

CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL MINUTES

November 7, 2017

CALL TO ORDER: Council President Brandie Saraceni called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm

PRESENT: Brandie Saraceni, Bob Errett, Sue Ross, Megan Zobb, Merle Baker, Amy Schultz, Cindy Black, Pastor Kemp, Bobbie Laciak, Jeanne Kiss, Suzy Flory

ABSENT: Kim von Schlichten, Rebecca Brunetta

JOY OF THE DAY – Several joys this month.

OPENING PRAYER

BUDGET PRESENTATION – Bob Errett made a motion to hold budget over to next month's council meeting. Bobbie Laciak seconded. Motion approved.

MINUTES: Suzy Flory made a motion to accept the minutes and Merle Baker seconded. Motion approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Motion was made by Bob Errett to accept the Treasurer's Report and seconded by Jeanne Kiss. Motion approved.

PASTOR'S REPORT:

1. Pastoral acts:
 - a. Funerals: Sara Smith 10-7-17
 - b. Weddings: Roy Ott & Jennifer Waggett 10-27-17
 - c. Baptisms (2): Connor Lee Paulus & Logan Patrick Thomas 10-1-17
2. Visitation
 - a. General/miscellaneous visits: 12
 - b. Hospital visits: 1
 - c. Bereavement visits: 3
 - d. Extraordinary communions (these are not extra visits): 6
 - e. Office Visits: 4
3. Worship leadership other than Sunday mornings, weddings and funerals:
 - a. Animal Blessing in the Park 10-14-17
4. Activity
 - a. Catechism (Confirmation) instruction: each Sunday during the Sunday school hour
 - b. Drew Erdman's Eagle Scout Presentation: 10-2-17
 - c. Congregation Council: 10-3-17
 - d. Greensburg Pastors' Pericope study at Zion's: 10-3-17, 10-17-17 & 10-24-17
 - e. Food from the Heart Luncheon: 10-4-17, 10-11-17, 10-18-17 & 10-25-17
 - f. Preschool Chapel Time: 10-4-17, 10-5-17, 10-18-17, 10-24-17 & 10-25-17
 - g. Social Ministry Mtg. RE: Habitat for Humanity with Dan Giovannelli, Bob Errett and Amy Schultz 10-11-17
 - h. Synod Theological Convocation 10-9-17 to 10-11-17—continuing education
 - i. Finance Mtg.: 10-17-17
 - j. Mtg. with Pastor Melissa Stoller, Director for Evangelical Mission for the ELCA and Assistant to the Bishop 10-17-17: I thought that she could be of help in addressing stewardship concerns—among others, and she is willing to conduct a retreat with the congregation council.
 - k. Food Pantry: 10-19-17
 - l. Worship & Music: 10-22-17
 - m. Budget Subcommittee: 10-24-17
 - n. Executive Mtg.: 10-25-17
 - o. Property after-mtg. at VFW: 10-25-17
 - p. Technology Concerns:
 - i. Office staff met with Erika Colonna 10-17-17 and scheduled subsequent meetings regarding the use of the website and other technology related communication.
 - ii. Sound system problems: I spent an inordinate amount of time particularly on 10-19-17 & 10-20-17 dealing with these issues. The problem is that the hard drive on the iMac that runs it is damaged and needs to be repaired or replaced. I will be taking the machine to an Apple store in the Pittsburgh area for that repair. After that, we are going to need some help with set-up.
 - iii. Communication Advancements: The response to the email address request was excellent, and the congregation's weekly email blast is now going out to those who expressed an interest. I am working to start utilizing the Twitter and Facebook platforms to send along similar information.
 - q. Lutheran Catholic Commemoration of Hope at St. Vincent's, 10-28-17: FELC was well represented both in the printed program and with 8 or 9 people, including me, from FELC in attendance.
 - r. Reformation Hymn Festival at FELC 10-29-17: Special event with our neighbors from 5 Lutheran churches that was well-attended by my expectations; a very big thank you is owed to Marvin for the substantial amount of work and leadership he offered.
 - s. Mtg. with Pastor Sarah Lee-Faulkner 10-31-17: She is going to be meeting with the council on 12-6-17 to review the call process. After that, she is willing to be with us on 2-18-18 to be with us in worship and speak with members from the congregation council at large between worship services at the continental breakfast on 2-18-18.
5. For Information:
 - a. Relationship with Pittsburgh Pastoral Institute: after last council meeting, I received concerns about PPI's use of the building. I am going to be meeting with Dean Cichetti, Sean Burns and Shauna Staranko in the near future to review building use procedures and agreement compliance.
 - b. Thiel College Invitation: No one responded to the invitation from Thiel College regarding the FELC, Scanlon and Pfiefer scholarship award recipients. I have RSVP'ed for my myself and will look forward to representing FELC and meeting the scholarship award winners on 11-11-17.

