

Council Minutes
February 20, 2023, 6:00 pm.
In person or zoom

Attending: Dan Strehlow, Deborah Dreher, Marjorie Peterson, Abby Mattimiro, Pam Hoffman, Warren Thomas, Pastor Geier, Lois Twedt

Call to Order at 6:02 p.m. by President Dan Strehlow

Secretary's Report—Lois Twedt

Marjorie made a motion to accept the minutes from the January meeting and Pam seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Treasurer Deborah Dreher

Council Action Required

St. Philip's Lutheran Church begins 2023 in good financial position. Review of January 2023 Financial Reports indicate year-to-date Giving in three categories, General, Capital and Misc. equal to Budget. Expenses are under Budget by 25.20%. Net Cash is \$19,096, primarily due to open staff positions.

2023 Budget Process update: Congregational Meeting on February 5, 2023, approved Budget, as presented. Staff salaries will be adjusted accordingly. Also, Congregation decided Benevolence Giving, and checks will be distributed by February 28, 2023, accordingly. Elected Audit Team will conduct 2022 Financial Audit.

Third Thursday Funds: discussion pursued regarding Third Thursday Designated Funds. FMT recommends 50% funds be given to other churches or organizations that are still doing weekly/monthly hot meals; and 50% be given to Meals on Wheels. If no one has continued weekly/monthly meals, FMT recommends 100% given to Meals on Wheels. Deborah made a motion to give \$1500 of the funds to OSEL as they are doing First Thursday meals and the remainder to Hastings Family Service/Meals on Wheels. Pam seconded the motion and the motion passed.

Volunteer Offering Counting: FMT decided to re-instate Volunteers' involvement in Offering Counting. The process changed during COVID and is now two-fold: 1) count cash and total envelopes and 2) prepare Bank Deposit plus input data for financial accounting. FMT will recruit 4 teams of two persons to count cash and total envelopes. This part of the process will take approximately 20 minutes or less and can be done after worship on Sunday or anytime on Monday. Deborah will continue to verify cash and offering total to prepare the bank deposit; and prepare the Excel spreadsheet for financial data input. Christine will continue to input data in QuickBooks Online (our financial data/budget) process.

Replacement projectors: discussion pursued regarding the need for fixing/upgrading our current video system. FMT strongly supports the process necessary to obtain bids, etc. to determine an upgrade, and discussed that SPLC has the availability of funds necessary to do so.

Pam made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report and Marjorie seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Vice President Sadie Reiners

No Council Action Required

- Buildings & Grounds did not formally meet as a team in January or February, but the team has attended to building issues under its watch.
- Sanctuary lighting was addressed by replacing halogen bulbs with LED bulbs in the chancel area where a lift was needed to service it. Sanctuary lighting remains an issue in terms of seeking bulbs that maximize lighting in the corner areas, which has become more of an issue with livestream production. Steve Wolverton and Bruce Arndtson led the bulb replacement with Al Todnem, Denny Kohn, and Paul Swanstrom assisting. A lift had to be rented for this project. The tall ladder will soon be used to replace bulbs over the pew areas.
- The entire B & G team attended a meeting with City Engineer Cody Mathisen in early February to discuss ideas for correcting the snow melt issue that tends to flood the back yards of two properties south of the parking lot. A solution was described about connecting to a sewer pipe which is already below the problem area. This would be at St. Philip's expense. Two contractors, Gartzke and Bauer, were recommended, that would be able to do the work. No cost estimate was discussed.
- The Pleasant St. replacement project was also discussed since we have a long stretch of boulevard and sidewalk. A follow up call was made to the St. Philip's team that the city has decided to remove the five remaining trees along Pleasant at its cost and will replace them with new trees which we'll be able to select. The reason for this is that a 10' asphalt trail will replace the current concrete sidewalk which St. Philip's now has to maintain through the winter months. As this becomes part of the city trail system the cost of snow removal will become a city expense. This becomes a huge benefit to the church, noting especially, the tree removal and replacement decision. The cost of the street improvement is assessed at \$41K for St. Philip's. First billing for this is in 2024 with the option of paying the assessment over time.

Some ceiling lights in the Sanctuary have been bursting when first turned on. An analysis will be done to determine why this might be happening.

Serving Ministry Report--Pam Hoffman

No Council Action Required

Fellowship Ministry

There were 65 who attended the potluck following the annual meeting with 37 dishes shared.

Max Lucado's "Pocket Prayers" book was sent to 2022 high school grads (16).

Jen Klos sent a letter asking about the possibility of starting a food pantry at St Philip's. We discussed our investment and commitment to HFS and the challenges there might be. Jen has been invited to our March meeting to explain her idea.

Blood Dive is planned for 3/16 from 12-6. More volunteers are needed that day.

Fellowship will serve ice cream following the outdoor service planned for 6/18.

Stewardship

On Feb. 16, the Stewardship team will prepare the all-congregation mailing of updated Time and Talent Forms which will reach most St. Philip's households. It is understood that not all members are able to give of their skills and time due to circumstances beyond their control. The form will provide information to the office as to who is willing to do the many volunteer tasks for St. Philip's various ministries throughout the year. The form will cover 2023 and 2024. A due date for returning the form is March 15. The giving of one's time and skills or talents to the work of St. Philip's internal and external ministries correlates with the giving of monetary resources .

HR Report—Natalie Carda

No Council Action Required

Nothing new to report.

Worship Ministry Report– Marjorie Peterson

No Council action required.

Communion - The railings will be in place for Ash Wednesday and remain in place through Holy Week. Masks will continue to be required for the servers.

Music - Plans are in place for bells/chimes, the children's choir with teens and adults, adult choral groups. and Unity.

