

# Minutes Congregation Council

St. John's Lutheran Church, Northfield, MN  
October 23, 2018

Present: Ruthie Neuger, Pr. Pam Fickenscher, Pr. Jonathan Davis, Martha Erickson, Eric Holleque, Nancy Ordahl Kmoch, Alyssa Ness, Jane Rinehart, Dan Van Tassel, Kristy Harms

Not Present: Rob Quanbeck, Terry Dell, Jennifer Edwins, Mark Gleason,

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

**1. Opening Prayer** - Offered by Jenny Nystrom.

## **2. Future dates**

- a. Boards – November 13, 2018 7:00pm. Treats provided by Evangelism & Communications Board at 6:45 pm.

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

- b. Council – **November 27, 2018**, 7:00pm; Mark Gleason, prayer

## **3. Pastor's Report**

Official Acts: Confirmation of 13 10<sup>th</sup> Graders on October 14.

- a. CYF ministry & Youth Transition Update. The 1<sup>st</sup> unit of confirmation in the new format is nearly complete. The science and faith unit was well received and concludes tomorrow with a field trip. Pr. Pam and Pr. Jonathan will switch classes; Pr. Pam will work with the 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Bible class and Pr. Jon will begin a unit on sexuality & faith with the 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade classes.

A group of pastors & youth leaders in the Northfield ELCA churches has been meeting to discuss confirmation ministry. All of the congregations are experiencing the pressure of busy families and the decline in family involvement during and after confirmation.

Different models of doing confirmation ministry are being explored and the possibility of combining forces for this ministry is being considered.

- b. New Members. We are trying a new model for Accompany, extending the schedule over the year rather than having two separate new member groups. This will give Accompany participants time to build relationships over the year. We will welcome new members in worship in February before the Lenten season and formally receive the new members in May. There will be no fall new member reception.
- c. Staffing. Tim Byers, facilities manager, has been recovering from surgery and is gradually returning to his full duties, following restricted mobility. We are grateful to Marvin Perez for providing some additional cleaning help on a volunteer basis.
- d. Foundation funds. See spreadsheet provided by Martha Erickson.
- e. Grace Overflowing  
Capital Projects
  - Tuckpointing is due to wrap up this week. It's been noisy, but we are happy with the work that Acme has been doing.

- Bathroom door openers are scheduled for installation later this week.
  - Next up: deciding on Fellowship Hall improvements, and decisions about restoration and location of the Resurrection window.
- f. Personnel Committee. Committee is working on a new template for our job descriptions and updating each description on a rolling basis. Some descriptions have not been formally updated for five or more years.
  - g. Beyond St. John's. Pr. Pam spent this past weekend at her alma mater, Valparaiso University, preaching and presiding for worship as part of their Walter Wangerin Preaching series. She was interviewed for a podcast and me with pre-ministerial students as part of the weekend. In the late 1980's, when she was a student there, women were not permitted to preside or preach on Sundays in Valpo's chapel, so this was a particularly meaningful invitation.
  - h. Upcoming. The SE Minnesota Synod's Fall Theological Conference will take place November 4-6 in LaCrosse, WI. This year's theme is building multicultural competency and confronting racism. Each leader in the Synod has taken an inventory assessing cross-cultural skills.

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

- a. Foundation Fund update – Martha Erickson. All Foundation funds for 2018 have been designated, except for the World Missions Funds (\$172.50). Martha will submit a request to disburse the balance of the funds held by the Foundation in the amount of \$6,142.50. The Council has committed these funds for projects. Jane Rinehart made the motion to approve submission of a disbursement request by Martha Erickson to the Foundation for the remaining balance of the Foundation funds for 2019 to fulfill committed obligations. Kristy Harms seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
- b. Hearing device update. Pr. Pam advised that recent technology called Looping allows hearing devices to link into audio technology; many hearing devices have this capability, even if the user doesn't know about the capability. Two sponsors have stepped forward to contribute toward the acquisition of this technology. (One sponsor committed to 20% of the cost, up to \$2,000.00. The second sponsor will match this amount toward purchase of Looping system(s)). Jane asked if Looping would be available in both the Sanctuary and St. John's Hall. It was confirmed that this is the plan. Final cost of this technology is being researched. The Council was supportive of this solution.
- c. Nominating Committee updates. See Pastor's Report.
- d. 2019 Budget – Budget completion in December. Ruthie is looking for two additional people to participate in the budget committee for the 2019 budget. This would be a two meeting commitment.

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

- a. Treasurer's Report, September 2018. Martha presented the Treasurer's report for September. There were no questions. Jenny Nystrom made the motion to approve the Treasurer's report as submitted to the Council for September 2018. Kristy Harms seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
- b. Minutes from the September 25, 2018 meeting. No revisions or recommendations made for the September Minutes. Dan Van Tassel made the motion to accept the Minutes as submitted. Nancy Ordahl Knoch seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **6. Other Items**

- a. Anniversary Celebration update. Ruthie noted that we are looking for one more person to work with Jennifer Edwins on the April event. All of the events are planned to appeal to multi-generational participants.
  - Jane asked if there are plans to recognize the five recipients of grants from the Grace Overflowing campaign; Ruthie assured the Council that there are plans to celebrate the recipients.
  - Alyssa asked if there are plans for a historical document for the celebration. Ruthie and Pr. Pam confirmed that no one has taken this project on for the celebration.
  - Alyssa asked if the interviews being recorded for this event will be posted on the St. John's website. The location of the recorded interviews has not been determined, yet.
    - i. January event is planned for 1/13/2019 between the first and second service.
    - ii. 4/28/2019 (weekend after Easter). Ideas under consideration include a Blessing Box campaign, planting a butterfly garden, Sunday School long ago.
    - iii. 7/13/2018 Open to the general public, could celebrate Grace Overflowing grant recipients at this event.
    - iv. Capstone event weekend dates: 10/25/2019, 10/26/2019 and 10/27/2019.
    - v. Considering a New Year's Eve Service
- b. Legal Clinic update – Pr. Pam. Open House set for December 11, 2019. The clinic will be housed at St. Dominic's. The organizers are looking for help with intake, which will require bi-lingual language capability.
- c. Library update. Plans are moving forward with plans to assess the materials, and update the library. Plans include sending books home with young children to encourage reading.

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

**8. Meeting concluded.**

Kristy made a motion that we adjourn, Jane seconded it. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Harms