

St Stephen's Lutheran Church
Parish Council Meeting Minutes

Date/Time: 15 April 2015/Meeting called to order at 7:15 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 Pirkl, Lori Ritt, Doug Schmitt (via Skype), John Snider, Dan Youness, Laura Vitelli, Justin Woods, Sitraka Rakotoarivelo

Agenda

1. Devotions - Darcy McKenzie
2. Adopt minutes from March Council meeting
3. Q & A on Committee Reports
4. New Business
 - a. One Service discussion
 - b. Marketing Consultant
5. Old Business:
 - a. Audio Consultant update
 - b. Nominating Committee update
 - c. 2015 Vision Goals
6. Adjournment – Lord's Prayer

Discussion of Agenda Items:

1. Devotions
 - a. Darcy provided insights from her Easter worship experience with her extended family at Bethel Lutheran church in Wapiton S.D.
2. Motion to adopt March 2015 Council minutes was made by Brent, seconded by Tanisha and approved unanimously by voice vote
3. Discussions Relating to Committee Reports
 - a. Youth committee
 - i. Tickets for waffle breakfast are available in the connection center
 - b. Fellowship
 - i. Signup genius
 1. Do we have one for all of St. Stephens or does each committee have their own?
 - a. Need to have invitation to see signup genius
 - b. Big effort and some significant disadvantages to have one signup genius for all committees
 - c. This is new to St. Stephen's and will take time for it to become the main tool for volunteering

- c. St. Stephen's Sign
 - i. Electricity has been connected
- d. Worship
 - i. John is looking for sermon ideas for the summer season
 - 1. Series that have relevance to various groups within the congregation
 - ii. May LMD meeting at the Walker to support our mission in Turkey
 - iii. Audio
 - 1. Lisa Henderson has moved to Clover, Wisconsin
 - a. She was a very reliable volunteer and will be missed
 - 2. Training will take place for audio equipment technicians on 21 April

4. New /Business

a. One Service Discussion

- i. Survey had conflicting responses
- ii. Do we want to consider this again?
 - 1. Initial resistance often fades and people see the advantages as time goes on
 - a. Fuller church
 - b. A more connected congregation
 - c. Provides opportunities for stronger relationships
 - 2. Choosing a single service time that the majority of the congregation likes is a big challenge
 - 3. Keep the Sunday service in a more traditional vein since we have a more non-traditional service on Saturdays
 - 4. Do fewer services provide fewer options for new members and long standing congregation members?
 - 5. Attendance seems to have stabilized and is growing
 - a. Bridge continues to grow
 - b. Shrinking attendance is not the primary reason for single service
 - 6. We have too many pews in the sanctuary
 - a. Church has changed in the last 20 years

b. Marketing Consultant

- i. Have a proposal from Renown Marketing Communications to help us develop a marketing plan to assist us in "identifying our brand"
 - 1. Reviewed and approved by Exec committee to do initial phase -- Apr to July
 - 2. Cost will be nominal as consultant has agreed to tithe her time to this effort
 - 3. Need a group of members to assist the consultant in identifying what St. Stephen's is and what we want to be
 - a. Consultant has a workbook that will assist us in arriving at this information

- b. Looking for volunteers to participate
 - ii. Second implementation phase will be fleshed out during the first phase
- 5. Old Business
 - a. Audio consultant update
 - i. Audio Consultant Recommendations
 - 1. Improve the Sanctuary
 - a. Main speakers
 - b. Stage snake
 - c. Monitor system
 - d. Will need specialist to do rigging and setup
 - 2. Need to accommodate hearing impaired
 - a. Not specifically addressed
 - b. Should be an easy fix – this is a need not a want
 - c. We will move forward on this
 - b. Nominating Committee Update
 - i. Still looking for candidates
 - ii. Elections take place in May
 - c. 2015 vision goals
 - i. Staff is working on implementing this and is moving forward
 - ii. Want to get together new and existing committee chairs for a three hour mini-retreat
 - 1. Candidate dates are Wednesday, 20 May or Saturday, 16 May
 - 2. Purpose is to develop leaders
 - 3. Notice will be sent out
 - d. Hospitality Training
 - i. Will be conducted Wednesday 22 April
 - ii. Geared to confirmation class members but open to all
 - iii. Train to use their gifts in welcoming through participation in church service activities such as ushering
- 6. Adjournment – Lord’s Prayer
 - a. John led us in the Lord’s Prayer
 - b. Meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM
- 7. Committee Reports that were received this month and that are included with these meeting minutes
 - a. Fellowship
 - b. Worship
 - c. Missions
 - d. Associate Pastor’s Report
 - e. Youth Director’s Report
 - f. Youth Committee Report

