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## **Agenda**

1. Devotions - Steve Morganson (5 minutes)
2. St. Paul Synod Visitor - Mark Hollabaugh (10 minutes)
3. Adopt minutes from September Council meeting (5 minutes)
4. Q & A on Committee Reports (10 minutes)
5. Spotlight: Worshipping Task Force Presentation (30 minutes)
6. Old Business
  - a. Land Sale update (10 minutes)
7. New Business:
  - a. Nominating Committee update (10 minutes)
8. Adjournment

## Attendees

								c=Committee Focus		d=Devotions		e=excused					
N			chair	% att	dev.	focus	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
							6/20/13	8/8/13	9/18/13	10/23/13	11/20/13	12/18/13	1/16/14	2/20/14	3/20/14	4/17/14	5/15/14
1	Treasurer	Dave	Bergeson	x	100%	0	0	x	x	x	x						
2	Finance	Mike	Bonk	x	75%	0	0	x	x	e	x						
3	Vice President	Jessica	Donahue	x	100%	1	0	x	d	x	x						
4	Stewardship	Dean	Eisfelder	x	75%	0	0	x	e	x	x						
5	Financial Secr	Brent	Harms	x	50%	0	0	x	e	e	x						
6	Fellowship	Patrice	Katzenmaier	x	100%	1	0	x	x	d	x						
7	Missions	Patty	Longard	x	25%	0	0	x	e	e	e						
8	Youth and Family	Dane	McKenzie	x	25%	0	0	x	e	e	e						
9	Youth and Family	Darcy	McKenzie	x	75%	0	0	x	x	x	e						
10	Evangelism	Steve	Morganson	x	100%	1	0	x	x	x	d						
11	Pastor	Cassie	Nault	x	100%	1	0	x	x	x	d						
12	Education	Tanisha	Pikula	x	100%	0	0	x	x	x	x						
13	President	Debbie	Pirkl	x	100%	0	0	x	x	x	x						
14	Secretary	Andy	Ruff	x	100%	1	0	d	x	x	x						
15	Pastor	John	Snider	x	100%	0	0	x	x	x	x						
16	Property & Maint	Justin	Woods	x	75%	0	0	x	x	x							
17	Property & Maint	Dan	Youness	x	50%	0	0			x	x						
18	Worship & Music	Chris	Youngren	x	50%	0	0			x	x						
	count	18	18	18		5	0	16	12	14	14	0	0	0	0	0	0

## Meeting Notes

1. Meeting was called to order at 19:15 by president Debbie Pirkl. Guests included:
  - 1.1. Abra Gillman, Book keeper
  - 1.2. Mark Hallabough from the St. Paul Synod
  - 1.3. Kathy Canniff, Deb Ellis, and Cathy Harms from the Strat plan -Worship committee.
2. Devotions: Steve Morganson led the devotion.
3. Budgeting. Abra reviewed the budgeting process. Abra provides each committee with a worksheet that shows: 2013 budget, 2013 actual, and a blank for 2014. Please estimate your 2014 expenses and return completed forms to Mike Bonk by 11/10.
  - 3.1. Question: Eisfelder asks which committee covers kitchen supplies. Abra will check.
4. St. Paul Synod Visitor - Mark Hollabaugh. Mark introduced himself. He is a lay member at St. Paul Reformation Church and member of the synod team who will be visiting all synod congregations this year. [Pastor John is doing this too]. Mark is also on the bishop election committee. Our synod will elect a new bishop in May of 2014. The process is covered on the synod web site. Mark invites us to participate in the process.

Intent of this visit: Learn what we are doing and share with the synod. Questions: How do we see God active in our congregation? What are we grateful for / want more of from the synod or national ELCA? Discussion:

- 4.1. Strategic planning: Harms: Started a couple years ago. Has evolved to some specific initiatives. The worship committee is here tonight. Mark: does that mean space or worship itself? It starts with worship itself but could evolve into a change of space. A key question is how do we maintain long term viability?
  - 4.1.1. Harms: our mission is connecting to God, each other and the world. We are targeting 4 goals: welcome, worship, equip, serve.
  - 4.1.2. Input is welcome. Mark: check the web site under strategic planning.
- 4.2. Youth: Dave Bergerson: we hired a new youth director. This is a priority. Intent is to improve our appeal to youth. Mark: are there more families moving into the area? Jessica: we need to draw them in. Dave: current services are heavy with organ music. We want to appeal to young and old. Saturday night service?
- 4.3. Budget: Dean Eisfelder: we are selling a vacant portion of our property to raise funds for potential future projects. We don't have specifics in mind yet.
- 4.4. Welcoming: we added a welcoming desk and are exploring broadcast of concerts and services on local public access TV.
- 4.5. Education: we moved Sunday school to Wednesday evenings. Attendance is growing. 70+ people were here tonight for dinner, confirmation and classes. The Sunday program was dwindling. Hockey teams don't play Wednesdays.
- 4.6. Contemporary service. Morganson. We've been doing this the first Sunday of every month. Members like it.

