

St Stephen's Lutheran Church  
Council Meeting Minutes

Date/Time: October 22nd, 2014/7:21 p.m.

Location: Lounge at St. Stephen's Church

Attendees (Absent): Dave Bergeson, Mike Bonk, Jessica Donahue, Brent Harms, Patrice Katzenmaier, Patty Longard, Dane McKenzie, Darcy McKenzie, Steve Morganson, Cassie Nault, Tanisha Pikula, Debbie Pirkel, Lori Ritt, Doug Schmitt, John Snider, Dan Youness, Laura Vitelli, Justin Woods, Sitakra Rakotoarivelo

Agenda

1. Devotions - Debbie
2. Adopt minutes from September Council meeting
3. Q & A on Committee Reports
4. Old Business
  - a. Alternative Worship Music Minister update
  - b. Changes to sign (Steve M)
  - c. Property Project List
5. New Business:
  - a. Alternative Sunday Worship Schedule
6. Adjournment – Lord's Prayer

Discussion of Agenda Items:

1. Devotions (Debbie)
  - a. Mathew 4:10
  - b. The meaningfulness and importance of church
  - c. Cassie to lead devotions next month
2. Motion to adopt September Council minutes seconded and approved by voice vote
  - a. Mike moved to approve minutes, Steve seconded the motion and was passed by voice vote
3. Q & A on Committee Report
  - a. Stewardship (Laura)
    - i. Sketched out a process for year end and next year
    - ii. Will produce a video working with the theme "Happy" showing committee activities
    - iii. Would like to do social media hosting (Facebook) over the course of the campaign
      - Plan to post pictures – advance approval required
      - Want to get photos from each of the committees
      - Put together a calendar for coordinating with committees
      - Loaves and fishes first target
      - Play video several weeks in a row in advance of parish Stewardship meeting
    - iv. Very important to have congregation leadership to thank contributors on a timely basis
  - b. Finance (Mike)
    - i. Mike passed out financials of year to date status and y/e projections
      - Tracking low on revenue
      - High utilities this year

- Project that expenses will exceed revenue by \$70,000 by year end
- Looking to increase pledges by 3% next year
- Shortfall will come out of reserves
- Many of the reserves are already dedicated for specific purposes but have sufficient unallocated reserves to get us through next year
- ii. Letter will be sent out to the committee chairs on or about 1 Nov. for them to identify needs/requirements in 2015
- iii. Letter going out parishioners who are behind on their giving asking them to get to a "current status" on their giving
- iv. Brent commented from a strategic prospective:
  - Things have been relatively flat over the past years
  - Need to take some dramatic actions to change the course or we have to step back and live within our funding
  - Need to have healthy discussions with the congregation regarding our path forward
  - Feels need \$200K for the next four or five years to really grow the church
- v. Cassie suggested that we conduct a survey of our neighbors asking them "what they think of the church" in their midst
  - Not trying to proselytize but rather to gather information regarding how the church/parish is regarded by the people in the area
- vi. John commented that change only happens when it is less painful to change than it is to not change
- vii. Need to get a leadership (current and past) in a retreat setting to brainstorm how we want to proceed, what do we want to be in future

#### 4. Old Business

- a. Alternative Worship Music Minister Hiring Committee & Candidates (Debbie)
  - i. Offer has been made to a person for the Music Minister for the Bridge Service
  - ii. Negotiations in progress
  - iii. One year contract with bi-lateral termination provision with 30 day notice
  - iv. Want to make this a specific line item in the budget
  - v. Will be additional related expenses for equipment and sound technician
- b. Changes to Lawn Sign (Steve)
  - i. Current sign has exceeded its useful life
  - ii. Steve passed out schematic rendition of new sign
  - iii. Have a preferred supplier who has provided quote of \$7,600
  - iv. Six week lead time
  - v. Sign (lettered area) will be lighted (back lit) and the letters will be encased in polycarbonate
  - vi. Will have three lines for text (6 inch letters)
  - vii. Current sign base will be raised will use the current St. Stephan's logo
  - viii. Dan took action to see if there is power going to sign, is there a circuit breaker issue and also is there a way to light the area of the sign that shows St. Stephan's logo
  - ix. Could use landscaping lights
  - x. Motion was made to spend up to \$10,000 to improve the sign with funding to be taken from the capital reserve fund. Motion was seconded and approved by voice vote
- c. Property Project List (Dan)
  - i. Dan and Justin are preparing a list of prioritized projects
  - ii. Debbie requested that this list be statused in a monthly report
  - iii. Preliminary meeting was held with John, Debbie, Dan and Justin and specific items were identified for short term fixes/actions

