

**Minutes**  
*Congregation Council*

St. John's Lutheran Church, Northfield, MN  
July 26, 2016

**Present:** Brent Nystrom, Pr. Pam Fickenscher, Bill Carlson, Jane Rinehart, Pr. Jonathan Davis, Dan VanTassel, Ruthie Nueger, Lynette Marks, Bill Malecha, Alyssa Ness, Kristy Harms

**Guest:** Bernie Renander

**Absent:** Joe Gasiior, Andrea Hoff, Sara Redetzke

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 p.m. by Brent Nystrom.

**1. Opening Prayer**

Bill Carlson led us in an opening prayer.

**2. Future dates**

a. Boards – **Tuesday, August 9**, 7:00pm; Treats – Fellowship and treats at 6:45 pm. Stewardship Board provides treats and Devotion. Meeting at 7:00 pm

c. Council – **Tuesday, August 23, 2016**, 7:00pm; prayer – Dan Van Tassel

**3. Council Action Items and Updates**

a. Budget 101 Discussion – Guest: Bernie Renander

- i. Clarification around budgeting process.
- ii. Review of Receipts/Expenses table comparing 2015 to 2016 funds and the Year To Date (YTD) vs. annual budget numbers.
- iii. Balance Sheet Review: the designated fund portion of the balance sheet has been revised to be more explicit.
- iv. Reserve Fund is not a liquid financial fund for operating expenses.

b. Property & Grounds Project funding.

Council approved \$30,000 to fund identified projects in June 2016. A funding proposal to cover this authorized maintenance was distributed for review and discussion.

i. Leaking roof over entrance #10: \$4,550

\$3800 for roofing work

\$750 for moving & servicing the A/C units on that roof

ii. Window Project: \$6190 for Priorities 1 & 2/ \$13,500 for Priorities 1, 2, 3

The June Council authorization was limited to repair for Priorities 1 & 2. Following discussion and additional information provided by Bill Malecha, the Council made the decision to fund repair of all three sets of windows to prevent further deterioration of the windows. In addition, repair of all of the windows at the same time results in cost savings for scaffolding rental and other costs associated with

repairing the windows at different times. The Council revised the original authorization to include all three sets of windows.

- iii. Sidewalks: Repairing uneven sections which are currently a safety hazard \$4,075
- iv. A/C unit for Music Director's office and nearby space: \$5,000

Proposal:

- i. Use of Undesignated Funds (\$11,190) to cover some of the identified projects.  
Use of Undesignated Funds does not require repayment of the funds.
- ii. Borrow funds from the Reserve fund to cover the balance of the authorized deferred maintenance projects. Repayment of the borrowed funds would be funded by a short-term loan from Thrivent to restore the Reserve fund. Repayment of the short-term loan would be funded through the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Capital Drive.

Motion: For use of undesignated funds in the amount of \$11,095 to cover the cost of some of the proposed and authorized deferred maintenance. Motion made by Dan Van Tassel. Bill Carlson seconded this motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Motion: Borrow \$16,030 from Reserve fund to cover the balance of the four projects to include repayment of the loan to the Reserve fund via a short-term loan from an outside financial institution. Repayment of the loan will be part of the Capital Fund drive for the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

Ruthie Neuger made this motion. Kristy Harms seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

- i. Next Steps – Defining the Reserve and updating the Spending Policy. Formal definition of the Reserve fund is pending draft completion. The Expense Policy currently in place is being revised and re-titled: the new document will be identified as the Spending Policy and the content will be expanded. The revised policy will be presented to the Council at a future meeting.
- c. 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Planning Update – Timing. Brent asked if the Boards have included discussion about the Anniversary in their meetings. Jane advised that the Benevolence Board has asked to have a Board member designated for the Planning Committee. Jane asked what time commitment is required for this function. Pr. Pam explained that the commitment is for a couple of years, but that there are two stages to the planning process: 1) determine the scope of the projects for the Anniversary celebration; 2) manage the projects and plan the celebration.  
  
Bill asked when the celebration will occur in 2019. Pr. Pam noted that the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration occurred in March, due to the charter date.
- d. Stewardship for All Seasons (SAS) Ministry Boards Homework: Enhancement of existing ministries with additional funds produced via SAS Stewardship initiative. Pr. Pam encouraged the Boards to imagine what ministries could be expanded with additional funding from successful stewardship initiatives. Submission of plans is needed for the August session of the SAS program.

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

- a. Treasurer's Report; June 2016. Bill Carlson presented the Treasurer's Report. Cash receipts continue at under the budgeted amount for Calendar Year 2016. The current deficit is \$34,000.
- b. Minutes from June 28, 2016 meeting
- c. Approval of seminarian Fall scholarships

- i. Two students, requesting \$500 per student. Funds to be provided from the Soli Seminary Fund

Motion made to accept consent agenda items by Ruthie Neuger; Lynette Marks seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

## **5. Pastor's Report**

Official Acts – July 2: Megan Errington and Andrew Fellows

Staff – Many staff are taking advantage of vacation, attending conferences or leading church trips. Many staff attended some of St. Olaf's Conference on Worship, Theology and the Arts. Mike Skunes is leading 9 people from St. John's on a backpacking trip through Christikon this week.

Online registration is now available for Sunday School and Wednesday Programming as a result of the efforts of Mike Skunes, Julie Brehmer and Leah Garlie.

St. John's has recently created a PayPal account to make paying for St. John's events easier.

St. John's is a location on Pokemon Go. Mike Skunes set up a welcome station with drinks and snacks for gamers who arrived at our campus. The creative and thoughtful outreach was greatly appreciated by gamers arriving at St. John's.

Our refugee family arrived at the MSP airport on Wednesday July 20. Pr. Pam and Alyssa Ness helped to welcome Paul, Ariat and their 7 children. The family is living in temporary housing due to a set-back in their permanent residence.

Pr. Pam and Pr. Jonathan, along with other members of the congregation attended the Black Lives Matter occupation in front of the Governor's Mansion in St. Paul on Monday July 25. This was an opportunity to listen to the voices of the black community in the wake of all of the local and national occurrences this summer.

**6. A closing prayer was offered by Brent Nystrom and he led us in the Lord's Prayer.**

## **7. Meeting concluded.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Harms