g. Pastor's Report

Next Meeting: Wednesday, May 13, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.

Semi-Annual Meeting: Sunday, May 17th 9:40 a.m.

Recorded and Submitted by
Doug Schmitt,
Council Secretary

Attachments to April 2015 Parish Council Meeting Minutes

Committee Reports:

Fellowship (Patrice Katzenmaier)

April 9, 2015

Old Business:

The January Lutheran Pot Luck Brunch was well received, attended and greatly enjoyed. Thank you all for the wonderful contributions! It felt very welcoming!

We did not meet in Feb. or March.

The Signup Genius is now being used for Fellowship hour signup. There are 2 signup lists. One is for Cub pickup & setup. The other is for servers. We are in hopes that this will make signup easier, convenient and user friendly. Patrice has created 4 lists with different names for different times of the year. Hopefully when someone receives an email invite, they will use the web site to sign up or give Patrice or one of the other fellowship members a call. We would like to know if anyone would prefer not to be on the list, or maybe at a different time of the year. We made the lists according to who signed up in the past.

A big change is that Joanna Mead has volunteered to do the setup on Sat. evenings. This will save a lot of time in the AM and cut the serving time in half on Sunday. We should be able to attract more volunteers this way. You are asked to please plug in the large coffee pot on Sun. AM if you should arrive early. It should be set up and ready to go. Thank you Johanna!

Upcoming:

We are in need of Coffee servers for the last 2 weeks in May from 10:15 to 11:15, our summer schedule of one service. Please consider signing up. Either use the signup link www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0B4EA5AD29A2FC1-coffee2 or sign the clip board in the kitchen. Thanks!

We are looking for dates for a possible "Tail Gate Party" in the church parking lot and then attend a Saints game. More to come.

Fellowship Committee,
Patrice Katzenmaier; chair, Kathy Cannif, Joanna Mead, Anne Pfankuch

Worship (Lori Ritt)

Worship Committee

March/April 2015

Lenten Service - Ash Wednesday, February 18 through March 25

During Lent the Confirmation students will be presenting projects Tanzania, Judy's kids, Food truck, SeAm, etc

White branches add prayers/Thanksgiving each week

Prayers/Thanksgiving will turn into butterflies

After Easter the Butterflies will turn into two banners for the Easter season.

Palm Sunday - Pancake breakfast by Youth, Palms will be part of procession, ordered palm branches for vases

Wednesday evening - Turned prayers/Thanksgiving into butterflies to get ready for Easter

Choral shells arrive - unload truck with the help of Jim, Doug, Ken, P. John, Scott, Abra and Gerrit.

Maundy Thursday - 1st Communion

Set up 1 station for intinction - wafers unless bread shows

Strip altar, Hang black on cross

Good Friday -

Choral Shells assembled on Friday with the help of Jim K, Anne P, Gerrit

Need gauze, crown of thorns, white bowl, spices, etc.

Saturday - Decorating

Add in white branches with flowers around bottom

Hang banners, hang white on cross

Bridge service - Gold pillars with bowl of sand, add white candles (Spread your light) Saturday service - intinction two stations - wafers

Sunday 3 stations intinction - wafers

Monday - Turn butterflies into banners and hang

Still having some difficulty in obtaining volunteers for the services. We have gone to Signup Genius for the Bridge. Looking at ways to use Signup Genius possibly for the other services.

