

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church
Council Meeting

Date/Time: 20 April 2016/Meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Location: Lounge at St. Stephen's Church

Attendees (Absent): Dave Bergeson, Jessica Donahue, Beth Hostager, Vicki Jackson, Patrice Katzenmaier, Dane McKenzie, Darcy McKenzie, Diane Meyers, Steve Morganson, Cassie Nault, Kathy Packer, Tanisha Pikula, Sitraka Rakotoarivelo, Lori Ritt, Doug Schmitt, Brett Scribner, John Snider, Laura Vitelli, Amy Wilson

Agenda

1. Opening Prayer/ Devotions
2. Adopt minutes from March Council meeting 2016
3. **Q & A committee reports:**
 - a. **Stewardship/finance – any discussion or comments**
 - i. start folding in the stewardship message more prominently during some Sunday services
 - b. **Youth pancake breakfast follow up- WAPO weekend follow-up**
 - c. **Fellowship – June 5th / June 12th Barbary Coast**
4. **New Business:**
 - i. **What is next with transparency of finances after thank you letters go out**
5. **Old Business:**
 - a. **May 18th, June 15th, July off**
6. **Adjournment – Lord's Prayer**

Discussion of Agenda Items

1. **Opening Prayer/ Devotions – Pastor Cassie read from the Gospel reading (John 13: 31-35) – they will know we are Christians. Even little children can believe, “what does that mean for us as followers?” – Even little children can believe.**

2. **Adopt minutes from March Council meeting 2016** motion to approve minutes Brett Schribner motioned to approve, Patrice Katzenmeier 2nd that motion. Unanimous voice vote to pass minutes.
3. **Q & A committee reports:**
 - a. **Stewardship/finance – any discussion or comments**
 - i. start folding in the stewardship message more prominently during some Sunday services this has been delicately applied, Pastor John wanted to have more support from council, all voiced to support implementing this more. Last sermon to include this was Feb. 14th.
 - ii. Pastor Cassie added a discussion note that we should look into as far as a financial gain or stewardship piece and that is Thrivent, and get the word out that being a member of Thrivent has a benefit to our church community. Beth was going to check into information on this and perhaps have information go out to our congregation.
 - iii. Stewardship is working on getting the thank you letters out, a bit slower than planned.
 - iv. Additional discussion was left at “top line collectively ask for more”
 - v. Finance: Beth and Diane will provide individual training to the chairs of each committee to understand how the budget works.
 - vi. Inviting committee has finished phase I and is working on beginning phase II
 - b. **Youth pancake breakfast follow up- WAPO weekend follow-up**
 - i. Youth breakfast raised 770.00, lower than last year.
 - ii. Wapo Confirmation weekend was a success, 11 + Pastor Cassie. Sitraka wanted to make sure we sent out recognition to Marnie Goldsvig as she volunteered the weekend to be with the kids. Big Thank you to her.
 - c. **Fellowship – June 5th / June 12th Barbary Coast**

- i. June 5th we (fellowship) will be hosting a potluck celebrating “us” a visual sign up board will be displayed soon.
 - ii. Graduation recognition to be celebrated on May 22nd 10:45 service also this day is the semiannual meeting.
 - iii. Other fellowship notes: Our annual clean up our church day is going to be June 15th it’s a Wednesday, we are working out the meal details, but families should arrive around 430p.m. and then will be assigned a job, dinner will be at 5:30 we will work until 730, then have a closing prayer with a campfire and smores and a sendoff for our WAPO kids who will leave that next Friday and Sunday
4. **New Business:** other discussion brought to the table was: continuing the outdoor service, blessing of the animals, and our outdoor movie night.

John wanted to bring to our attention he will be offering 8 classes following A Path with Heart book. They will be participating in conversation and silent prayer around this book. It will be offered the 2nd and the 4th Wednesdays starting in May at 7pm

5. **Old Business:**
 - a. **May 18th, June 15th, July off**
6. **Adjournment – Lord’s Prayer**

Attachments to these Minutes:

Committee Reports

Mission Committee
Fellowship Committee
Finance Committee
Worship Committee
Youth Director’s Report
Associate Pastor’s Report
Pastor’s Report

Committee Reports

Mission Committee (Patty Longard)

Lynda B., Vicky J, Cassie N., Patty L.

