

# Minutes

## *Congregation Council*

St. John's Lutheran Church, Northfield, MN  
June 28, 2016

**Present:** Ruth Neuger, Michael Berger, Anita Helle, Bill Carlson, Pam Fickenschner, Dan Van Tassel, Sara Redetzke, Lynette Marks, Andrea Hoff, Jane Rinehart, Bill Malecha, Alyssa Ness, Joe Gasior, Kristy Harms

**Absent:** Brent Nystrom, Jonathan Davis

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Ruth Neuger.

### **1. Opening Prayer**

Sara Redetzke

### **2. Future dates**

- a. Boards – **Tuesday, July 12th**, Fellowship and Treats at 6:45 p.m., Business Management Board provides treats and Devotion. Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Ruthie recommended that the Boards confirm if they plan to meet in July.

- b. Council – **Tuesday, July 26th** 7:00pm; prayer – Bill Carlson.

### **3. Consent Agenda Items for Counsel**

- a. Treasurer's Report for May 2016

Total cash is down from this date, last year. There has been a downturn in income for 2016, year to date. Expenses are being managed well and are not excessive.

Financial condition of the congregation Year to Date (YTD) includes a rough estimate for June. June offerings are expected to be slightly below previous years, based on projections.

- i. Fitted Line Plot for members giving less than \$5,000/year prepared and presented. Giving trends that fall below the plot line represent the current deficit (4%).
- ii. Downturn in giving is related to individual hardship situations and previously identified sporadic giving patterns.

- b. Minutes from the May 24, 2016 meeting.

Minor revisions recommended for the information addressing giving to the Kline's for their mission visit to St. John's. Kristy will revise the Minutes based on recommendations.

Andrea made the motion to approve the Minutes from May 24, 2016. Joe seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

### **4. Pastors' Reports**

Nathan just returned from a retreat in North Carolina; the retreat event has been planned for two years.

Pr. Jonathan is on vacation.

Pr. Pam will leave for vacation after Jonathan returns from his vacation.

Mike returned from vacation and left for camp with St. John's youth. He will leave for Christikon shortly after returning from camp.

Vacation Bible School (VBS) was successful. St. John's hosted the 2-7 year olds for the week of

June 13. Emmaus hosted VBS for the older children during that week.

St. John's has hosted three funerals during the month of June 2016.

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

- a. Financial Health of Congregation. Discussed during Treasurer's Report. Growth is the desired outcome for the health of the congregation.
  - i. Foundation
  - ii. Next steps for the Committee and the CouncilDiscussions involving pastoral guidance will continue.
- b. Stewardship. Synod has contracted with an organization to provide structured programming for stewardship campaigns.

Dan discussed the Synod program, Stewardship for all Seasons (SAS). The Stewardship Board is excited about the prospect of using the tools available through the program. This is the second year that the Synod has offered this program. Congregations involved in year 1 were very positive about the outcome of the program for Stewardship. Inquiries about similar programs identified costs of \$25,000 - \$40,000. Michael asked if the program should be considered for CY2017, instead of this year. Pr. Pam explained that the Synod is sponsoring the program in CY2016, but may not offer the opportunity for a third year in 2017. Engaging in the program for CY2016 would capitalize on fundraising activities. With a focus on plans for the St. John's 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary capital drive, and cultivation of intentional giving in younger congregants, the time is right to participate in this opportunity.

- i. Program cost: Basic fee = \$1,000, or 10% of the gain above previous years' pledge level, whichever is greater. Additional cost of \$600 for materials for the Board to engage in the program.

The program costs are not currently in the budget. Ruthie asked whether the Council should vote to authorize funding for this program. Pam noted that the funds must be available by August for participation in the program.

Proposed Motion: Authorization of the funds for the \$1,000 basic fee and the materials fee of \$600 for the St John's Stewardship Board to engage in this Synod sponsored program.

Motion proposed by Dan Van Tassel.

Motion seconded by Jane Rinehart.

Motion carried with two dissenting votes.

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

- a. Confirmation of Martha Erickson to Business Management Board.

Bill made the motion to confirm Martha Erickson as a new member to the Business Management Board. Andrea Hoff seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.
- b. 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Planning
  - i. Historian(s)
  - ii. Fund Drive(s) and project vetting process
  - iii. Worship

Pr. Pam asked the Boards to include 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Planning in the July Board meetings. The Council will look for updates at the July Council meeting.
- c. Property and Grounds. Identification of projects for Council approval.

It was noted that \$30,000 was available at the end of CY2015 for Property and Grounds projects. The current deficit has impacted the designated funds for Property and Grounds.

Bill noted that there is a \$60,000 reserve that can be used to cover the fluctuation caused by the deficit.

A motion to release funds for the purpose of supporting the projects for CY2016 was proposed.

Motion: Authorize release of additional \$30,000 reserve funds to complete the identified projects and address the current deficit in the budget.

Kristy made the motion. Jane seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

- d. Evangelism. Update on signage needed to support new logo. Additional funding for design of logo for The Voice and outdoor layout and signage.

The original approved funding for the logo design was limited to development of the new logo. Additional funds are needed to cover the cost of development of logo formats for the Voice template and outdoor signage design and layout. (\$500)

There is money available in the Media fund for CY2016 that is used by Library and Broadcasting.

Jane made the motion to authorize release of \$500 from the Media fund to cover the additional costs associated with development of the logo for The Voice, and the outdoor signage design and layout. Bill seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

- e. RIC Updates. Work to compile feedback received in May continues.
- f. Refugee Resettlement. LSS has advised that a family has not been identified, yet.
- g. Foundation fund status. The Foundation budget for CY2016 began with \$25,000. A Foundation financial update will be added to the monthly Agenda/Minutes documents to provide a visible tracking tool for these funds.

## **7. Other business**

- a. Continuing dialogue between Council and Staff. Brent continues to engage in Staff meetings.
- b. Michael Berger announced his resignation from the Worship and Arts Board.
- c. Dimmer switch for the sanctuary. Bill asked about the status of this request. An estimate has been provided: the installation has been estimated at \$2,600.
  - i. Light for the stained glass window in the choir loft was identified. A timer is needed for the existing light.
- d. Handicapped access to choir loft. Jane asked about adding an elevator to access the choir loft. Michael noted that the issue is larger than getting up to the loft; the choir loft is made of many levels and would have to be renovated to be truly handicap accessible.
- e. WELCA update:
  - i. WELCA theme this year is Reformation, Past and Present.
  - ii. The Art Crawl sponsored this year was very successful. The content will be available on DVD for broader viewing.
  - iii. Programming for will be rotated between afternoon events and evening events to be more inclusive.
- f. Jane noted that the SE Synod website features refugee stories. The painting in the main entry from St. John's is featured on the website.

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

**9. Meeting concluded.** Conclusion at 9:13 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Harms