Lori Ritt

(651) 738-1340

Live Every Moment.
Laugh Every Day
Love Beyond Words

Missions Report (Patty Longard)

Missions Committee Meeting

- 1) Final totals of MN Foodshare: ~250 food and over \$1000. Thank you to everyone who participated!
- 2) Plans for Mission Sunday; May 2/3. We will be hosting a Fair Trade Fellowship weekend, featuring a mini Fair Trade boutique, with various Fair Trade items for sale, just in time for Mothers Day. We will also have a Fair Trade trivia game during Fellowship hour. Finally, we will be collecting the Pots and Pans offering this weekend.

Respectfully Submitted
Patty Longard

Associate Pastor's Report (Pastor Cassie Nault) April 2015

Worship

It is the season of Easter, which means that we move into a more celebratory feel in worship! Alleluia, He is Risen! Mark your calendars for Sunday, May 24th, when we return to one Sunday worship service at 9:30am. The Bridge at 5pm Saturdays continues throughout the summer. Sign up genius has worked well for worship

assistants for The Bridge service and for Holy Week. As Lori Ritt mentioned in her report, we will likely work toward using this tool for other worship service assistants as well. This fall, **the staff has agreed on moving back into the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL)**, to make it easier to connect our faith formation to worship--and to experience more experiential and modern worship. Zach uses the RCL at his other church, so it will be more streamlined for him--and the options for Faith Formation are geared toward RCL, which makes it easier for Sitraka as well. Pastor John and I are happy to accommodate. Stay tuned to hear when we make the transition—it might happen this summer.

Confirmation News

Sitraka led 16 of our Confirmation students at a retreat from April 10-12th at Camp Wapo. This is the annual 8th grade retreat to help prepare students for their Confirmation Day. We were delighted that Kim Henning and Tanisha Pikula chaperoned the trip, and Deborah Ellis, Dean Eisfelder, Tom Tschida, and Pastor Cassie joined the group for Saturday afternoon to help 8th graders begin work on their faith statements. The students had a great time getting to know each other on the retreat. We are hoping to have another retreat in the fall--and work towards total participation among all the Confirmation classes, along with senior high participation. Note: *Confirmation Sunday* will be on a different Sunday than in the previous years; save the date: Sunday, October 25th , 2015. Students will share their faith statements in between worship services on Sunday, October 18th, 2015 at 9:40am.

Waffles on Mother's Day: The Youth and Education Committees have invited in Dad's Belgian Waffles to do a fundraiser on Sunday, May 10th from 9am-noon. Tickets are on sale now, through any Confirmation student, Youth participating in the Detroit trip, or Michelle Steffen. Tickets to the event are \$7/person in advance or \$8/person at the door, with kids 5 and under eating free. Mark your calendars and spread the word. Proceeds will help fund the National Youth Gathering trip and our Camp Wapo kids. It is our hope not to just have our congregation at this event--but the wider community. If you'd like to help sell tickets, please let the Youth Committee know! Our goal is 350 guests.

A Sabbatical for Pastor Cassie: Pastor John and I have been planning for me to be gone on sabbatical this summer from June 2nd-August 25th. I am applying for a \$1000 grant from the synod, \$500 for our congregation to assist with pulpit supply and \$500 to help me with a project during my sabbatical. The focus of the proposal focuses on Jesus' ministry of breaking bread with others, eating meals with all sorts of people. When my proposal is complete, I will make sure to share it with you.

In Christ,
Cassie

Pastor Cassie Nault

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church
1575 Charlton Street West St. Paul, MN 55118
(651) 457-6541

Youth Director's Report (Sitraka Rakotoarivelo)

Youth Director's Report - April 2015

Faith Formation

The year has been energetic on Wednesday Faith Formation nights. We had a total of 45 children registered that came on a regular basis for Faith Formation. The first half of the year (September - December), we went with Faith Inkubators: Bible Songs which was awesome. We learned Bible stories as well as sign language. This coming fall, we had discussed as a staff that we will be moving back to the Revised Common Lectionary. This will better connect what we do on the weekends with Wednesday night.