- We celebrated our **MN March Foodshare** campaign, where we collected \$2035 and 271lb food!! This far exceeds our collections in recent years.
- **Loaves and Fishes** - This account is doing much better than we had previously surmised. We do have another offering May 1, however, based on our current surplus, will go back to quarterly offerings (instead of 5). Also discussed doing a yearly special offering on Wednesday; probably in the fall.
- **Mission Sunday** - We decided to go with a Missions volunteer fair for Sunday May 1st. We will have tables with representatives from Feed My Starving Children, Loaves and Fishes, Meals on Wheels, Neighbors Inc, Lutheran Campus Ministries, Tanzania scholarship program, Lutheran Mideast Development, and our Parish Nurse volunteer. We will also be selling Fair Trade coffee. Finally, we hope to have a speaker at Adult Forum talking about the Lutheran Synod presence in Guatemala.

Respectfully submitted
Patty Longard

Fellowship Committee (Patrice Katzenmaier)

Attended: Kathy Cannif, Pastor John, Sara Ruff, Patrice Katzenmaier, Rosalie Christenson

The new ratio of coffee being used does not seem to make a difference in the taste so we will continue to use the new recipe.

The sign up poster board seems to be working well so we will continue to use it. The visual aide seems to attract more people to sign up. A big thanks for this change! We have a few open spots in May.

We are planning a Brunch for June 5th, 10:30. The theme will be "Children of God, Making a Difference-Celebrating Us". We will have a pot luck sign up soon- I believe Kathy volunteered to make?

We would like to attend a St Paul Saints game again in August.

Patrice Katzenmaier, fellowship committee chair

Finance Committee (Diane Meyers)

The Finance committee did not meet in the month of April.

Financials :

Month of March Financials :

Income was **\$5,164.24 under plan** due to Publeo De Fa rent was budgeted in April of \$3,257.50 was not received. Timing issue.

Expenses: Property and Maintenance had a favorable variance to plan of \$2,853.17 due to Gas charges **positive variances of \$3,200.16**

Education has more expense than plan due to Wednesday meals of \$1,388.91.

Income less expenses for the month was **\$2,282.56 over plan.**

Respectfully submitted.

Beth Hostager and Diane Meyers, Finance co -chairs

Worship Committee (Lori Ritt)

Attended: Lori Ritt, Cleone Swanburg, Cassie Nault

Absent: Mary Brunkow

Guest: Marilyn Erickson

Worship committee met on Thursday, April 8.

Marilyn was available to go over possible green banners either for summer or January.

Lori presented possible idea for parament. Discussed possibility of gathering quilting squares from congregation. What fabric available from downstairs. we will look and get back to Marilyn of ideas.

Pentecost May 15th - Red -balloons and dove

Barbary Coast June 12th - one service

Lori Ritt

Youth Director (Sitraka Rakotoarivelo)

April 20, 2016

C.Y.F HIGHLIGHTS

April 8-10: Confirmation Retreat

The retreat went very well. A big thanks to Marnie Gulsvig for chaperoning the girls and for Pastor Cassie and her leadership. During the weekend we covered the topics of purpose (vocation), God's love and Faith Statements.

Faith Formation Nights

It's been a good year. Giving kids opportunities to learn and grow in their faith in classes has been going well. This encourages a closer relationship between the adult leaders and student. Larry Longard, Shanely Harper, Janell Woods, Mary Molumby and Tanisha Pikula have been great this entire year.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Camp Wapogasset, June 17-24

We have a total of 25 registrations going to WAPO this summer. Very exciting. Tanisha and I will be going during the youth week. I always encourage parents to come and see their kids in a Camp environment, even if only for a morning or afternoon.

Vacation Bible School, July 11-15 (9am - 12pm)

Curriculum: Cave Quest by Group Publishing

Ground kids in the rock-solid foundation of God's love, a love that takes us through life's dark times.

Promotions for Vacation Bible School will be going up soon.

Always need adult leadership, adults are the ones that make it exciting for the kids.

AV EQUIPMENT/TALK

How is everyone liking the new sound system so far? There have been some complications with the sound system during the early phase of it being installed. Unfortunately we had to also use the portable system money to purchase additional equipment to fix the issues. We hope that we will still be able to get somewhat of a portable system in the future.

What we do with the old A/V stuff is up for discussion. We have talked about selling the old soundboard, which still has a pretty good value, or reusing it as a dedicated board for the fellowship hall (replacing the wall mounted audio box). Gerrit is reusing our previous speaker and amps downstairs.

SOCIAL MEDIA

We are looking for more Committee involvement when it comes to posting on our Facebook and Instagram pages to help create consistency with event promotion throughout the week. An example would be the Inviting Committees "My Church" video. They did the work and I helped put it online, then we showed it during our weekend service. It helps all families (especially Wednesday families) see what's happening during the weekends since there seems to be somewhat of a barrier between the events we promote on Wednesdays and weekends. Our most active Facebook users are part of the Wednesday group.

