

Council Minutes

December 19, 2022, 6:00 pm

In person or Zoom

Attending: David Weisser, Deborah Dreher, Sadie Reiners, Pam Hoffman, Cindy Toppin, Marjorie Peterson, Abby Mattimiro, Bruce Arndtson, Pastor Geier.

Call to Order by 6:02 p.m. by President David Weisser

Secretary Lois Twedt

Deborah made a motion to accept the November minutes and Bruce seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Treasurer Deborah Dreher

Council Action Required

St. Philip's Lutheran Church continues to be in good financial position. Review of November 2022 Financial Reports indicate 2022 year-to-date Giving in three categories, General, Capital and Miscellaneous lagging Budget by 4.03%. Expenses are under Budget by 11.5%. Net Cash is \$71,306, primarily due to open staff positions.

Budget Process 2023: FMT completed the 2023 Budget Worksheet. Deborah will present to Council for their review and approval at the December 19, 2022 meeting. Motion was made by Cindy and seconded by Bruce to accept the Budget for 2023. Motion passed.

Capital Fund: Since the Capital Fund reached an amount in excess of the three months mortgage payments in reserve, FMT approved to make a principal reduction payment of \$10,000 prior to 12/31/2022.

New Business: The committee leading the Philadazzle event asked to donate excess funds, approx. \$1,100 (expenses were less than income) to Hurricane Response and Eastern European Crisis Response bullets. Benevolent tithing on Miscellaneous Income and Special Event funds are decided at the Congregational Annual Meeting. It was decided that full amount will be added to the amount chosen for Benevolence outside Hastings. Communication to all Ministry Teams will be done so all are informed, should a future event generate income, even though not the intent of the event.

See two attachments.

Motion was made by Bruce and seconded by Marjorie to accept the Treasurer's Report. Motion passed.

Vice President Sadie Reiners

No Council Action Required

- An organized group of the B & G team did bulb replacement. Four LED bulbs were installed in hopes of less burnout. The halogen bulbs have been causing a problem of shattering into the pew areas. Steve Wolverton is the lead person on bulb purchase and disposal. It takes a team of five to work with Steve on bulb replacement.
- Mice showed up in ELC 2 just before Thanksgiving. Plunkett's was engaged in trying to find the point of entry. Outside spots that were suggested we fill were the pipes going into the building from the old air conditioners that service the old sanctuary. Paul Swanstrom spent several hours on a ladder and below filling around the pipes that enter the brick wall. The mice were in the ceiling and coming down into ELC 2. At present things are o.k. It's highly suggested we purchase an annual plan for about \$750 which would cover all calls we need to make to Plunkett's in a year. We have not decided yet to proceed with that option. One call cost \$550 which signals that we should probably get the plan. They come for ants, mice, or whatever else. Ants were just found near the kitchenette during the last two weeks.
- The kitchen sanitizer would not run on Pancake Sunday so is under repair. Added to that is the water spigot in the dish washing area of the kitchen. Steve Wolverton is seeing if he can fix both.
- Precision has been alerted that they cannot dump snow on the grass area south of the parking lot due to a water build up last spring which angered the neighbors. Also the walkways along the west of the church and the sidewalk going out the east door had not been plowed for Preschool's use. These two areas have been addressed.
- Paul Swanstrom was called to check the pump in ELC 1 due to an odor problem but found the pump was fine. Paul thinks the odor may be from a mouse in the wall.
- The December Newsletter listed the donors of the ten replaced trees and the honorees.
- Eleven trees were actually planted which was mentioned in the tree replacement article. Noticing the need for one more donor, Julie Dale came forward and purchased the 11th tree in honor of John Dale. This will be noted in the January newsletter.

Serving Ministry Report--Pam Hoffman

No Council Action Required

Fellowship Ministry

Some of the Fellowship team were able to help with the Stewardship Breakfast.

Zeimet funeral went well.

Philadazzle was well received. It was good to have members of the congregation involved in the planning. There were 11 youth servers led by Kristian Ronning. Waiting for final count but there is about \$1000 to Ukraine and Florida Relief through LSS.

Sending out Christmas cards to about 26 elderly and/or shut-in members of the congregation.

Camille will check with David Weisser about council discussing Annual Meeting and if there will be a potluck and what would Fellowship duties be.

Stewardship

The Stewardship Ministry Team is pleased with the roll-out and completion of its 2022 theme Embody “The Mission”. The mailing done in mid-November was received just in time for the first temple talk by Al Carstensen, with week two by Camille Johnson Oster and the final temple talk by Beth Fahlstrom.

Commitment Sunday was December 4, following by a Pancake./Sausage breakfast served to 125 worshippers. The Fellowship Ministry Team gave considerable help to the Stewardship team by working both on Saturday and Sunday in preparation of the breakfast. Set up on Saturday, serving and clean up on Sunday which was a big effort. Lista is a great help in every Stewardship campaign with her design capabilities on the brochure that’s created and the tent card centerpieces which were on every table.

I do not have total commitment cards in nor any total pledged amount. The finance team manages the pledge card results.

“Keeping Connected” will remain a monthly offering in the newsletter. Gerri Lundby recruits the writers and sees that deadlines are met.

HR Report-- Cindy Toppin

Council Action Required

The HR Ministry Team has met and finalized a Sabbatical Policy for St. Philip’s which we seek your approval for. Pastor Geier has also reviewed these policies. The policy is adapted from documents from other churches and obtained by Pastor Geier. In addition, we recommend approving a sabbatical for Pastor Geier for the 2024 year. A future Council could undo this if need be. Both policies are attached below. Hard copies will also be available at our meeting.

