

# Minutes

## *Congregation Council*

St. John's Lutheran Church, Northfield, MN

January 12, 2016

**Present:** Michael Berger, Bill Carlson, Pr. Jon Davis, Pr. Pam Fickenscher, Joe Gasior, Norma Gilbertson, Andrea Hoff, Lynette Marks, Jeff McLaughlin, Alyssa Ness, Patsy Ophaug, Jane Rinehart, Troy Sorensen, Dan VanTassel

**Absent:** Keith Homstad, Brent Nystrom, Sara Redetzke

**Guest:** Char Carlson

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Patsy Ophaug.

### **1. Opening Prayer**

Andrea Hoff led us in an opening prayer.

### **2. Future dates**

- a. Annual Meeting Preview – **Sunday, January 17**, following first service
- b. Staff/Council Party – **Friday, January 22**, 6:00pm
- c. Annual Meeting – **Sunday, January 24**, following second service
- d. Boards – **Tuesday, January 26**, 7:00pm; Treats – *Evangelism & Communications* [Note: current 2015-2016 boards]
- e. Boards – **Tuesday, February 9**, 7:00pm; Treat -- TBD
- f. Staff / Council retreat – **February 13**
- g. Council – **Tuesday, February 23**, 7:00pm; prayer – TBD

### **3. Pastors' Reports**

Our pastors provided written reports.

They are reviewing the recent Christmas services and considering some timing changes to ensure smooth transitions between services. They also thanked the volunteers who assisted with the St. Olaf Choir Sunday.

Lent is soon upon us – and they are also preparing for that time period.

Pr. Davis noted that nearly 70 people attended a session about refugee resettlement; another 20 people attended a session with LSS. We appear to be one of only four congregations in Minnesota looking to serve in this particular role.

### **4. Congregational Mission Visioning and Discussion**

Bill Carlson reviewed year-end 2015 budget items. Our overall budget is largely – 90% -- devoted towards human resources, debt payments, property and grounds, and benevolence. We drew on

our reserve funds for some significant capital expenses, and due to cash flow issues, we also prepaid some 2016 expenses in 2015. Our congregation commits nearly 17% of its total budget to benevolence, 11% from our standard operating budget, and an additional 6% from special, designated benevolence fundraising.

We are projecting an increase in revenues for 2016, with a slightly larger rise in expenses (primarily due to being fully staffed).

#### **5. Consent Agenda Items for Council**

- a. Treasurer's Report; December, 2015
- b. Minutes from the December 15, 2015 (not printed for review, to be reviewed in February)

Council approved consent item.

#### **6. Action Items and Updates for Council**

- a. Char Carlson met with Council as a representative of the *Columbarium Committee*. She provided a summary of our current columbarium spaces (in the courtyard). The committee is seeking to add additional bays, and enhance existing ones to better protect them from rain. The total cost to add new units and enhance the old is \$45,530. While the current Columbarium Fund has only \$32,247, they are seeking to make the additions now, given long lead times for construction, and unpredictability about utilization. They sought to borrow the excess from existing church reserve funds, to be paid back as additional units are sold. The total cost will not exceed \$50,000. Andrea Hoff made a motion that we move forward according to the details outlined above, Jane Rinehart seconded it. Motion carried.
- b. Troy Sorensen made a motion that we recommend the proposed 2016 budget for congregational approval, Joe Gasior seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- c. Andrea Hoff reported that the Nominating Committee has continued their work, most leadership roles have been filled, but they continue to seek volunteers for other boards.
- d. The St. John's Foundation made its official 2016 allocation, \$25,000, allocated the same percentages as in 2015.

#### **7. Other Business**

- a. None

#### **8. A closing prayer was offered by Patsy Ophaug, and she led us in the Lord's Prayer.**

#### **9. Meeting concluded.**

Troy Sorensen made a motion that we adjourn, Jeff McLaughlin seconded it. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff McLaughlin