That is all!

Blessings to you all,
Sitraka Rakotoarivelo
Director of Children and Youth Ministry

Associate Pastor's Report (Pastor Cassie Nault)

Confirmation: We're in the final stretch of Confirmation classes for the spring: this week and next.

Annual CYF Planning: Sitraka and I will be gathering our calendars the first week in May and planning the next program year. If you have any events that you want to make sure get on the calendar, please let us know before May 1st.

Guatemala Trip 2017: We're in the beginning stages of planning a Mission/Service Learning Trip to Guatemala for Summer 2017. We will have Janet Metcalfe, representing the Saint Paul Area Synod's partnership with the Augustinian Lutheran Church of Guatemala speaking in Adult Forum on May 1st to tell us more about the ministries we might be visiting. **This trip is NOT just for kids.** The recommendation is that participants are ages 16 and up, so I'm sending announcements to the youth, but we will need folks to commit to the trip a year in advance, so we can properly plan.

Wilderness Canoe Base Family Camp: I'm leading a group of 14 people for family camp; 3 families from our congregation. We are looking forward to this intergenerational camp experience at the end of the Gunflint Trail at the Lutheran Bible camp; August 1st-5th. Registration for the event has closed—if anyone else does want to go, they will need to be put on the waiting list.

Peace,
Cassie

Pastor's Report (Pastor John Snider) **April 20, 2016**

1. **New Members** this weekend! We have 9 new members joining and all of them have found St. Stephen's to be a friendly and welcoming congregation. Special thanks to **Joyce Taylor** who attended both new member orientations and the reception at my house. One remarkable aspect of this group was as they introduced themselves they spoke in a very personal and open fashion; more in paragraphs than sentences. Be sure to welcome them this weekend!
2. With the leadership of **Sitraka** and **Cassie** before her maternity leave, we had amazing **Lenten Wednesday** worship services. There were plenty of people, adults, youth, mentors, members of all stripes. The worship services were led by various age groups and with a very impressive sense of dignity and grace. It's what we want weekend worship services to look like. We gathered a group of pastors from **other churches on April 14th** to share our experiences. On **May 4th** we have invited a few people to meet with the staff to talk about worship options in our future. There is also a class at Luther Seminary in **July** called, "**Rethinking Sunday Morning**".
3. Since we last meet "**Let's Talk**" our bridge building with local Muslims has meet twice. For the meeting at St. Stephen's we had over 30 people and discussed Jesus the Messiah and Holy Communion. We also meet at the mosque and 8 people from St. Stephen's attended. What a powerful experience it is, but we shouldn't be surprised, Jesus said we'd meet him in the "other".
4. **Nominating Committee** is under sail. We've met twice. We see our job as being grateful for all who serve, finding new servants and building supportive and helpful committees. Thank you to: **Tiffany Cook, Dave Paton, Annette Youness, Darcy McKenzie, Brett Scribner**. We are concerned about the identity of a council elected member. Along the lines of thanking servants, not just those serving at church but serving throughout their lives, the Fellowship Committee is going to celebrate "**Vocation**" on the weekend of **June 18, 19th**.

5. **Lutheran Mideast Development** is having a big week. This Saturday, April 23 we will be “friend-raising” in Durham, North Carolina, combining the connections that Matthew Hand has there musically with those my family has. On Thursday, April 28th, 7 p.m. Matthew Hand will bring a report of the ongoing work in the midst of the terrible turmoil in the Middle East in our sanctuary.
6. Jack Kornfield’s book, “**A Path with Heart: A Guide through the Perils and Promises of Spiritual Life**” will be the foundation for an 8 session class on prayer and meditation. It will be offered the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of May, June, July and August, from 7-8:30 p.m. in the Gathering Room. I’ll be teaching it with the Rev. Gary Stoos with whom I taught Centering Prayer. It is a kind of next step. If you are interested in exploring spiritual practices I recommend giving it a try.
7. Finally, how about our **Adult Ed. Leadership Team**: Dan and Alice Mikel, Dean Eisfelder, Carol Pagel, Cleone Swanberg. We have absolutely amazing topics and presentations, from Dr. Nadia Mohamed, gun issues, a friend of Pope Francis talking about their relationship before he was Pope and this week, **Pastor Cassie** addressing theological questions from the listeners.

Stewardship Committee (Laura Vitelli)

Stewardship Report

Invitation Committee (Steve Morganson)