- 4.7. Web site: Mark said he visited our web site and it is excellent. He hadn't realized we were tied to Pueblo de Fe. Mark suggests we could upload sermons.
  - 4.8. What are we grateful for from the synod? Some examples:
    - 4.8.1. Disaster relief. Disaster victims say lots of people show up early. Lutherans stay to help.
    - 4.8.2. Tanzania ministry.
    - 4.8.3. Food safety training. We serve. We need to serve safely.
    - 4.8.4. Pastor John: if we had issues, we'd know the synod a lot better.
    - 4.8.5. Good training of our youth directors.
  - 4.9. Bishop election: The process starts in November. The chair of the call committee will send out a schedule of events. Our synod is 150 congregations spread from Wyoming MN in the north to Randolph MN in the south. Pastor Cassie: Intent is to make this more like a call process, ie. spirit led instead of popularity only.
  - 4.10. Mark offered a prayer. Time at this point: 19:55.
5. Adopt minutes from September Council meeting.
    - 5.1. Corrections:
      - Item 3... Adopt minutes from June ... should've said adopt minutes from August.
      - Item 5.3.3 Mickelson's committee... should've said Mikel's committee
    - 5.2. M/S/C to approve the minutes as corrected.
6. Q & A on Committee Reports
    - 6.1. Meeting dates: PirkI: bring your calendars next month so we can pick dates for H1'14 council meetings.
    - 6.2. Youth / education: discussion over the silent auction. Pikula: there is some confusion over frequency of these and who runs them. Sounds like this has evolved. We used to alternate years with Augustana. More recently we tried every year and last year tried to do a Spring one too but that did not go well. Pastor John: This used to be done by the men's group. John suggests: Darcy and Taunisha get Sitraka involved. Tim Youngren, Bruce Meyers, and Jim Packer used to run this and can offer input. The committee needs to write some letters and deliver to Robert St. businesses to solicit donations and then organize and mark stuff for the auction. Brent says this takes longer than you think. Allow plenty of time.
7. Spotlight: Strategic Planning - Worship Task Force. Cathy Harms passed out a handout (copy attached below) and reviewed contents with the group. Brent thanked the committee for their efforts. Council questions and discussion follows:
    - 7.1. Worship leaders: would these be staff or contractors? This affects benefits.
    - 7.2. Screens: permanent or retractable? Retractable.
    - 7.3. Brent: thanks the pastors for their willingness to do a third service. Pastor John: worship is the core; the heart that sends us out.
    - 7.4. Brent: we do want new bathrooms. But worship changes has potential for bigger impact; if we generate excitement the rest will follow.
    - 7.5. Finance: PirkI: We have an operating budget. This is a separate strategic budget...

