Community Bank.

I will give everyone the information I learned during the meeting so we can decide if this is something we would like to pursue.

**Counting:** I am counting the offerings every Monday & taking it to the bank. I also continue to process e-giving & PayPal donations.

**Worship:** I made a signup genius for people to sign up to be a worship leader for the month of November.

I started doing the bulletin insert this week for the outdoor worship.

**Building:** I dumped water down all of the drains.

I met someone from the Fire Detection Group to have them change our cell dialer again. It was not working properly.

There was a leak in the boiler room but it was just condensation

I met with Lori Davis about using the space to hold a small bridal shower.

I met with a representative from AA. They will be using our space each week to hold their meetings.

I have been contacted by church groups to use our building again. Most will not be using it at this time. Their groups are on pause right now.

**Sunday School:** I promoted all of the students in servant keeper (church management system).

**Prayer Chain:** I updated the prayer chain list & distributed it to the people on the prayer chain.

**Service of Remembrance:** I mailed out the letters for the Service of Remembrance.

**Annual Maintenance:** Greisch Plumbing did our annual back flow test. We did pass & no repairs were needed.

*Discussion: Vanco – worked with prior on E-giving prior to Cornerstone; ACH giving what we have currently, transaction & 151 transaction per month – if you split it out then they go to each transaction (each section) – but they do offer online access onto website for dues – VBS, boundary waters fees, any other donations, etc. Texting option is \$5 a month. Will have the rep try to come to next meeting to explain more.*

### **Attendance Report**

Attendance was discussed.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **CHRISTIAN CARE: (Melissa Schmidt)**

No report provided

#### **FELLOWSHIP: (Wendy Freeland)**

No report provided

#### **FINANCE: (Lynda Lalley)**

Total income for the month shows as \$52,883.20 --(should average \$51,529.75 monthly) – \$1,353.45 more than average but still puts us behind **\$20,152.02** for the year breakdown of this number is listed below:

- Sunday Offering \$51,481.51 --(**\$420.12** more than monthly plan, **\$20,152.02** behind YTD plan)



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- o E-Giving \$18,263.75 --(Up by **\$706.00** from last year)
- o PayPal Donations \$866.57 --(Up by **\$53.71** from last month)
- Special Services \$36.87
- Scrip \$203.60 --(\$1,522.62 YTD Total Rebate, **\$477.38** behind YTD plan)
- **NO August** Building Rentals \$0.00 --(**\$391.67** ahead YTD plan)
- Money Market Interest \$11.22
- Contingency **\$349.69** --(explained below)

Expenses were under by **\$4,033.29** for the month at \$52,100.67 (we should average \$56,133.96).

Income was short therefore we needed to move \$349.94 from contingency fund to cover expenses for the month of August. New contingency balance for August is \$136,358.21 from \$135,575.43 in July.

Cornerstone Bank has submitted our Forgiveness Application to SBA portal, and they have up to 90 days to review. I will keep everyone informed.

Looks like we are holding our own for August, which is encouraging

### **OUTREACH: (Rachel Langer)**

No report provided

### **PROPERTY: (Sarah Brogni)**

God's work our hands did a great job pulling weeds and putting mulch around all the trees. I was contacted by Jim Scott and the RNT group have all decided they want to "refurbish" the Nativity Scene. Each couple is going to fix up a figurine and repair it. Jim said he would fix up the stable set. They all want to put the Nativity scene up for the season and will take it down. I had a brief discussion with Pastor Paul and if they are that willing, I don't see an issue. The previous year's Nativity scene we can potentially be placed on one of the corners of the property.

This weekend I will be cleaning out the weeds by the dumpster and spreading the last of the mulch where I can. If there is any left overs we can encourage any church members to take what they need.

Thinking ahead to the winter we will have to see how many people will be volunteering to help with snow removal this year. I'm hoping we still have a good group of willing helpers!

### **WORSHIP: (Kelly Olson)**

#### **Worship Planning Team Meeting Notes – September 9, 2020**

**Present:** Pastor Paul, Pastor Heidi, Tori Saunders, Jane Braband, Zack and Eryn Durlam, Debbie Donovan, Vince Olson, Kelly Olson and Tech Committee guests Dustin Lobner and John Bernd

#### **Fall Worship Plan**

- We plan to continue holding services outdoors through October 18<sup>th</sup>, as long as the weather allows.
- Beginning October 25<sup>th</sup>, we will go back to video recording of services. No plans at this point to begin indoor, in person Sunday services.
- John Bernd and Dustin Lobner joined our meeting to discuss the options on how to do our online services once we can no longer meet outside as the weather turns colder. John and Dustin felt that the best option is to record the services led by the worship and



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music leaders on Sunday mornings, so that they can also be livestreamed on our YouTube channel at the same time. The recording would also be posted to YouTube so that it is available for people to watch when they can. Some new equipment is needed for this. A synod grant will help cover the bulk of the cost.

- The music leaders will work with their groups, soloists or small ensembles to do special music recordings to be incorporated into the services.
- We would also like to continue to have members/families involved in the services as we did initially last spring for the Holy Experiment worship recordings. Volunteers will be needed for the readings, to lead prayers, and possibly participate in children's sermons for the recordings.
- We are looking into offering limited attended in person worship, especially for those without internet access.

### **Indoor Prayer Service**

- The team finalized plans for an indoor prayer service to be held on Thursday, September 17<sup>th</sup>. The service will be kept brief. Attendance is limited and advanced sign up is required. Prayer requests are encouraged and welcome. Masks and social distancing are required. This is a trial. If it goes well, we will consider holding more as it will also help us prepare for when we are able to begin in person inside worship.