Planning for the next years faith formation classes has already begun, and we are very excited for the new faces that will be joining us.

Confirmation Retreat & Other

As mentioned on the Associate Pastor's Report, we had a successful retreat April 10-12 at Camp Wapogasset. Grateful to our adult leaders that have joined in the fun this year. Because of a cancelled retreat in March with Urban Immersion, they were kind enough to let us postpone our date to the fall. This is great news because this enables our fall retreat to already be booked in November.

A/V, Social Media, and Website

Since the installation of the screens, we have been using them extensively for our Saturday and Sunday services. We are very grateful for the Media Team (Jessica Donahue, Jenny Van Pelt, Piper Gillman, Lisa Anderson, and David Mace), for their continued dedication on weekends. Because we are moving closer towards media based elements in worship, we need more people to join the media crew for both audio and video. It takes a lot of time and energy to do these *well*, and without a solid team in place, there will be too much inconsistency and burnout if only one person keeps doing it. On April 21 at 6pm there will be an open meeting to anyone interested in joining St. Stephen's Media Team.

Lisa Anderson was a very critical piece to the media team this year. She was always present Sunday mornings to help in any way she could. So her absence will be missed and won't be easy to fill right away.

I have simplified the church website for easier accessibility. The website is a 24/7 door to anyone and everyone, so it is vital that our information is kept to date. I am willing to do small work around the website, but more extensive things will need to be done by a dedicated web team.

We opened an Instagram account for St. Stephen's. This will aid parents and others to keep up with what St. Stephen's is up to. This summer, we will be using it primarily to show pictures of Camp, the Youth Gathering, and other events. But this can be used as an outreach tool to anyone using the platform.

Summer

This summer will be full. In June, our students will be at Camp Wapogasset from the 12th - 19th. I will be joining the Youth and TIM Team students on their week, and this year, a few parents will be joining me as well.

VBS will be July 6-10 from 9am - 12pm. We will be using Group Publishing for our curriculum which is called "Everest: Conquering Challenges with God's Mighty Power." Recruiting will start this month with training in June.

The ELCA Youth Gathering will be July 15-19. In preparation for the Gathering, we have been meeting as a Youth Group Sunday mornings studying the Gospel of Mark as well as learning more about Detroit. We are so thankful to the congregation for their help this far. The Pancake Breakfast was a huge success, as well as "Donate for an Egg." We could not be happier with where we are right now.

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Sitraka Rakotoarivelo

Director of Children and Youth Ministry

St. Stephen's Lutheran Church, West Saint Paul

*"3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. 4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others." **Philippians 2:3-4***

Youth Committee Report (Darcy McKenzie and Tanisha Pikula)

PAST HAPPENINGS

ELCA Toolkit Workshop. Introduced to EnerChange who in conjunction with Xcel and CenterPoint Energy deliver energy saving services at no cost to MN Nonprofit Organizations. Fascinating opportunity for St. Stephen's if we wish to pursue.

"Plan-It" WorkShop. Joined Sitraka & Pastor Cassie to strategically plan and lay out the next year of our youth ministry life. We worked together and planned our entire calendar 2015-16. Felt a true surge of accomplishment after the endeavor. Our target date to finalize the calendar is August 1st. We will share the calendar with the other committees at that time.

Donations to Garlough & Moreland - The Youth Committee provided games, toys, sleeping bags, pillows, lots of fun stuff for each school's Family Bingo Nights. We received the most sincere expressions of gratitude from both school PTAs.

Parents Night Out - The scheduled event was cancelled due to lack of participation.

Open Gym Dates – The gym was open every Sunday in March to encourage youth to join us on the weekends. Attendance was light.

Urban Immersion Retreat - With the passing of Sitraka's Grandfather, participation at the retreat was cancelled. We will attend the event in the fall of 2015.

FUTURE HAPPENINGS

Dad's Belgium Waffles Fundraiser - Have you had these yet? They are GOOD! The Youth Group will be hosting a Waffle Breakfast on Sunday, May 10th. Mother's Day. Be prepared to enjoy a marvelous selection of syrups from the syrup bar!