- 7.5.1. Brent: This includes a \$20,000 one time expenditure and \$45,000/yr for people. Financing could be separate. Example: one time expense covered by the foundation?
  - 7.5.2. Brent: do we tie this in at stewardship time? Ask for extra contributions for this worship proposal? People who donate want to see things happen.
  - 7.6. Canniff: we won't know if this will work till we give it a try.
  - 7.7. Presenting this to the congregation. Pirkl: this will be presented 11/3 during fellowship hour.
  - 7.8. Timing: Start in early January? Wait till after the annual meeting end of January?
    - 7.8.1. Pastor John: it doesn't take much to start a service. When / how do we approve the expenditures?
    - 7.8.2. Meeting next week: John and Cathy want to kick off marketing 30 days prior to the start of the extra services.
  - 7.9. Where will the people come from [for the Saturday evening service]? Morganson.
    - 7.9.1. Brent: initially: shifting from services. Hopefully we will pick up new.
    - 7.9.2. Cathy: we need to do marketing and track performance. Marketing means signs, web site, flyers. Performance means attendance.
    - 7.9.3. People who have left are good targets.
    - 7.9.4. Will this affect Sunday blended service?
  - 7.10. How does Pueblo de Fe fit in? Stats suggest the Hispanic population is growing way faster than Caucasian.
  - 7.11. Is a quality half hour service possible?
    - 7.11.1. Brent: people want predictability and consistency.
  - 7.12. Will we do 4 services year round?
  - 7.13. Pirkl: Let's step back, think about it, discuss during adult ed 11/3, reconvene the worship committee... then? Exec? Thursday 11/7? [We need to make a decision on if and how we will fund this proposal and define timing...]
8. Old Business
- 8.1. Land Sale update. Pirkl. A new corrected purchase agreement has been received. The buyer requests postponing the closing till after approval of the site plan by the city of West St. Paul. Current estimated timing is last week of November.
9. New Business: Pirkl: The nominating committee is looking for a replacement for Chris Youngren as chair of the Worship committee.
10. Next meeting: 11/20. Dave Paton will present on the Foundation.
11. Adjournment
- 11.1. MSC to adjourn at 20:50.
  - 11.2. We closed with a prayer.

Respectfully submitted,  
Andy Ruff, Secretary

***Attachment: Strategic Planning – Worship Sub-Committee Proposal***

**Mission**

***Connecting to God, each other and the world***

**Committee Goal**

***Services that inspire and stay with you during the week***

Worship team members: Sondra Paton, Mike McHugh, Deb Ellis, Janelle Woods, Kathy Caniff, Cathy Harms.

Keeping these key goals in mind.....team came up with some commonality on a few points

- Service must be focused and well executed (offering cannot take 10 minutes!)
- Service must be relevant to current day and our current lives
- Service should be shorter – 45 - 50 minute maximum
- Service should be memorable and meaningful
- Gospel is key and sermon is key –
- Music is important – sing songs that everyone can sing with, mix of traditional and contemporary. Want words that are meaningful and tie to the sermon and gospel
- Figure out ways to get the youth involved when possible.

Based on our mission and key goals - we have come up with the following recommendations:

Beginning the first week in January 2014 there will be 4 service options at St. Stephens

1. Saturday at 5:00 – “The Bridge” Band-led, family friendly, contemporary
2. Sunday at 8:30 - Traditional service
3. Sunday at 10:30 - "Light" service that lasts about 30 minutes
4. Sunday at 12 - Pueblo de Fe

The worship committee wants to emphasize the quality of the service - in execution of the service, in the quality of music at every service, and the quality of the message. In order to deliver that, there are some investments that would need to be made. We have highlighted all the roles necessary to make the worship experience spectacular - some are currently in the budget and others are outside of the budget.

The other key investment is in marketing for the new service. A specific marketing plan is detailed at the end of this proposal.

Below are the proposed positions and investments that we recommend:

<b>Position</b>	<b>Role/Description</b>	<b>Volunteer or Paid</b>	<b>Estimated Annual Cost</b>
Praise Band Leader	Responsible for choosing music, running the Sat service. Also responsible for youth choir or music groups.	Paid - \$250 per Saturday	\$13,000
Praise Band – drum, guitar, bass maybe piano	Perform each Sat night	Paid – 3 additional at \$100 per Saturday	\$16,000
Part-time Worship Coordinator	Responsible for coordinating all parts of the worship from confirming participants, having tech ready, preparing the screen content, posting social media updates.	Paid 20 hours per week @\$15 per hour	\$15,600
Church Admin	Continue to do bulletins for Sunday and also develop the Powerpoint for Saturday and contemporary service	Paid - Already in budget	0 new dollars
Tech Team – 3 - 4	Group of people to run the microphones, screen projector, lights, etc for each service	Volunteer – coordinated with Worship coordinator above	0 new dollars
Organist /Choir Director	Select music for groups, post music on website, recruit choir members, responsible for adult music groups, do all music for services on Sunday	Paid – already in budget -	0 new dollars
Choirs – Men's Women's, Bells	Need to have enough volunteers to perform.	Volunteer – run by Organist	0 new dollars
Youth Sunday	Sitraka will be in charge and will need to get enough youth to cover all the roles needed	Volunteer run by Youth Director	0 new dollars



<b>Equipment Infrastructure Needs</b>			
Screens up front	2 screens in the front of the church. All readings and hymns would be projected up there for all services. Eliminating the need for complete bulletins.		Total cost of screens and projectors = \$17,000
Projectors for screens	There would be 2 projectors connected to PC for the screen information		
Special Chairs plus offering bags on the pews	To make it more family friendly we thought about having an area where kids could sit in beanbags or fun chairs		\$1,000
Marketing Activities	New logo, flyers, ads, mailings, website update, make it easy to connect		\$10,000
Total Annual Expenses			\$54,600
Total One-Time			\$18,000
Total			\$72,600

January 4<sup>th</sup> is the proposed kick-off date for the Saturday Service.