At a previous Council meeting, we discussed giving Pastor Geier two more Sundays “off” from preaching so that he might worship without leading a service. He then suggested that we hold off on that if there would be a sabbatical in 2023. Since the sabbatical has been moved to 2024, HR recommends that we implement the two Sundays “off” beginning in January 2023.

In other news, we have no applicants for our open positions. However, the music ministry seems to be going well as is. Pastor has asked Becky Kaphing to take the lead on VBS and she has agreed. Pastor has also talked to OSEL about sharing a youth position but no action there.

Council action needed:

1. Approve sabbatical policy for church
2. Approve sabbatical for Pastor Geier in 2024
3. Approve 2 additional Sundays off for Pastor Geier beginning in 2023.

See two attached documents.

Motion was made by Deborah and seconded by Bruce to accept the Sabbatical Policy for the Church. Motion passed.

Motion was made by Bruce and seconded by Marjorie to approve a Sabbatical Leave for Pastor Geier in 2024. Motion passed.

Motion was made by Cindy and seconded by Bruce to Approve 2 additional Sundays off for Pastor Geier beginning in 2023. Motion passed.

Worship Ministry Report– Marjorie Peterson

No Council action required.

Services are going well and attendance has slowly been growing to 145.

Special music is being scheduled.

Name tag use is being encouraged. Suggestions offered were: 1) Place a reminder sign near the entrance. 2) Move the kiosk near the entrance. 3) Have clip-on tags available. 4) Have a reminder on the TV screen behind the Welcome Center.

Christmas Services

Individual communion kits will be used for the Christmas Eve services.

Special music for 3:00 will be the bell choir, and for 5:00, a prelude solo by Darlene Olson and strings during the service.

Yellow tape will be removed from the pews for the preschool program and for the 3:00 service.

Poinsettias and individual candles will be prepared during the morning of the 23rd.

Future Planning

On January 1, Rebecca Thurman will be subbing for Pastor Geier.

An Immigrants Creed will be used during Epiphany, and the Nicene Creed will be used during Lent.

Next year, consideration will be given to having an additional service—a "Blue Christmas" service for those dealing with depression, anxiety or grief of any kind.

Learning Ministries Report –Abby Mattimiro

No Council Action Required

Preschool:

- The student we put on scholarship has stopped coming. Scholarship money has been transferred back into the church scholarship fund.
- Christmas program is going to be December 22 at 6:00
- Start thinking about next year's tuition prices. We are in line with the other 2 churches and the public school as far as current cost but anticipate raising prices will be needed. Current rates \$305 for five days, \$180 for three days, \$150 for two days a week.

- Ministry team discussed and decided that raises will be given to preschool staff after the new year. This will line up with other church staff's raises as far as when they come and percentages given.
- Fundraisers for this fall between greeting cards and gift card sales totaled of over \$1,000. Thank you for all of your support!

*Pre-school has received an anonymous \$5000 donation.

ASG:

Financial Peace University will be starting.

Communication/Marketing/Tech Report – Bruce Arndtson

No Council Action Required

There will be advertising for the Christmas Service at the Hastings Inn.

Pastor Geier – December 2022 Council Report

- I participated in my first candidacy approval interview on December 1st.
- I officiated at the funeral for Jim Zeimet on December 2nd.
- In addition to my weekly contemplative prayer meeting and text study, I concluded the Zoom Resiliency cohort and am just oozing with resilience!
- I also attended a conference meeting at Prince of Peace in Burnsville and found out about VINE-- a fascinating collaboration between four congregations that work together, but not competing, in lifting up the ministries in the area and share the strengths they all have.
- I have tried to make connections with children and/or their parents at various school events including:
 - -5th grade Christmas Concert on 12/8
 - -6th grade Christmas Concert on 12/8
 - -High School Band and Orchestra Concert on 12/13
 - -High School Holiday Vocal Concert on 12/17
 - -I will attend 7th grade Vocal concert (postponed to 12/20)
- I completed my physical therapy and will continue to try to build strength in my left calf.
- I am very grateful for Becky Kaphing, Katie Thomas, and Kelsey Wormley for their willingness to make sure that we had a Sunday School Christmas program. This program was written by Amy Geier.
- I am even more grateful that Becky was willing to be hired as our Vacation Bible School Director for next year!
- I have had home visits with 10 members at homes or nursing homes and had a home visit with a prospective member.
- I am hoping to schedule our Council/Leadership Retreat for February or March.

- I would also like to explore the idea of hosting an ecumenical “Prayers for Ukraine” worship service on February 26th or March 5th to mark the anniversary of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. I may need assistance in determining the best ministry or non-profit for our offering.
- The annual meeting is February 5th.

Thanks for your partnership in the Gospel.
Your Servant in Christ,
Gregory A. Geier, Pastor

New Business

A potluck will follow the annual meeting. Assignments for food to bring will be split up by the alphabet. Fellowship will organize this.

There will be no change in how the Tithes and Gifting money is divided up for the annual meeting.

Need to address microphone issues at the annual meeting.

All motions for the annual meeting need to be presented in written form.

Sign up for Genius will start soon.

Motion was made by Cindy and seconded by Bruce to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed.

Submitted by Abby Mattimiro (acting secretary)