

# Minutes

## *Congregation Council*

St. John's Lutheran Church, Northfield, MN  
January 09, 2018

Present: Ruthie Neuger, Rob Quanbeck, Pr. Pam Fickenscher, Jennifer Edwins, Nancy Ordahl Knoch, Andrea Hoff, Dan Van Tassel, Bill Carlson, Martha Erickson, Jenny Nystrom, Jane Rinehart, Alyssa Ness, Pat Fick, Sue Brockman, Pr. Jonathan Davis

Guest: Bernie Renander

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

**1. Opening Prayer** - Offered by Rob Quanbeck.

### **2. Future dates**

- a. Boards – January 23, 2018 7:00pm (at chairs' discretion) *Treats provided by Benevolence & Social Concerns at 6:45.*
- b. Annual Meeting – **Sunday, January 21, 2018**
- c. February 3, 2018 – Retreat: Please hold this date. Location to be determined.
- d. Board Meeting - February 13, 2018 7:00 pm *Soup supper provided at 6:45*
- e. Council – February 27, 2018 7:00pm; Kristy Harms, prayer

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

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

- a. Official Acts since 12/21
  - i. Baptism of Quin Traaseth, December 23
  - ii. Memorial Service for Grace Madson, January 7
- b. Grace Overflowing – the “quiet phase” of the anniversary appeal has been going splendidly well. The public phase will begin with a mailing and announcement at the Annual Meeting on January 21. Deposits have been made for payment of work on two of the First priority projects, The Good Shepherd window and the new HVAC and thermostats, with work expected to be complete this spring.
- c. Christmas – robust attendance for all five of the services scheduled between the morning of the 24<sup>th</sup> and Christmas Day was a pleasant surprise. The annual Christmas Dinner had record-breaking attendance. The spirit of that day is truly a sign of the kingdom of God, when all can come together to rejoice.
- d. Pastoral Care – The holidays often bring about crisis and post-holiday let-down is often a time of more funerals; this year has been especially so, with a high number of falls, hospitalizations, and other types of family crisis, in addition to the many deaths and funerals. Pastors Davis and Fickenscher have experienced an extraordinary season in pastoral care. They are grateful for the systems of care already in place at St. John's that reach beyond their schedules; Stephen Ministers, Called to Care, parish nursing and the many relationships in place that help people to not be alone in this time.
- e. Away from St. John's – both Pastor Fickenscher and Pastor Davis were grateful for some time away with family after Christmas. Time away is important for everyone. Making sure that staff takes time, keep appropriate boundaries from the work sustains both their work and their family lives.

- f. Thank you! What a joy it has been to work with all of you this past year. We are truly blessed with leadership that is strong, compassionate, working for consensus and yet gracious in disagreement. Thanks for your gifts of time and talent in 2017.

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

- a. 2018 Budget presentation – Bernie Renander. The operating budget assumes:
- i. 3% salary increase for staff
  - ii. Benefits increase of 7-9%
  - iii. Estimated envelope offerings of \$894,000.

The Budget Committee met on Saturday January 6, 2018 and recommended submission of the proposed budget to the Council for approval. Bill Carlson noted that the budget is relatively neutral from 2017.

- Tax law changes and historic giving patterns will impact the budget.
- A line item has been added to the budget for Wednesday night community outreach to fund this growing ministry.
- Rob noted that replacements for the copier and three computers will be needed in 2018. These items will be covered as part of the Capital campaign.

Motion was made to approve the budget submitted to the Council by Bill Carlson; motion was seconded by Jennifer Edwins. Motion passed unanimously.

- b. January 21, 2017 Annual Meeting Minutes – Courtesy review. The Minutes from 2017 were included in the materials for this meeting to permit review of the content before the annual meeting on January 21, 2018.
- c. Good Shepherd window repair – Repair will begin as soon as the weather warms. Repair is not dependent on the weather; insulation will be used to minimize exposure to the weather while the window is being repaired.
- d. Hardy Mechanical from Austin will begin work March 1, 2018 to replace the AC and all mechanical controls for the HVAC system.
- e. Foundation update – Pr. Pam noted that the St. John's Foundation has met and will be granting \$25,000.00 for calendar year 2018 for dispersal by the Council.
- i. The Foundation has offered a challenge grant in the amount of \$10,000.00 over three years for the Capital campaign. The Council discussed this generous offer. A motion to accept the \$10,000.00 grant from the Foundation as a participation incentive for the capital campaign, with details for the challenge to be finalized by the Capital Campaign Committee was made by Jennifer Edwins. Jane Rinehart seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- f. February Board meeting: Brief training for setting up and serving Lenten Soup Suppers
- g. New freezer for St. John's kitchen has arrived! – Informational update.

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

- a. Treasurer's Report – Bill Carlson. The report is incomplete at this time; completion is expected within the week. Income for 2017 was less than budgeted, but operating expense was less than projected expense by about \$13,000. Kristy Harms made the motion to accept the Treasurer's report for 2017, as submitted to the Council; Jenny Nystrom seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
- i. Andrea Hoff asked for follow up to the 2016 financial reports that reflected a deficit for the year. Bernie Renander advised that the deficit was addressed by movement of cash. The \$60,000 cash reserve fund has remained constant. A \$10,000 insurance reserve is separate from the cash reserve, and has also remained constant.

- b. December 19, 2017 Council Minutes – Kristy Harms. The group reviewed the Minutes, with no revision recommended. Dan Van Tassel moved for approval of the Minutes as submitted; Rob seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**6. Other business**

- a. Council retreat – February 3, 2018. Location to be determined. Please reserve this date.

**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 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Harms