- iv. Freezer is operating well and no plans to replace it at this time
5. New Business:
- a. Staff brought up the possibility of only having one Sunday service in January, in addition to the Saturday Bridge service
    - i. January is traditionally a light attendance month
    - ii. A fuller sanctuary is energizing for all participants
    - iii. Would need to change the date of the annual meeting that is scheduled for January
    - iv. Concern was expressed about what message does this send to the congregation
    - v. It was agreed not to decide on this matter at this time and that it be readdressed in a special purpose council meeting on Sunday, 2 November at 11:45.
      - Debbie to send out meeting notice
      - In meantime members to pray about issue and think of pros and cons with objective to be prepared to vote yes or no on this matter.
6. Adjournment – Lord’s Prayer
- a. John led us in the Lord’s Prayer
  - b. Meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM
7. October Meeting Minute Attachments
- a. Committee Reports
    - i. Missions Committee (Patty Longard)
    - ii. Stewardship (Laura Vitelli)
    - iii. Pastor (John Snider)
    - iv. Worship (Lori Ritt)
    - v. Evangelism (Jan Perkins)
    - vi. Fellowship (Patrice Katzenmaier)
    - vii. Finance (Mike Bonk)
  - b. Financial Data YTD and Y/E Projections (.xls format) Mike Bonk)
  - c. Evangelism Sign Proposal (.pdf format) (Steve Morganson)

Next Meeting: Wednesday, November 19, 2014 at 7:15 p.m.

Recorded and Submitted by  
Doug Schmitt,  
Council Secretary

## Attachments to October Parish Council Meeting Minutes

### Committee Reports Embedded within Meeting Minutes

- Missions Committee (Patty Longard)
- Stewardship (Laura Vitelli)
- Pastor (John Snider)
- Worship (Lori Ritt)
- Evangelism (Steve Morganson)
- Fellowship (Patrice Katzenmaier)
- Finance (Mike Bonk)

### Separate Attachments (submitted concurrently) to October Parish Council Meeting Minutes

- St. Stephan's 2014 Financials – YTD and Y/E Projections (.xls file) (Mike Bonk)
- Evangelism Sign Proposal (.pdf file) (Steve Morganson)

## Missions Committee Minutes (Patty Longard)

Missions Minutes 10/2014

) **Budget:** We spent some time combing through our 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter budget and making sure we're on track for all donations by the end of the year. We have reached out to members of the finance committee to make this happen; thank you to Abra, Dave and Beth for all of your help!

2) **Fair Trade Coffee:** We discussed packs of Fair Trade coffee, and, while we're selling casually at this point, we have not set any plan to sell bags of coffee in the near future. We invite other committee chairs to weigh in – do you like the Fair Trade coffee sales? Would you like to see a more organized selling time? Thank you for your input.

3) **Loaves and Fishes:** After maintaining a ~\$1000 buffer through 2013, we were alarmed to see that our Pots and Pans balance has dropped to just over \$300. We're working to make sure this is not an accounting error, but have entertained the likelihood that Loaves and Fishes needs more than we are bringing in at our Pots and Pans offering. We will be promoting this donation heavier in the next few weeks, including more information on Facebook and the Update. **Next Pots and Pans offering will be held November 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

4) **Tithe monies:** We have been entrusted with tithing the Land Sale revenue, as well as are finishing up tithe from the Ken Nelson memorial. From the latter, we have invited Sitraka to use the remaining monies toward money raised for the Cardboard Box City (supporting homeless youth), Operation Christmas Child, and 30 Hour Famine 2015. Discussion continues on the best allocation of the former. We are also working with Abra to set up a dedicated budget line item to better track these tithes.

5) We will once again be promoting the **Walk to End Hunger** at the Mall of America on Thanksgiving morning. We will not be having a St Stephen's team per say, but strongly encourage members to sign up and walk. More information coming.

6) Kim Henning just finished our application for **Blessing Tree** this year, will have more information coming up in the next month.

7) We discussed the opportunity through Thrivent Financial to support small fundraising projects. See website for more information; <https://www.thrivent.com/actionteam/>

Respectfully Submitted  
Patty Longard

Stewardship (Laura Vitelli)

Stewardship Report  
10.18.14  
Activities

- Campaign is planned. Using 'Happy' as the theme. Will run 11.9-12.31.
- Developing video to support campaign.
- Q3 pledge summaries mailing with letter to encourage payments on pledges.