- c. *Listening Post: 11-15-17 @ 7pm We will focus on the question: What have we learned in the last five months?*
 - d. *Disaster Relief: I received an update from the synod office about disaster relief. Something should be circulating at the meeting. I also have reached out to people who have participated in that work from this congregation in the past.*
 - e. *Vacation: I will be on vacation from December 7-13. Pastor Dave von Schlichten will be leading worship on 12-10-17.*
6. *For Discussion or Action:*
- a. *Letter of transfer to be taken up as an executive recommendation*
 - b. *Healthy Congregations training to be taken up as old business*
 - c. *Constitution Review to be taken up as old business—My recommendation is that we take this up in March at the March Council Meeting and continue to carry this as an item of old business in the meantime.*
 - d. *Setting of the date for the council retreat to be taken up as new business, which would include Pastor Melissa Stoller's participation; my suggestion is 2-3-18*
 - e. *During the Budget Discussion under new business: I am going to move to amend the proposed 2018 budget to reduce my auto expense and put that toward a leadership development/training line that would be specifically for council training materials.*

COUNCIL BUSINESS:

For Your Information:

- 1) Reminder – Council meets Wednesday, December 6, 2017
- 2) Annual Report for each team is due December 1st (Team members' names should be included in the report)

For Action: Executive Committee recommends:

- 1) Transfer membership for Josephine Ann Sleasman from Trinity Evangelical in Latrobe to First Lutheran Greensburg. Seconded by Sue Ross. Motion approved.
- 2) Approve use of Fellowship Hall/Choral Society room for Westmoreland Symphony Orchestra on December 2 and December 9, 1:30-3:30. Seconded by Merle Baker. Motion approved.
- 3) Approve use of Fellowship Hall for Blankets for Vets Service Project (Marusko's) on Sunday, November 12 and Sunday, November 19 after the second service. Seconded by Bob Errett. Motion approved.

ACTIVATION TEAM REPORTS:

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION Meeting held October 17, 2017

1. Acolyte Training–October 15th - Dianna Marusko provided training for new confirmation students.
2. Bible distribution –October 22nd
3. Two - 3 years olds will receive the Whirl Story Bible, Seven - 3rd graders will receive the Collaborate Lutheran Student Bible, Five - 7th graders will receive the Lutheran Study Bible
4. Reformation Celebration –October 29th: Cake and punch will be served during the Sunday school hour 9:30 AM-10:30 AM along with an opportunity to make a craft of Luther's Rose with a button and magnet.
5. Lights, Cameras, Action –December 3rd: Christian Ed has taken on some of the responsibilities of the Youth Committee in planning a family movie afternoon at AMC Movie Theater behind Westmoreland Mall for a showing of "The Star" an animated movie of the nativity from the camel's point of view. Cost of the movie is \$5.00 per person lunch will be served in the fellowship hall immediately following the 10:45 AM Service.
6. Christmas Stocking for Shut-Ins /Thrivent Action Team -December 3rd: Sunday school Students will be filling stockings for our Shut-ins with the help of Thrivent Financial who will donate \$250.00 toward supplies and "Live Generously" T-shirts for each of our students to wear during their service project.

PROPERTY Meeting held October 25, 2017

1. The Burglar Alarm System has been repaired and all systems have been tested, however we now have a new keypad procedure.
2. West Penn Power denied our power surge claim and stated in a letter to Property that they have no evidence to suggest negligence on their part.
3. Rick Druschel is asking for a work party on November 4th to help clean up the property of Andrea Brown. If you can help, please contact Rich by phone or email.
4. Power washing and sealing the upper parking lot and gazebo is completed.
5. Seven light fixtures still remain on phase four installation (installation date pending). We have installed 83 fixtures and have 123 to go.
6. Goals – continue to upgrade lights and light fixtures to LED type, landscaping of park and front lawn, pressure wash and sealing of both floors of the parking garage and other areas, schedule and monitor all equipment inspections, servicing and maintenance, repair and replace electrical, plumbing or mechanical fixtures as needed, maintain and monitor security and safety systems, repair replace and maintain any other items as necessary.