### **Affirmation of Baptism Service**

- The service for the 2020 Confirmation class that was not held in May due to Covid has been rescheduled for the afternoon on Reformation Day, Sunday, October 25 in the worship center. The service will be limited to the families of the confirmands. This class is only 7 students so safe social distancing and the 25% occupancy limits can be observed. All families involved were contacted to assess their interest and comfort level for this service.

### **Campfire/Camp Song event**

- Zack suggested an idea of holding a campfire/camp song event on a Sunday late afternoon/evening in November. We are looking into logistics for this.

### **Service of Remembrance**

- Pastor Paul announced the annual service of remembrance is planned for November 1<sup>st</sup> at 7 pm. The service will be held in the worship center. The typical attendance for this service will fall within the 25% occupancy level.

### **Ideas for Advent & Christmas Worship**

- Pastor Heidi shared a list of ideas she had to keep the Advent/Christmas season meaningful even though we won't be able to worship and celebrate in our traditional ways. Ideas included putting together a devotional written by Grace members like the one she did a few years ago; Family and Home Advent kits; a CD or mp3 download of seasonal music and Bible readings; outdoor candlelight service/Christmas Eve worship, possibly in Tom and Jean Fugate's barn. Other ideas include a special online Christmas service, possibly with other churches and social media engagement/devotionals for Advent. Debbie suggested brainstorming ways to do music without singing—kids handbells, instruments, snapping, stomping, etc. Zack said singing is not out of the



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question if we wear masks, social distance and occupy the space for no longer than 30 minutes. The team will continue to discuss all these ideas.

**Next meeting:** Tuesday, October 6th @ 6:30 pm

*Discussion: Back to online Oct 25<sup>th</sup>, such great weather during the summer months. Recording Sunday services with music and leaders and live stream. Can still do picture and picture (able for slide show and the live viewing). But there is a small population that do not have internet so looking for options for those individuals.*

*Sign up sheet formed for helping out with services to possibly come and participate.*

*Deb is working with handbells to work on recording pieces for the fall. Also potentially work on Sunday evening Campfire event.*

### **YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY COMMITTEE: (Jen Jacobson)**

The Youth and Family Ministry team didn't meet this month so I don't have a report.

I do know that both Sunday School age and older youth have kits already available this fall, and Erica, Katie and myself meet with Pastor Heidi about Advent Kits. The YFMT team will meet in October.

Katie:

- We are going to promote faith at home through two different opportunities:
  - Family Faith Kits
    - These are the kits that we are putting together each month to help families bring faith into their homes while we are not able to have in-person Sunday School. If you haven't checked out our Family Faith page, you can check it out online here:  
<http://www.gracegrifton.com/family-faith.html>
    - So far I have created 2 kits (David & Goliath and Love Is). 34 families picked up a David & Goliath kit and 19 families have picked up a Love Is kit (the second kit was only "released" last Sunday and I only have 5 left). The kits include a physical bag of supplies along with an online lesson that includes a song, Bible reading, activity video and closing prayer.
    - Some of the kits have gone to grandparents or others and not just Grace families. But during this time, we are happy when anyone is sharing the Word with those around them! We are also reminding folks that there is no pressure or timeline as to when they need to be done. It's a low stress approach to work faith into family's lives.
    - I have learned how to create the web pages on my own, so I've been recording the lessons, editing them and putting the web page together for each kit. This allows John to just post the link and not worry about anything else for the page creation.
    - I will continue to create kits (goal of 2 a month) as long as families are using them! I will also try and get more Thrivent grants to cover these costs.
  - Family Faith Activities
    - These are the activities we are holding for families that would like to safely meet at church or other outdoor locations.
      - Glaze glass cross making activity (Sept 20)



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- We ordered 30 cross kits. 21 were created on Sunday morning after church and the other 9 went home as “take home kits.”
  - Families seemed to enjoy this activity, and the crosses they created will be beautiful!
- Other upcoming events we have planned:
  - Nature walk through Lion’s Den Park (Thanks to Kate Peterman for leading)
  - Family Scavenger Hunt (Pastor Heidi and Erica are leading and anyone in the congregation is encouraged to participate)
  - Outdoor Trunk or Treat (Erica and I are working on this)
- Family Faith Start-Up Kit: We created a packet for every family at Grace with kids in 3K-12<sup>th</sup> grade. Some families picked up their packet at church as part of our back to school blessing during the service, about 10 families stopped by at our drive through back to school blessing and the rest were mailed.
  - One of the items in the packet was a postcard that kids/families could fill out to tell us what they are up to and how we can pray for them.
  - As they come in, we include the prayers in our staff meeting prayer and write a card to the student. Pastor Heidi also takes the prayer requests to include them in our churchwide prayers.
  - If you have kids, please encourage your children/family to return the prayer postcard to us!
- Grace Youth Cross: A huge thank you to Dan Hagerman for building the beautiful cross that we are including as part of each service. Each tie on the cross has the initials of one of our Grace youth in 3K-12<sup>th</sup> grade. Jen Jacobson also volunteered to help Erica and I tie all the “kids” on.
- Children’s Messages
  - I have continued to do weekly children’s messages throughout the summer. We have talked about some creative ways to continue these when we move back to the online format, but possibly include children each week.

### **Other Business**

*Personnel committee – updated job description, met with pastors, Lisa, music leaders, still need to do office staff.*

*Budget planning starts this month – executive committee meets for this to start and then presents to the council.*

**Closing Prayer:** Pastor Heidi

Next meeting Oct 22<sup>nd</sup> at 7PM