

Minutes
Congregation Council

St. John's Lutheran Church, Northfield, MN

May 22, 2018

Present: Rob Quanbeck, Ruthie Neuger, Pr. Pam Fickenscher, Terry Dell, Erik Holleque, Jennifer Edwins, Jenny Nystrom, Pr. Jonathan Davis, Alyssa Ness, Kristy Harms

Not Present: Nancy Ordahl Knoch, Martha Erickson, Jane Rinehart, Dan Van Tassel

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Rob Quanbeck.

1. Opening Prayer - Offered by Terry Dell.

2. Future dates

- a. Boards – June 12, 2018 7:00pm (at chairs' discretion). Treats provided by Benevolence Board at 6:45 pm.
Reminder: Please call or e-mail your board members prior to the meeting and remind them.
- b. Council – **June 26, 2018** 7:00pm; Jane Rinehart, prayer

3. Pastors' Reports

- a. Official Acts: Nordis Christenson funeral, April 30
- b. Grace Overflowing.
 - i. The Spending Committee has authorized release of GO funds to spruce up the Commons. Andrea Hoff (previous Evangelism Board Chair) is working to re-start those conversations and move to completion of the work by 2019.
 - ii. The Steering committee has been recruiting co-leads for each of the 4 primary celebrations in the anniversary year. Celebrations are planned for January, April, July and October. The Steering committee has also met with Jeff Sauve who will be heading our history efforts in connection with the anniversary.
 - iii. The Benevolence Board has a proposal for an additional community grant for the Immigration Law Center of Minnesota. This will be discussed as part of the Action Items content.
 - iv. Capital projects near completion, or completed: 1) The Good Shepherd window at the rear of the church has been repaired and the sill for the window has been replaced; 2) the air handler has been replaced and new duct work & controls are being installed.
- c. Global Partners. Six St. John's members attended the Synod Assembly: Jane Rinehart, Kristin Partlo, Tarkel Price, Martin Thorsheim, Pam Fickenscher and Jonathan Davis. The Synod Assembly was held in Mankato on May 5 and 6 and focused on global mission partners, with moving leadership and speeches from guests from Colombia, Tanzania and South Sudan. The Wednesday before the assembly, St. John's hosted bishops from Tanzania and Colombia, along with their spouses. They were able to witness our Wednesday meals, after school programming and choir rehearsals and came away grateful to see our ministry here.
- d. The Program Year concluded with a wonderful musical on May 9, and end-of-year celebrations for Sunday School, after school programming and confirmation in the second and thirds weeks of May. Our choirs all had their last times of leadership for the program year and are done with rehearsing for the summer. Stewardship board led fellowship hour

to give thanks for all the gifts of time and talent. Now we turn our energies to planning the next program year.

- e. Children, Youth and Family Update: The Youth Transition team is gathering a group of key parents and leaders on June 6 to have a visioning session with Karen Gieseke, from Luther Seminary. This event is called “A Shared Story of Future Hope”. Karen will lead us in a time of telling, hearing, and envisioning the stories of faith at St. John’s. On May 20th we lifted up and celebrated Rebekah Thomas and her time of ministry here at St. John’s. We will be looking for a college student to fill her role next year. We have some strong leads on candidates.

4. Council Action Items and Updates

- a. Spending Policy review – Kristy Harms. Many Boards have designated funds available for their use. Designated funds should be spent on projects that apply to the clearly targeted special purposes, as approved by each Board. Requests for these funds do not have to be submitted to the Council for approval. Requests for Foundation funds must be submitted to the Council for discussion and approval.
- b. Evangelism & Communication update – Mark Gleason.
 - i. Oral Histories. Evangelism & Communication will be conducting oral histories with St. John’s members for inclusion in the 150th anniversary celebration. 30-40 candidates have been identified for this project. Jennifer Edwins has recommended audio interviews; Jennifer conducts oral histories for Carlton College. Pr. Jonathan asked why audio interviews were recommended vs. video interviews. Jennifer explained that people are self-conscious on vides, and less self-conscious in an audio interview. Video may be best for group histories. Ruthie noted that Neuger Communications has a lighting room that could be made available for video recording, if it is used. There is little cost associated with the interviews. Pilot interviews will be conducted this summer. Alyssa asked if the interviews would be transcribed; Mark advised that this is being considered. **Motion:** The Council approves and endorses collection of oral history from members for the purpose of the anniversary celebration. Terry Dell seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
 - ii. CCB training. Evangelism & Communication is planning training for this tool. Leah Garlie and Kristin Partlo have volunteered to conduct training. Concern about whether the tool is too complicated was voiced. Training will be explored.
- c. Youth Transition Team update – Pr. Jonathan. A discussion/presentation about the transition process is scheduled for June 6, 2018. The meeting is open to interested participants.
- d. Worship & Arts
 - i. Pr. Pam. Summer schedule begins in June. The Board is proposing that the congregation move to a single Sunday service during the month of July. Service would be at 9:30 am with Fellowship after the service. Communication, including signage will be prepared. **Motion:** Rob made the motion to change to a single 9:30 am Sunday service during the month of July on a trial basis. Ruthie seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
 - ii. Congregational photo: A congregational photo is planned. A fall photo could be used for Anniversary celebration purposes.
- e. Benevolence Board/Legal Aid. Benevolence Board has revisited the original grant request for \$25,000 from Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota (ILCM). One of the grant submissions considered last year, this is a one-time request. A summary follows. **Motion:**