EVANGELISM Meeting held October 12, 2017

1. Sunday Breakfast is filled through December. Volunteers are needed for January through May.

2. Greensburg Christmas Parade – Hot chocolate will be served only if youth does hot dogs once again and/or are available to serve.
3. Christmas Service Ads will be placed in the Tribune-Review for Christmas Eve morning and both Christmas Eve evening services – especially if times are different from previous years.
4. Discussed Council’s decision to pay 1/3 Catholic/Lutheran Reformation program cost of \$500 for event at St. Vincent College on October 28, 2017 out of Evangelism budget.
5. Evangelism budget for 2018 will remain at \$4000.

FINANCE Meeting held October 17, 2017 @ 6:30 PM

1. Those in attendance: Pastor Larry, Bob Errett, Malcolm Sias, Dave Cobb, Dan Lucas, Tom Flory, Daniel Schaar, Dave Mickley, Tony Ferry, Alex Koter, Eric Koter and Pranav Jaiswal, Client Portfolio Manager for Brandes Investment Partners Global Equity Funds

Mid-town Plaza project

2. Tony Ferry said he has everything on his end ready to go. He said he’ll have his contract ready for us by the end of the year. Once that is ready, it will be shown to our attorney, Wes Long, then acted upon by the Finance Team, after approval by Council

The Tax Appeal hearing took place on the morning of October 3, 2017. It will be a while before we know the results of those hearings.

3. The appraisal, conducted by Hayden Appraisal Services, is completed and in our possession. Revenues are higher than original estimate. We will see a nice increase in rental income next year. The value of the property was slightly lower than estimate, which should lower the tax appraisal considerably

4. Still waiting on meeting date with Robert Boyle

5. The Budget Sub-team will meet on October 24, 2017 in the conference room to prepare the first draft of the 2018 budget

Met with our Morgan Stanley reps, Alex and Eric Koter. They invited a representative from Brandes Investment Partners to speak with us about value-based stock, global investments and the domestic markets. It was an interesting meeting.

6. Recommendations were made to move some money from our ETF funds into Brandes

7. The Finance Team had questions. Action was set aside until we received answers to those questions

8. Discussed the investment portfolios we currently have in place.

SOCIAL MINISTRY Did not meet.

STEWARDSHIP Did not meet.

WORSHIP AND MUSIC Meeting held October 22, 2017

1. Marvin Huls went through the Hymn Festival with the committee members.

2. Discussed the results of the member survey concerning worship times for Christmas Eve.

- Sunday, December 24 10:00 AM Service only
- 7:00 PM Family Service with Communion
- 10:00 PM Candlelight Communion Service

Sunday, December 31 - 10:00 AM Service only

PERSONNEL Did not meet.

FELLOWSHIP Meeting held October 4, 2017

1. 2018 Fellowship Calendar, Budget and Goals were turned into church office by Patti Sias.

2. Bereavement Committee Volunteer List was reviewed and revised.

3. Fellowship agreed to serve cake and punch during Sunday School hour on Reformation Sunday, October 29th.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY Did not meet.

YOUTH Did not meet.

Ad hoc Activation Team – Nomination

a. Current nominees to replace Bobbie Laciak and Cindy Black:

- i. Joan Orr
- ii. Dianna Marusko

b. Nominations were set November 5 at the Congregational Meeting and will be elected November 19 during the Congregational Meeting

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Nativity in the Park – We have not heard anything, not moving forward
2. Constitution and By Laws – will be moved to March due to a number of other issues between now and then
3. Healthy Congregation Training - \$51 a person for materials, four to six Saturday morning sessions– Bob Errett made a motion to approve the training. Suzy Flory seconded. Motion approved.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Distribution of Trust Fund Outreach ministry – Meeting date TBA
2. Council Retreat Date - January 6, 2018, 9:00 AM-2:00 PM
3. Approve Mark Barnhart’s request to use the Fellowship Hall, Conference Room, Parlor and Library for Rotary meeting October 6, 2018 from 7:30 AM to 3:30 PM. Bob Errett made a motion to approve. Megan Zobb seconded. Motion approved.
4. Discussion on Exec Council positions for 2018.
4. Discussion on recent Synod communication.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Amy Shultz and seconded by Suzy Flory to adjourn the meeting. Motion approved.

CLOSING PRAYER

Respectfully submitted,

Megan Zobb, Council Secretary