Key Dates	Activities	Estimated Costs
November	Find a band	
	Get a logo – contact design schools to help	\$1,000
	Name the service	
	Design flyer, postcard mailer and ad – need a clear message	\$2,000
	Order the screens and projectors	\$18,000
	Post Worship Coordinator position	
December	Update website with new services info	
	Include new service info in all bulletins and e-updates	
	Print flyers and hand out, especially at our Christmas services – need 4000 for newspaper insert plus additional 2000 for use	
	2 weeks prior to first service – send a postcard mailer – buy a targeted list	\$900 for 2,000 \$300 for list
	1 week prior to first service – a newspaper insert	\$300
	Sunday before first service – ad in Pioneer Press Sunday paper	\$500
	Hire the Worship Coordinator	
	Plan out the message and music for January	
January and February	Bi-Weekly visibility testing different marketing strategies – direct mail, ads, inserts, parking lots, home delivery. Repetition is key.	\$2,000 for 4 different activities over 2 months
	Feedback and surveys of those attending services – adjust message if necessary	
	Social Media campaign – grassroots – get video of band on Facebook, YouTube. Get people to talk about it on Twitter. Talk to our members to get them to participate and spread the “viral” word about our new services.	Starts with Worship Coordinator – no additional costs
March/April	Continue Bi-Weekly with an extra push before Easter	\$2,000 for 4 different activities over 2 mo.
May - Aug	Focus on email and social media messaging to keep the services top of mind	
	Participate in community events to spread the word	

## Committee Reports

### *Education*

Reference: Email from Tanisha Pikula dated 10/23/13 14:51

### **Christian Education Meeting**

**Attendees: Darcy McKenzie, Sitraka R., Tanisha Pikula**

**Oct 5, 2013**

#### **Old Business:**

1. **Rally Day: Sept 15<sup>th</sup> with a basket raffle and potluck egg bake and fruit bowl (Darcy will make the fliers, posters, and the Update)-There was some confusion as to who was serving on 9/15 and we apologize for this.**
2. **JOY-will move to Wed nights from 6-7pm and will offer for 3yr-1<sup>st</sup> –We still need some volunteers to continue with the JOY group.**
3. **W.I.L.D.- will be 2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade Wed. nights 6-7pm with dinner at 5:30pm**
4. **Education hour on Sundays-we will hold off on this until Christmas program rehearsal.**
5. **W.I.L.D. Sunday service-we will plan this for the spring again.**

#### **New Business:**

1. **Darcy hosted a Meet the parent's potluck dinner on 10/5 and it was great to meet new people. (Thank you Darcy & Dane)**
2. **November 6<sup>th</sup>-Operation Christmas Child \*WILD needs shoe boxes\*, JOY-making Christmas cards for pastors to bring on visits **Adult volunteers needed****
3. **Christmas Program Dec. 15<sup>th</sup>-still needs to be planned**

I would like it to be known that I'm trying to do my best as Education Chair and Michelle Stefan has been very helpful when it comes to the WILD/JOY stuff and helping me plan weekly lessons. But I feel like there is no support system for WILD/JOY and without the support and volunteers it is really hard to keep this program going. I'm open for suggestions and would love to see a list of items that I'm in charge of to make sure things happen when they are supposed to happen. It is a bit overwhelming to coordinate the things that are expected from me and to teach every week and feel there is a better (non-stressful) way for this to happen.

### ***Evangelism and Membership***

Reference: Email from Steve Morganson dated 10/7/2013 13:37

1. We obtained information on costs associated with televising events at Town Square Network. Costs are \$25 membership and certification fee per person. Each member must take four 1.5-2.0 hour classes (two editing and two filming) at \$30 each \$145 each person certified.
2. Each person can use Town Square Network's taping equipment at no charge.
3. We have seven volunteers. (Dave Paton, Jenny VanPelt, Loren VanPelt, Steve Morganson, Justin Woods, Logan Woods, and T J Pirkl).
4. Mark agreed to investigate funding as there is no money in the current budget.
5. We have delivered 11 welcome packs during the last month.