Future planning - A member of the prayer team will assist with the imposition of ashes on Ash Wednesday. Easter services will be held at 8:30 and 10:30 AM.

Sanctuary screen projectors - One option is to send in the left side projector for analysis and a fix which will take many weeks. The projectors are ten years old and the other is likely to go out also. Therefore, this team recommended research and securing bids on two new laser projectors. They will be expensive but will also provide a better quality picture.

Learning Ministries Report –Abby Mattimiro

No Council Action Required

Preschool:

1. Current numbers: M/W/F 25 of 32 spots filled T/TH 23 of 32 spots filled
2. Registration night for new families Feb 28, 5:30-6:30
3. Field trip – Dodge Nature Center April 27th
4. Family night April 21, 5:30-7:30. Would love some helpers 😊
5. Team up with Mary and Connie to run the March food drive together with the church
6. Budget/Started spending donation dollars
7. Next meeting date March 20th @5:30? Normal date 13th (spring break)

ASG

- * Al Todnem arranged Paul Orman coming on Feb 15. Publicity seems to be already set up.
- * We have plans for Sunday mornings through Easter.
 - Jan 29: Annual Budget review
 - Feb 5: Annual meeting, no ASG
 - Feb 12 and 19: U of M Aging series - Chuck leading discussions (?)
 - Feb 26, March 5, 12, 19, 26, April 5 Holden Prayer of Good Courage/Philippians study - Jennie will revise the Westwood Lutheran Church handouts we have permission to use to remove references to things unique to Westwood but we are not planning any major changes. Jennie is willing to lead 2-3 of the sessions and hoped that perhaps Doug or Lisa could also do 1 or 2 each so people aren't always listening to just her! Jennie will do a blurb for March and get it to Lista.
- * Special events for Lent: Neither blanket tying or a book study are planned for Lent this year. Checking with WELCA to see if they are interested in doing the blanket tying. Last year's books study was not well attended.
- * Further Sunday Morning Adult Forums:
 - April 9: Easter, no ASG
 - April 16, April 23, April 30, May 7, (+/- May 14: Mother's Day) We'll do a month of the Wired Word again. Jennie will notify and remind Lista to Subscribe on April 12 and cancel after the May 11th email from them. Then we'll plan a summer break.

Pending issues:

1. Doug is working with Katy Lindberg on something on homelessness, Doug's department coming out with a major statement on homelessness this coming week. Looking at doing something for the wider community, not Sunday Forum. Doug to follow up with Katy. Maybe into summer, vs. yet this spring.
2. Jennie talked with Pastor about following up on the Women's retreat Fall 2021. Jennie has put it to some of WELCA leadership if they want her to help them set one up.
3. Is Pastor going to do monthly Fire Pit chats this summer? They went over well, but does he have the bandwidth to do it this summer with all the other responsibilities or not?

Faith Formation

No report received.

Communication/Marketing/Tech Report – Warren Thomas

There is a need to make a decision on the Sanctuary Screen Projectors.

Pastor Geier – February 2023 Council Report

- Right now, I am no longer participating in a regular text study but continue involvement with my weekly contemplative prayer group.
- Called and/or visited 12 members who are either homebound or living in nursing homes.
- 3 Hospital visits
- 2 pre-baptism meetings
- The normal regimen of staff, ministry team meetings, confirmation, etc.
- I met with two prospective members who will be joining St. Philip's in April and will have visited with another family before our council meeting.
- I recorded a segment for KDWA to talk about our prayer service for Ukraine and did a live segment at WFNU in St. Paul with a colleague who has a weekly show.
- On 1/23 I participated in a regional training workshop via Zoom for those serving on synod candidacy committees.
- On 1/24 I attended the first HS show choir performance and made connections with 9 teens and/or families.
- On 1/25 I met with the Hastings Ministerial Association and discussed the prayer service for Ukraine.
- On 1/30 I attended a meeting with our Building and Grounds Ministry Team and the city engineers to discuss adding a storm drain on our property as well as the impact of the project on Pleasant this summer.
- On 2/2 I participated in our Synod Candidacy Meeting
- Six people participated in the "Check You Tech" on Saturday the 4th.
- I think our Annual Meeting went well except for the polls for benevolence. I will try to do better next year.
- I broadcast Paul Oman's Bible study on Facebook Live and had six screens participating throughout the two-hour presentation.
- On 2/9 I attended our South Conference meeting at Farmington Lutheran in Farmington.
- Right now, considerable time has been invested in writing the prayer service for Ukraine and writing the Mentor Handbooks for Lent and trying to match confirmation students with mentors. \$1100 donations was received for the cause at the Prayer Service for Ukraine.
- On 2/25, I will be attending Synod Toolbox South Conference Caucus.
- March 19th is the St. Philip's Leadership Retreat.
- The Ash Wednesday service will be available online due to the weather forecast. The Confirmation Orientation is postponed and will be held on March 1. Ashes will be offered before the Lenten Service on March 1. Lista will send emails on Tuesday and Wednesday to let members know there will be no in-person service on Ash Wednesday.

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

Old Business

It was decided to divide the \$2800 fund designated for Third Thursday meals between OSEL's First Thursday Meal and HFS Meals on Wheels.

New Business

Four bids were received for Replacement Projectors for the Sanctuary. They were from AVE (Audio Video Electronics), Advanced MultiMedia, WNAV, and Aufderworld Corporation (Excel). All bids were in the \$37,000-\$40,000 range. Following a discussion the Council suggested going with Sony products. Deborah made a motion to grant the project to AVE, and Warren seconded the motion. The motion passed.

A motion was made by Deborah to adjourn the meeting. Warren seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Submitted by Lois Twedt, Secretary