Vacation Bible School - July 6th- 10th, 2015. Confirmed dates.

ELCA Youth Gathering 2015 - July 15th – 19th, 2015. Anticipation and enthusiasm is building. Building for the all youth of St. Stephen's, not just for the nine attendees.

Respectfully Submitted,

-- Darcy McKenzie

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"It doesn't make a lot of sense that the federal government makes our students pay higher interest rates than Wall Street banks." Angie Craig, '16 Candidate for MN CD2

To add to the happenings our Youth who are attending Detroit and camp WAPO this year are also selling popcorn to earn more funds. If you are interested or know anyone who is interested please seek out any youth of St. Stephen's and ask them if you can order your delicious popcorn from them.

Our Wed. nights together will be ending on April 30th which is the last Wed. of the month.

Thank you,
Tanisha Pikula

Pastor's Report (Pastor John Snider)
Pastor John's Report
April Council Meeting

An unusual number of **funerals** have occurred recently at church, 5 by the end of Saturday. I want to commend our volunteers who provide a very real ministry to the grieving families. Through the work of **Joyce Taylor, Lynn Kubat and Dorothy Lea wonderful volunteers** show up to help make the experience comforting, gracious and filled with hope. We the church of Easter have a very special calling in people's life. These times the heart-to-heart ministry really happens.

We had a great **Lent!** It was terrific to return to Holden Evening Prayer and to being led in worship by the piano and two singers. It was also excellent to have the mentors and confirmation student together during worship. The entire theme of having confirmation classes and their guides instruct us various ministries we are involved was also excellent. I want to comment **Pastor Cassie and Katelyn and Sitraka Rakotoarivelo** for their creativity and execution of our Wednesday services. Holy Week was also powerful and Easter...how great was that?

I am working on articulating the "**rocks**" that each staff member will carry on behalf of this ministry and our critical efforts in 2015. We have an excellent team with vision and desire for faithful and effective ministry that results in renewed lives. My hope would be to finalize these and meet for a few hours as a leadership team, including new leaders either **Wednesday, May 13 or 20th, or Saturday, May 16th**. We would meet for no more than 3 hours, include a meal, and share a growing sense of direction. Pastor Cassie is coordinating a computer scheduling program called "Doodle". Watch for an email from her to respond to. We have many members carrying "rocks" as well here or we wouldn't be the church. Rocks aren't just for staff.

This weekend St. Stephen's will welcome **New Members: 7 families, 27 people, 14 of whom are children**. Pray for them and for all of us that we will be a place of **Connection**. The spiritual life is one which leads us from *separation to the highest form of connection through the grace and love of God*; or as we have expressed them to God, each other and the world. Polly and I were pleased to host two receptions in our home for the new members. They were fun and an informal way to help this happen. We like to have existing members and staff come and connect.

Part of our goal is to **improve the worship experience** at St. Stephen's. This is our core and fundamental connection. We need to make the sanctuary more visitor and member friendly with: improved space for **wheel chairs and walkers**, more room between the pews, and a better audio experience. We have started that with the **choir shells**. We now have a recommendation from a consultant on improving the sound in the sanctuary. It includes a **new speaker array** which will make the sound heard evenly throughout the sanctuary as well as help the choir hear itself better. It includes an **in ear monitor system** for the Bridge. Equipment estimates are \$9,490.00. Rigging: \$4,500.00. Construction and Electrical:

\$2,500.00. Consulting and oversight: \$1,500.00. This does not include costs we may accrue working with the pews or moving the technical equipment to the back of the sanctuary.

This summer, during Pastor Cassie's well-earned sabbatical, I'm considering a **couple of sermon series**, 3-4 weeks on a given topic. Any ideas?

Finally, **Lutheran Mideast Development** continues to be responding to human need in the Middle East. We can be very proud of this ministry in our midst. On **Tuesday, May 12th, 7 p.m.** a free one hour update will be held at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis. Please consider coming and learning more about this world class effort right in our midst.