Requests of Council members (more info at 10.22 meeting)

- Lots of photos from church activities during campaign period
- Facebook sharing
- Thank you calling (11.24-12.31)

Laura Vitelli  
651-274-4994  
St. Stephen's Stewardship

## Pastor Report (John Snider)

### October Council

651. It's always important to be reminded that the Body of Christ is a relational place. How we relate, get to know each other, care for and pray for each other, is where the rubber meets the road. As Jesus said (John 13:34) ***"I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."*** So, regarding outreach and evangelism and new members (and this may affect you) two points:
651. Besides **Steve Morganson** and the lay person visits which he and the evangelism committee are doing so well, if someone visits St. Stephen's 2/3 times the pastors will make an invitation to visit with them. It could be in their home, or in the office or at a coffee shop. The goal isn't to persuade them to join but invite them into a deeper relationship.
651. **Pastor Cassie** has made an excellent suggestion that we invite the new members to a post joining session in a home (**Polly and I** are happy to host this) for an informal time with each other, and those members of our community that might have similar interests. So, if on their Time and Talent form they talk about helping repair things around the church we'll see if **Justin or Dan** could come from properties. Again, it's all about relationships.
2. We have a great mission statement, **"Connecting to God, each other and the world."** Very relational. We also have 4 vision words: **Worship, Service, Welcome and Equipping.** With **Brent Harms** encouragement as our officer for strategic planning, **Pastor Cassie** and I have met 3 times to put some beginning goals around these words. It is fun and inspiring as we think of ways to make specific things happen. Even in the church, what you pay attention to grows. We'll get you copies for discussion starters soon.
3. **Debbie Pirkl** and the hiring team have been working hard interviewing candidates for the Bridge. We are negotiating with a very talented and gifted leader. He is part of a serious commitment on our part to really try and make worship on Saturday night grow and reach into the community. This will require some technical improvements with the speakers as well as

some purchased services for support people. We believe this can be successful from a numbers point of view but more importantly from the spiritual perspective of extending God's Kingdom.

4. The Richard Rohr class, "An Alternative Orthodoxy" has maintained its attendance at approximately 15 people at both the evening and the morning sessions. For an adult class that is very impressive! There is lively discussion. Can we bring friends? Was asked this week.
5. In closing I'd like to say thank you to just a few of the many, many, committed and wonderful people here. We really have created a wonderful relationship with Pueblo de Fe which was so clear during **The Rev. Jacqueline Belzer's** ordination service. Thank you to everyone who helped, especially **Jan Perkins** who worked endless hours to produce such a beautiful bulletin. Thanks also to **Laura Vitelli** who is bringing a wonderful gift set to this year's stewardship effort and to **Eric and Jessica Donahue** as they take on the leadership for the Financial Peace University.

### Worship Committee (Lori Ritt)

St Stephens Lutheran Church  
October Meeting

**October-** Two training sessions setup Wednesday October 1 at 7:15 pm and Sunday, October 19 at 9:45 between services. We had 6 acolytes eager to be trained on Wednesday, October 1.

Sunday, October 19 we trained in one usher, communion server and lector. We need to find ways to get more people excited about volunteering for service or look for ways to cut back on volunteers. Any suggestions would be appreciated. .

Need to pick up gluten free wafers (St Patrick's), reserved signs (St Patrick's) and 8 worship calendars (Seminary)

Reformation Sunday –all red

**November-** decorate Fall/Thanksgiving November 1, 9, 16, 23  
Saturday/Sunday, November 1 and 2. All Saints Tables with candles for both services. Will decorate for Thanksgiving after November 1 wedding.

Sunday, November 23 Youth service 8:30 and 10:45 Youth and parents will fill communion servers, ushers, lectors, etc.

Christmas decorating – Friday and Saturday after Thanksgiving. Tree with blue balls, advent candle, garland.

**Advent** – November 30 – December 7, 14, 21. Check for advent candles.  
December 24 –change Christmas balls to red – get hand candles ready

**January-February** –Set up to borrow ELCA Banners for display in sanctuary. Pick up January 7 for display January 11, 18, 25 and February 1. Return banners by February 7. Need 5 rods to hang banners.