The Council authorizes the Benevolence Board to release funds to the Immigration Law Center of Minnesota, as provided through the Grace Overflowing fund drive. Kristy Harms made this motion. Erik Holleque seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Summary of the proposal:

The grant requests \$25,000 to supplement the position of a traveling staff member. This will represent .25 FTE of the staff member's work. This person would be based in the St. Paul office but would visit Northfield two days each month, to conduct appointments, provide education or outreach presentations, and ongoing casework done remotely. 100% of the money will be used to respond to the concerns and legal matters of the immigrant and refugee community in the Northfield area. Sustainability would include seeking funding from the colleges, local employers, the city, local nonprofits and individuals. ILC has development staff to work on fund raising for the long term future of this project.

ILCM has a robust network in Northfield, working closely with the Northfield High School TORCH program, as a legal resource. They have also worked with St. Olaf College, Carleton College, Growing Up Healthy at Greenvale Park Elementary School, the Northfield City Council and the Northfield Police department. They have a strong partnership with the Center for New Americans and its director, Ben Casper, who lives in Northfield. In addition, a new group has formed in Northfield to explore the possibility of an expanded legal clinic with the help of the Volunteer Lawyers Network. Having these networks already established in Northfield will open doors and lead to the success of the traveling staff member.

- f. Property & Grounds update – Terry Dell. Terry provided updates on the status of a number of the capital projects:
 - i. Mud jacking projects for the sidewalks has been completed.
 - ii. A large leak/cut in the roof was discovered during the Good Shepherd window repair. This has been added to the inventory of projects/repairs.
 - iii. Tuck pointing quotes: 2 have been received. One more quote is pending. The project can be initiated this summer.
 - iv. North parking lot drainage: ice accumulation issues necessitate a solution.
 - v. Fellowship Hall: project is on hold, pending a plan to address the scope of the projects and clearly define the use of this space.
 - vi. Pew refinishing: Methods to refinish the pews for a reasonable cost and acceptable outcome haven't been identified. Properties & Grounds would like input from other Boards to arrive at a final recommendation.
- g. Worship & Arts Update/Equipment needs – Mark Gleason
- h. Lutheran College Scholarship Funds. Pr. Jonathan noted that the scholarship applications were due on May 20. Five applications were received. Jonathan recommended division of the scholarship funds to the five applicants. The total available for 2018 is \$2307.50.
Motion: The Foundation funds for scholarships to students enrolled at Lutheran colleges should be divided among the five applicants for 2018. Terry Dell made the motion. Ruthie seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

5. Consent Agenda Items for Council

- a. Treasurer's Report, April 2018. Reports reviewed. No questions or concerns identified.
Motion: Approve the April 2018 Treasurer's Report as submitted.
- b. Minutes from the April 24, 2018 meeting. Revisions recommended correcting the footer after page 1, correcting a misspelled word, adding the planned summer celebration for the Anniversary events planned in 2019, and removing an incorrect reference for the Library project. **Motion:** Approve the April Minutes with the recommended revisions.
Motion: Alyssa Ness made the motion to approve the consent agenda items, as noted, above. Ruthie Nueger seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

6. A closing prayer was offered by Rob Quanbeck, and he led us in the Lord's Prayer.

7. Meeting concluded.

Council member made a motion that we adjourn, Council member seconded it. Motion carried.
Meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Harms