

Minutes
Congregation Council

St. John's Lutheran Church, Northfield, MN

September 25, 2018

Present: Ruthie Neuger, Pr. Pam Fickenscher, Pr. Jonathan Davis, Terry Dell, Jennifer Edwins, Martha Erickson, Mark Gleason, Eric Holleque, Nancy Ordahl Knoch, Alyssa Ness, Jane Rinehart, Dan Van Tassel, Kristy Harms

Not present: Rob Quanbeck

Guest: Bernie Renander

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Ruthie Neuger.

1. Opening Prayer - Offered by Dan Van Tassel.

2. Future dates

- a. Boards – October 9, 2018 7:00pm. Treats provided by Youth Ministry and Education Board at 6:45 pm.

Reminder: Please call or e-mail your board members prior to the meeting and remind them of the meeting.

- b. Council – **October 23, 2018**, 7:00pm; Jenny Nystrom, prayer

3. 2019 Budget Items

- a. 2019 Staff Health Care Costs – Ruthie Nueger. Health care premium for 2019 with current coverage carrier will increase by 3.5%. This increase impacts the Operating budget. The Personnel Committee has made the recommendation to continue with current health coverage carrier for 2019.

Motion: The Board moves to continue the current health benefit plan with the current coverage carrier resulting in a 3.5% increase in health premiums for 2019. Jenny Nystrom made this motion; Jennifer Edwins seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

- b. 2019 Board Budget preparation – Bernie Renander. Bernie distributed 2019 budget materials to the Council. There are a few unknowns for the 2019 budget: 1) Street assessment; 2) Funding for ASL interpreter on Sunday mornings; 3) Impact of recent storms on property insurance premiums.
 - i. Submission date for budget: **November 15, 2019.**
 - ii. Staff has been assigned to specific boards to offer assistance in budget development.

4. Pastors' Reports

Official Acts

Funeral for Dick Dahlin, September 17

Storm Update

Tornados and winds on Thursday September 20 affected many of our members with loss of trees, power outages and some structural damages. Thankfully no one was injured and St.

John's own property was not damaged. The church experienced a partial power outage on site and the church was closed on Friday September 21.

Staffing

Tim Byers, our facilities manager, had surgery on September 25. Staff is sharing the load of opening and closing the building, and additional help will be arranged to clean the building during the week in Tim's absence, as he recovers.

The kitchen Coordinator position has been posted internally for a few weeks. The search is being extended further through advertising.

Foundation Funds

Due to confusion around expected foundation disbursements and tracking fund status, we are adopting a new procedure for tracking Foundation funds. This should allow us to have a more accurate, up-to-date sense of fund commitments and the balance of funds available throughout the year.

Grace Overflowing

Capital Projects

- Interior signage was replaced in the first week of September
- Tuck pointing should begin next week (October 1)
- HVAC system & controls: we are still trouble-shooting glitches with the new system. The company is working to identify the problems for correction.

Bequest

St. John's received a bequest from the estate of Margaret O'Leary. After conversation with the family, the funds will be added to the Alice Hanson Fund, which funds our music interns.

Note: August 2018 Minutes documented that this bequest would be disbursed as an undesignated bequest. The family has identified their desire to designate the bequest for the Alice Hanson Fund.

Personnel Committee

Personnel Committee has recommended that we continue the current health benefit plan with Portico for those who receive benefits. The increase in costs is the lowest in years, and employees seem satisfied with the plan.

Fall Programming

Fall launch is underway!

We have welcomed Emerson Clay to the staff as a youth point person. He will be working Sundays and Wednesdays with middle and high school youth. Angie Gehring continues as youth administrative support.

5. Council Action Items and Updates

- a. Laura Baker Good Neighbor Award and representation at award ceremony. St. John's has been nominated for the Good Neighbor Award; the award will be presented at an event on November 7, 2018 in Rochester. Benevolence board has been asked to represent St. John's at the ceremony. Jane Rinehart & Ruthie Neuger will attend. Jane will extend invitations to other people. Pr. Pam will send the RSVP for the event at the end of October.
- b. Properties & Grounds

- i. Mud jacking project: Southwest entrance (Door #1) curb. Pavement is sinking outside this entrance. The uneven surface presents a hazard for members with walkers or mobility challenges. The risk is for people leaving the building, resulting in potential falls on the walkway outside the entrance. Terry Dell advised that this project is estimated at about \$300. Martha Erickson noted that Bernie is of the opinion that funds are available for this project; Martha will verify that funds are available.

Motion: The Council authorizes funding to complete the mud jacking project outside Door #1. Terry Dell made the motion; Jane Rinehart seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

- ii. AC update – See Pastoral Report section. Staff continues to work with company to resolve issues with the new system.
- c. Personnel updates. See Pastoral Report section.
- d. Stewardship updates: Dan Van Tassel. The board is considering printed materials for the Stewardship drive; materials may be a different format than a brochure. Focus of the drive for 2019 will be Maintaining Momentum of current ministries to strengthen the current direction. The Stewardship board is asking for Council guidance on the goal for the drive. Council is asked to think about ideas to share with the board.
- e. Anniversary celebration events: update
- f. Proposal by Business Manager to address 2018 financial commitments and St. John's Foundation fund: Bernie Renander. St. John's Foundation funds for calendar year 2018 are depleted.

6. Consent Agenda Items for Council

- a. Proposal for re-assignment of liaison for St. John's Foundation Fund management: Martha Erickson. The function of fund management will be transferred from the Recording Secretary to the Treasurer. Martha prepared a spreadsheet to track Foundation funds, and authorized fund dispersals for review.
- b. 2019 Budget recommendation – Personnel Committee. See 3.b., above.
- c. Treasurer's Report, August 2018. No remarkable issues with the report.
- d. Minutes from the August 28, 2018 meeting. Jane Rinehart asked Mark Gleason whether Evangelism & Communication board had identified a need for additional hearing devices, and made the recommendation that the board work with Women of St. John's/WELCA, if additional units are needed.

Motion:

- Accept recommendation to re-assign the liaison for St. John's Foundation from the Recording Secretary to the Treasurer.
- Accept the Treasurer's report for August 2018 as submitted to the Council.
- Accept the August 2018 Council Minutes as submitted to the Council.

Motion made by Kristy Harms. Motion seconded by Nancy Ordahl Knoch. Motion passed unanimously.

7. A closing prayer was offered by Ruthie Neuger, and she led us in the Lord's Prayer.

8. Meeting concluded.

Council member made a motion that we adjourn, Council member seconded it. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Harms