Regards  
Steve

### ***Fellowship***

Reference: Email from Patrice Katzenmaier dated 10/22/2013 08:23

Our committee met on Sunday, October 6, 2013.

Attending: P. Katzenmaier, T. Cook, K. Canniff, Diane Johnson, L. Ritt

### **UPCOMING DATES/ EVENTS**

Oct. 12-- Sandi Patti Concert & Dinner from Cassetas... Tiffany will pick up and serve dinner, Dianne will get extras from Cub. We will continue to try to sell more tickets.

Nov. 3-- Apple festival. We will have apple fritters, apple slices and apple deserts brought by various contributors. Can you bring something? Also that same evening is a concert by the Woodbury Coral. We need volunteers to serve and make sure there are treats. Can you help?

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

Sept. 15th Homecoming went well. It was a little unclear who was serving the event. Education was busy with the basket raffle. Fellowship did a great job serving and providing fruit, juice ! Thanks to you all.

Nov. 2 family game night has been cancelled due to busy schedules.

We are always looking for volunteers to fill the dates for Sunday morning donuts/coffee. I have made up an annual schedule but need help editing and implementing. Any volunteers? Can we pick a date to meet?

Yours in Christ, Patrice Katzenmaier, Chairperson, Anne Pfankuch, Kathy Canniff, Diane Johnson, Lori Ritt, Tiffany Cook, Joanna Mead, Sara Ruff

## ***Finance***

Reference Email from Mike Bonk dated 10/18/13 10:23

The Finance Committee met on Thursday October 3rd. Members present included Sue Clark, Beth Hostager, Pastor John, Abra Gillman and Mike Bonk. Dean Eisfelder also attended.

Following is a brief recap of the meeting:

### September results:

Special thanks to Abra for having September results available to the Committee within three days of month-end. September revenue of \$41,915 was 3% or \$1,300 above plan. General envelope revenue was \$1,900 less than plan but the shortfall was offset by a \$3,000 special payment from Pueblo de Fe. That payment was received earlier than budgeted. Year-to-date revenue of \$345,000 is now on plan due to special income and additional rent received.

Expenses for September of \$40,665 were \$2,000 over plan primarily due to additional maintenance and repair expense. This expense was over plan due to storm damage not covered by insurance. For the year-to-date expenses are \$12,000 under plan. Net income less expenses for the YTD is now \$11,000 favorable to plan.

### 2014 Planning:

Dean Eisfelder attended the meeting to discuss a revenue goal for 2014. After much discussion the group felt that a 5% increase in general envelope giving to \$430,000 would be a good target.

Abra has sent the 2014 budget planning worksheets to all committee chairs. I will followup with a budget schedule and request for a budget review session with each chair.

### Trailer Damage:

Beth Hostager summarized the storm damage to the tree and Boy Scout trailer along with the insurance reimbursement. The Church will receive approximately \$2,000 for approximately \$4,000 of damages (\$2,000 of tree cleanup and \$2,000 of trailer loss). The Finance Committee agreed that we should give the scouts approximately \$1,000 to cover the cost of a new trailer.

### Evangelism and Music Request:

Mark Rogosheske stopped by the meeting to request funds to place some of St Stephen's music on the local access channel. Most of the funds will be used to train Church volunteers on video taping. The Committee approved \$1,200 for the request with the source of funds being a dedicated account.

### Land Sale:

Subsequent to the meeting Mike Butala indicated that the new closing date for the land sale is November 27th. More time was needed to complete the survey and allow the buyer more time to receive city approval for their plans.

