

# **Council Minutes**

**October 16, 2023, 6:00 pm**

Attending: Dan Strehlow, Deborah Dreher, Pam Hoffman, Natalie Carda, Marjorie Peterson, Warren Thomas, and Lois Twedt.

## **Call to Order at 6:05 p.m. by President Dan Strehlow**

### **Secretary's Report, Lois Twedt**

A clarification was made under #6 of the Building and Grounds Committee Report, stating that the neighbors in attendance were not interested in cost sharing and suggested we try the same plan as use in 2023-34 and St Philip's agreed. Marjorie made a motion and Natalie seconded it to approve the Secretary's Report with this addition. The motion passed.

### **Treasurer Deborah Dreher**

#### **Council Action Required**

Review of September 2023 Financial Reports: Comparing Actual Giving to Budget, Giving is under Budget by 14.4% and Expenses are 19.2% under Budget. Our overall financial situation is still favorable. Net Income is \$56,353.

The City of Hastings furnished SPLC with information relating to Pleasant Drive Special Assessment. The total assessment is \$41,400.00. If the assessment is not paid in full by November 30, 2023, the assessment may be paid up to ten annual installments at the rate of 4.56%. FMT approved paying \$11,400 before November 30, 2023, and three additional annual payments of \$10,000. This means the assessment will be paid in full by 2026. There are no penalties or fees for paying off the assessment prior to 10 years. In addition, FMT approved transferring \$45,000 from Designated Funds to a 12 month Certificate of Deposit at a rate of 5-5.25%. The difference in interest rates will offset interest expense. A separate line item will be noted on the Budget and Financial reports.

Portico Benefits were reviewed and approved by FMT. The Finance Ministry Team is recommending Council approval for the 2024 Benefit Plan for Pastor Geier. We recommend the same benefit plan/level as 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023. The overall premium percentage of increase is approximately 2.5%. A motion was made by Natalie and seconded by Warren to continue with the same level of benefit coverage for Pastor Geier as the previous 4 years. The motion passed.

2024 Budget was discussed. When Ministry Teams submit their 2024 budget information to Christine, (due 10/13/2023), the Budget will be updated and distributed to FMT for review. If information is received in a timely manner, it is likely FMT will have an approved Budget for Council to review at their November meeting.

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

### **Vice President Sadie Reiners**

#### **No Council Action Required**

- The water heater servicing the office area restrooms, the kitchenette, and the ELC classrooms required repairs. The repairs were done by Majeski Plumbing at a cost of \$475.
- Five trees, varieties of Red Oak and Hackberry, were given and planted by the city along the Pleasant Drive boulevard.
- The parking lot surfacing was completed in four days by Tundra at a cost of \$16,700.
- A grounds cleaning is scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 14, at 9 am. Paper bags will be provided for all the cuttings and pruning that will be done. Will focus on bringing the corner sign area to a much better appearance.
- We will act on sanctuary lighting as time and need allows. Halogen bulbs are providing the brighter light which means we'll be continuing our use of them as we make changes from the LED bulbs. The council heard the report of cost for changing the many fixtures to being LED compatible which for now is too ambitious an expense.
- Budgeting for 2024 will include two Mini Split AC units for the old sanctuary. Estimated cost is \$11,000.
- The HVAC system had its routine inspection and changing of filters two weeks ago. The cost for this service was \$675.
- ELC teachers touched up the chipped paint in their back hall for their school start.

## **Serving Ministry Report--Pam Hoffman**

### **No Council Action Required**

#### Fellowship Ministry

Philadazzle plans are coming along. The date is 12/3 and tickets will be \$20 which will be sold during November.

Military families are being contacted for updated addresses. We will send out cards for Veteran's Day.

We are still looking for volunteers and donations for the Halloween Downtown Event on 10/29.

HFS would like our help in collecting 25 sets (5 personal size items) for homeless and those recently released from jail. Caring Ministry funds will be used to purchase the items.

November 5th will be an informational hour and lunch for new members. New members will be received on 11/12.

A note was received from Jim Mossman thanking St Philip's members for all their help for Norma's funeral.

#### Stewardship

The Stewardship Team met Oct 10, to discuss its fall campaign under the theme, "Community Grows Here".

Stewardship Sunday is Dec. 10 followed by a pancake and sausage breakfast.

Following Al Todnem's temple talk in Sept which rolled out the mural project, the October temple talk will be by Tom Bullington and the November talk by Carlos Villavicencio.

A bulk mailing of the 2024 giving response card, a brochure supporting the theme and information regarding our budget and goals will be assembled Nov 14, designed to be in people's hands well in time for the December 10, Stewardship Sunday.

"Staying Connected" continues to be led by Gerri Lundby with at least two households in every monthly newsletter.

## **HR Report—Natalie Carda**

### **No Council Action Required**

Nothing new to report.

## **Worship Ministry Report— Marjorie Peterson**

### **No Council Action Required.**

#### Service debrief:

Attendance at services continues to be 125-135, although on Sept. 7, it was 160.

Appreciation was expressed for the addition of acolytes to our services.

For the on-line services, words are now printed on the lower 1/3 of the screen with a camera shot of the speaker above. We thank John Diischer for his work on this intensive task.

Pastor Geier would like the Kyrie leader to stand at the altar.

#### Funerals

The funeral handbook will be reviewed concerning the use of family photos on the screen, They should be prepared on flash drive. There should also be extra compensation for the AV director associated with this task.