**February** –Children’s service 10:45 February 8  
Ash Wednesday February 18

Lori Ritt  
(651) 738-1340

If only you could see the blessings God has already prepared for you,  
and He’s preparing your heart right now to receive them.

Evangelism (Steve Morganson)

**Evangelism Committee**  
**October Report**  
**Steve Morganson**

We have finalized our recommendation for modifying the sign on the front lawn of the church. We are recommending that we accept the proposal submitted by **Greg Rendell at Sign Source**. A picture of their proposal is attached. The total cost for this change is **\$7,609**. This includes lights in the sign, polycarbonate cover and a set of 6 inch letters. The time to complete construction is 6 weeks.

We did ask about electronic signs and they have estimated a cost of \$24,000 primarily because of our configuration; we require two signs, one for Charlton Street and one for Wentworth. Cheaper signs as low as \$6,000 are available but are not recommended because of quality and durability.

We have not recommended electronics signs because they cannot be read as easily or even more importantly, as quickly.

I have attached a sample of some electronic signs produced by a competitive company in response to previous requests. However, we are not recommending it for the aforementioned reasons.

Our objective is that we can vote on and approve this proposition at the next council meeting and get the changes prior to the winter season.

Regards,

Steve

Fellowship Committee (Patrice Katzenmaier)  
OCTOBER FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT 2014

Our Committee met on Thurs., October 2, 2013 on All Committee Night  
Attending: P. Katzenmaier, Dianne Johnson, Anne Phankuch

Upcoming dates/events:

We are planning a car pool to the Lutheran Mideast Development Celebration on Tues., Oct. 21st. This is an evening to learn more about the Middle East and to be inspired by the stories. As of 10/18 we will be able to fit in one car. Please call if you plan to attend.

Action Items:

We are looking for volunteers to fill the dates for Sunday morning donuts/coffee. Any Committees that would be interested in helping, please sign-up. We need to fill the winter months. Fellowship hour is held just after the 8:30 service-Sept. thru May and after the 9:30 service in the summer. Cathy has filled November and Patrice will fill December.

New Business:

We are planning to attend the National Lutheran Choir at the Basilica of Saint Mary on Sat, December 13 at 8 pm. The other dates didn't work out. I hope we can get a good group to go. We will leave church at 6:30. Mark your calendar and plan to come! It should get us all in the holiday spirit. I have ordered 15 tickets at \$20 ea.

Talked about hosting another Mardi Gras progressive dinner. We need to find a date that would work best for the committee. A few members will be gone. Further research is being done.

Old Business:

None. (to speak of)

Yours in Christ,

Patrice Katzenmaier, Chairperson, Anne Pfankuch, Diane Johnson, Joanna Mead, Kathy Cannif & Sara Ruff

Finance Committee (Mike Bonk)

The Finance Committee met on Thursday, Oct 2. In attendance were Sue Clark, Dave Bergeson, Mike Butala, Pastor John, Abra Gilman and Mike Bonk.

Following is a brief recap of the meeting:

September Financial Results

September contributions of \$31,400 were \$5,000 or 14% less than budget and were also down \$4,800 from September of 2013. Envelope and plate offerings continued to trend down in

September. For the year-to-date envelope and plate offerings are \$8,000 or 3% than last year. Without the special Lego Bridge campaign contributions would be down \$20,000 or 7%. Our Finance committee estimates that if the revenue trend continues our 2014 revenue will be down \$23,000 from plan.

September expenses of \$38,500 were \$500 favorable to plan and helped to offset the revenue shortfall.

#### 2014 Projected Results

Attached is a spreadsheet showing an estimated projection for 2014 compared to budget and last year. It appears that our revenue could fall \$23,000 short of budget due to the decrease in monthly contributions. Expenses are projected to be \$12,000 over plan due to increased utility costs. The budget for 2014 had estimated that our expenses would exceed revenue by \$36,600 and this deficit would be funded from dedicated funds or reserves. It now appears that the deficit to be funded by reserves might be \$71,000.

At our September council meeting the group was generally in agreement that a 3% increase in 2015 contributions should be in our preliminary revenue plan for next year. This would be a challenge for our church council as contributions have trended down for the past two years including our projected decrease for 2014 giving.

#### On-line Giving

St Stephen's is now linked into Vanco's Simple Giving program and members can donate or make other payments on-line. We have had just a couple of members sign up for on-line contributions. We have had several more members that are using Vanco to pay for Wednesday meals.

Respectfully submitted  
Mike Bonk