Respectfully submitted  
Mike Bonk

## **Missions**

Reference Email from Patty Longard dated 10/13/13 18:43

Meeting Minutes 10/4/13

Old business

1. **Finances** - Jacqueline's check (part of the Ken Nelson Estate tithe) has been sent to the Synod to support her education
2. **Sandwich making went well!** We made nearly 350 sandwiches, and fun was had by all. Pictures to come on Facebook
3. **Budget** - discussed our theoretical plan for 2014. At this point, plan to continue with the status quo, not add any new organizations this year. Remaining budget will be determined early 2014 after acceptance of the church budget.
4. **Get To Know Your Neighbors** - not much action this month, planning another big push for Winter / January
5. **Tanzania monies** - continue working with Fellowship to decide how to distribute the funds earned at the garage sale
6. **Pots and Pans** - Oct 27th (posted in the update)

New Business

1. **Operation Christmas Child** - sounds like plans are in the works, we will offer help to Sitraka
2. **Walk to End hunger** - Plan to work on promotion this year, let members decide which organizations to donate their funds to (many options such as Loaves and Fishes, Neighbors, Second Harvest and MN Foodshare.) Plan to post messages on Facebook to remind members to sign up. There will be no official St Stephen's team this year.
3. **Holiday plans** - Angel Tree is back - plan to ask Kim Henning if she is interested in doing this again this winter.
4. **Looking ahead to 2014-** will keep up-coming events in our agenda; 30 Hour Famine will come again, Souper Bowl Sunday Feb 2nd, Lent March 5 - Apr 20 - congregational focus on outreach and Missions; will choose an event to do for Lent (ie: sandwich making, extra push for loaves and fishes, keep working on ideas) Mission Sunday - May 4th - theme TBD.

Connecting with God, Others and the World

Worship – Welcome – Equipping – Serving

***Pastor's Report – John Snider***

Reference: Email from Pastor John dated 10/23/2013 16:32

It has been a wonderful month! Some of the things which stand out to me include:

1. Our relationship with **Henry Sibley High School**. With the help of Darcy and Jessica, Sitraka was able to give free hot dogs to the first 100 hungry high schoolers setting up the home coming parade. We are blessed once a year to have so much of the High School, and their parents come to us! In a very similar manner we hosted a bonfire for the anniversary of Adam Stenhaug's death and again the community came to us. The Noreen Center was used. Over 100 people gathered around the fire.
2. The **strategic planning group** gathering around worship has really gotten busy, as you will hear tonight. I think they are bringing some excellent ideas for us in response to the question of how we can bring more people to the worship of God. Brent and I have meet with Jack Fortin, each other and the committee: Mike McHugh, Sondra Patton, Deborah Ellis, Kathy Canniff, Janell Woods, Cathy Harms have been bold and faithful. It is an exciting time to be in leadership here has we step forward in faith.
3. **Via de Cristo**, half way done as the women's weekend begins tomorrow remains a 5 star experience. It is a many layered experience: faith, music, food, friendship, worship all tied up with humor. I would recommend everyone take advantage of the weekend. It has provided a boost to my faith.
4. **Pueblo de Fe** and its future will be the subject of a meeting at the Synod Office tomorrow. Jacqueline Belzer and I are floating the idea of a new form of Latino ministry, a "friendly experiment" involving a multiply sight worshipping community, strong on lay leadership, with the oversight of Jacqueline.
5. Justin Woods and Dan Youness organized a meeting of the **Hard Hats** in Justin's driveway. It was a nice beginning to re-energizing this much needed group. It will be restored in a more modern ways, with talk of "Googledocs" as part of the solution.
6. New leadership has emerged to help with the **Scandinavian Meatball Dinner and Silent Auction**. It's nice to see this long term effort appreciated and supported. Men: please be available on Friday, November 8<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. for an hour of food preparation and again on Saturday for serving. Everyone: Saturday, November 9<sup>th</sup>, plan on eating here and bringing your friends. One of the singular characteristics of this event is that ALL the proceeds go to youth, ours and the scouts.
7. Friday, October 25, at 11 a.m. we will celebrate the life of **Margaret Mattson**, a longtime member and wonderful saint.

***Pastor's Report – Cassie Nault***

Reference: No update as of 10/23/2013 13:00

Hello Council,

A few highlights from the past month:

\***Women's Retreat to Heartwood Conference Center** went well October 4th-5th; theme: "Chocolat" 8 women in attendance, planned by Lori Ritt and Nancy Schaffert. A good time and some inspirational Bible study. Everyone agreed we should pursue doing this again next year.

\*Sunday, October 5th: We welcomed **Christian Hip Hop Artist, AGAPE\*, into our First Sunday Confirmation Worship service**. 5 students publicly affirmed their faith and read their faith statements to the congregation. This was a different worship experience for our congregation, but by all appearances, a welcome one.

\*Weekly Confirmation, WILD, and JOY programs are off to a great start! **At last count, we had 70 students registered** for these programs (in Pre-K through 8th grades).