#### Wish list

At this point we would like to see an additional green banner given the length of the season of Pentecost, and the addition of two more communion trays.

#### All Saints Service

Plans are being made to have votive candles available for members to light in memory of a loved one.

#### Music

Events were planned and scheduled for November and December.

## **Learning Ministries Report –Abby Mattimiro**

### **No Council Action Required**

#### Preschool:

1) M/W/F 29 T/TH 23 (Eight of these students come every day)

2) Our Licensing has a change that impacts the church. We were now informed that the Treasurer and the President of the church must be on our license as controlling agents. After a very long conversation with licensing, I can tell you this is not an option. It was explained to them that while we run as a ministry of the church these positions do not interact with the preschool. I was told those positions would be like the CEO and CFO of a business. Because as a church we don't have those we must have these individuals on our license. Becky and Lorelei will still make decisions and run the day-to-day operations of the school as normal. These people will need to go through the process of a state run background study which includes fingerprinting. Dan and Pastor are in process now of getting their fingerprints done and the change of license form has been submitted. We added pastor as an additional controlling agent because he is in the building on a daily basis and involved in the school. Not that we have ever needed to, but if there was a problem with something in the program or an unhappy parent, he would be the person we would refer someone to. Deborah's term is up in Feb. so we are able to wait for a new treasure.

3) Raise Right gift card sales will take place again in November and December.

4) We plan to sell St. Philip's Preschool T-shirts again in November.

5) We have many special activities coming up including fire truck visit, Librarian visit, and our spring trip is booked and will include a pancake breakfast for families.

6) Christmas program will be one program December 21st at 6:00 pm

7) As of this month, we will be able to apply for state grant money. We also filled out a regional grant application for some educational supplies, a new toy shelf, our health nurse visit, and art supplies that we should be hearing about by the end of the month.

8) Budget was reviewed with team.

#### ASG:

No report received.

#### Faith Formation:

1) Sunday school kick off and review

\* Four pre-k/k kids (Lydia teaching Ellie doing some assist with this group)

\* Five signed up 1st/2nd grade (Kate )

\* Seven signed up 3/4 grade (Marjorie and Bernita)

\* No 5th graders

Carlos and Kristian will take turns doing opening.

Becky will sub in as needed and still help coordinate curriculum and things.

Confirmation was discussed on what needs to be planned and ready for Class on 28th and service on the 29th.

\*Family Sunday school was discussed for December 10th to go along with stewardship Sunday breakfast.

\*Christmas program plan was discussed. Pastor sent some from his previous call that Amy had written for the team to look over. The group, after reading them in an email, chose one and will begin planning soon.

## **Communication/Marketing/Tech Report – Warren Thomas**

### **No Council Action Required**

Nothing new to report.

## **Pastor Geier – October 2023 Council Report**

- I am currently attending the Bishop's Theological Conference in Alexandria, MN and will be back in the office on Wednesday.
  - I attended our synod's south conference meeting on September 21.
  - I have visited our members who are homebound or in nursing homes.
  - I lead worship at Oak Ridge on September 27 and at Regina on October 4th.
  - On September 30th, we had a memorial service for Diane Reller.
  - On October 5th I participated in our Synod Candidacy Committee that walks with those seeking rostered status in the ELCA.
  - Last week I went to the high school to meet with the last confirmand who will share her faith statement October 15th. She will be doing this following the service after the livestreaming has been stopped.
  - I have sent emails to our high school youth after receiving word that they were more interested in a mission trip than the National Youth Gathering. I shared a variety of sites from Kentucky, South Dakota, Missouri, Wisconsin, and Indiana, but again have not had any response. Sigh.
  - Staff Matters: John Diischer had surgery Friday morning (as I am writing this,) to remove part of an infected bone in his left foot. At this time, we do not know how long he will be out of commission, but his absence will directly impact the caliber of our slides during worship and how they are broadcast for our livestream experience. I and Paul Hellen have a certain degree of proficiency with the ProPresenter program we use, but neither of us has John's skillset. I am confident that we will continue to have meaningful services as we worship Jesus.
- Lista had been putting in extra hours prior to John's hospitalization so that he could remotely access the computer in the tech booth and be able to create and edit slides. Once John is feeling up to it, we now have that capability as long as someone is here to relay a passcode to him.

Our first priority is caring for John and Ellen (& their son, Mark).

Thanks for your partnership in the Gospel.

Your Servant in Christ,

Gregory A. Geier, Pastor

## **Old Business:**

We will begin hosting Ruby's Pantry in March, 2024. The representative from Ruby's Pantry was pleased with the accessibility of our facility. The first date is tentatively set for the third Saturday of the month. Communication for Ruby's Pantry will be covered by the Fellowship Committee.

## **New Business:**

Minnesota's licensing for preschools requires the church President (CEO) and Treasurer (CFO) be included on the Preschool license application. The MN Preschool licensing requires background checks and finger printing for those listed on the application. The Council Nominating Committee will inform candidates for these offices of these new expectations.

The Nominating Committee for Council Members for 2024 has 4 members. We need to have 6. Deborah has volunteered to serve. Dan will be looking for a 6<sup>th</sup> person, preferably a male.

Deborah made a motion that designated memorial funds and ministry team needs be tabled to the November meeting. Warren seconded the motion. The motion passed.

A motion was made by Natalie and seconded by Pam to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 6:53 p.m.

Submitted by Lois Twedt, Secretary