\*This Sunday, October 27th, 7 3rd graders will receive their Bibles in the 10:45am worship service. If you haven't already, **please share your favorite Bible verse with the kids in their Bibles--found in the narthex**. When the children receive their Bibles, we want them to be full of encouragement to study God's Word.

\*I participated in a Continuing Education Event in Buffalo, Minnesota at Christ the King Retreat Center last week, leading worship for the Connex Conference: A Summit on Children's Ministry hosted by a joint effort of the UCC, Episcopal, Methodist, and Lutherans in Minnesota. I gained some good perspective on possibilities for worship during Lent and on integrating children into worship (one example: having a "children's message" doesn't necessarily make our worship services child-friendly).

\*My husband Tony participated on the Kitchen Team for the men's Via de Cristo weekend last week and I will be serving in the Rollo Room for the women's Via de Cristo weekend this week. It's been an interesting and enriching experience and I encourage others to check into Via de Cristo opportunities in the future.

I will be out of the office for most of November and part of December on maternity leave (the "due date" is November 6<sup>th</sup>, but we all know that's just a guestimate, babies tend to enter the world in God's timing, not ours). In my absence, Pastor John, Sitraka, Deborah Ellis, Jenny Van Pelt, and our three Luther Seminary students (Keith, Mandy, and Katelyn) are all stepping up to cover my duties. I am very thankful for their support and for your prayers and encouragement. Thank you!

Peace,  
Cassie



### ***Property and Maintenance***

Reference: No update as of 10/23/13 19:00

### ***Stewardship***

Reference: Email from Dean Eisfelder dated 10/22/2013 14:42

The Stewardship Committee met on September 23rd and October 6th to continue planning the 2014 Stewardship Campaign. The materials for the mailing have been printed and are ready to be mailed on October 24th. Every family will receive a letter from Pastor John, a letter from the Stewardship chair (me), a step-chart for planned giving, and a pledge card. Members are invited to return their pledge card on Stewardship Sunday which is November 17th. Our goal is to raise \$430,000 in total envelope income (both hard and soft pledges) for 2014. This is a 5% increase over last year.

For the first time members will also be able to submit their stewardship pledge online using the St Stephen's website. Members can also download and print the pledge card and pledge materials on their own printer as well. Our thanks to Dean Hostager for his technical know-how. We are planning on sending an email announcement about this new pledge option to all members with an email address.

To promote the 2014 Stewardship Campaign, the Fellowship and Stewardship committees will be hosting an Apple Festival during the November 3rd Fellowship Hour. We are planning on serving apple treats as well as other goodies in order to entice people to stay and listen to a series of presentations by Pastor John, Miike McHugh and Sondra Paten, and Dean Eisfelder. Brent Harms will be the Master of Ceremonies and will introduce the speakers.

We have also invited several members to give short Temple Talk presentations about their faith journeys. The speakers include Don Smith (10/27), Donnie McKenzie (11/3), and Dean Eisfelder (11/10).

Dean Eisfelder  
Stewardship Chair

### ***Worship and Music***

Reference: Email from Chris Youngren dated 10/22/13 15:08

No Meeting was held this month.

Chris Youngren, Chair

## **Youth**

Reference: Email from Darcy McKenzie dated 10/23/13 17:06

1. **Henry Sibley High School Homecoming Parade:** The Henry Sibley Communications Director was delighted to spread the word that St. Stephens was as ever delighted to host the parade. We served 100 free hot dogs, chips & refreshing glasses of water. Sitraka R. & Jessica D. were instrumental in making the gesture an unique success. Superintendent Nancy Allen-Maesto sent me a gracious email of gratitude.
2. **Parent Potluck:** Dane & I hosted a potluck gathering in our home on Oct 5th for the parents of youth and children in our congregation. There were few in attendance but believe it is a sure step to inspire friendships and create a sense of belonging among the group.
3. **Scandinavian Meatball Dinner and Silent Auction:** Efforts to secure more volunteers to assist with the Silent Auction have floundered. Hopefully last minutes attempts will prove successful.
4. **Holiday Boutique:** Again, my attempts to secure individuals to coordinate and organize this event have been futile. Two individuals have given me a feeble maybes. Say a prayer that I may inspire some "go-getters".

Respectfully submitted,

Darcy McKenzie,  
Youth Co-Chair

End of File.