

St Stephen's Lutheran Church  
Parish Council Meeting Minutes

Date/Time: 16 September, 2015/Meeting called to order at 7:15 p.m.

Location: Lounge at St. Stephen's Church

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

Agenda

1. **Opening Reading** (Pastor John)
2. **Adoption of August minutes:** Review and adopt August council meeting minutes
3. **Q & A committee reports:**
  - a. Sanctuary renewal
    - i. Lighting, children's area, sanctuary doors
    - ii. Sound
  - b. Properties and Maintenance
    - i. Update on roof, date of when balance is due
    - ii. pipe update from chapel
    - iii. Other
4. **New Business:**
  - a. Portable audio/visual equipment
  - b. Wednesday nights
  - c. Outdoor worship
  - d. Adult Ed
  - e. The Bridge
5. **Old Business:**
  - a. Marketing Plan "right sizing"
    - i. Requesting more concrete analysis of demographics in our area
    - ii. Possibly focus group
    - iii. Website: work on pieces to keep it fresh, possibly volunteers? A blog would be great ( we could use free ones like weebly.com)
    - iv. Requesting a pared down list of media upgrades needed to enhance web.
  - b. Wednesday to worship
6. **For the Good of the Body**
7. **Adjournment: - Lord's Prayer**

**Discussion of Agenda Items**

1. **Opening Reading** (Pastor John)
  - a. "What is the body of Christ?"

- i. It is us and more -- including local and remote churches
- b. Pastor John illustrated this point by reading a letter he received from new pastor Yona of our sister congregation in Africa
  - i. Letter of appreciation for all that we provide them
  - ii. Detailed their action plan to grow the community of Christ in their congregation – brick making for church building and clinic
  - iii. Concluded with an invitation to St. Stephen’s members to visit their congregation and a request that we pray for them

**2. Adoption of August minutes:** Review and adopt August council meeting minutes

- a. Motion to accept August minutes was made and seconded
- b. Approved by voice vote

**3. Q & A committee reports:**

- a. Sanctuary renewal
  - i. Lighting, children’s area, sanctuary doors
    - 1. Higher wattage bulbs will be installed in existing fixtures where possible – total cost will be less than \$1,500 including purchase of spare bulbs
    - 2. Children’s area will consist of:
      - a. Soft toys, low sound furnishings and flooring at front of sanctuary
      - b. Potentially a second area in narthex that will allow viewing of service through new glass doors
    - 3. Glass and wood frame sanctuary doors are being investigated to replace our wood doors
      - a. Provide a much more inviting entrance
      - b. Price quotes being requested
  - ii. Sound
    - 1. Speaker funding approved and can be ordered at any time
    - 2. Waiting to coordinate with lift availability and light bulb procurement
- b. Properties and Maintenance
  - i. Update on roof, date of when balance is due
    - 1. Everything but sanctuary is done
    - 2. Complete sanctuary by 5 October
    - 3. Balance of funding due on completion – no work order changes were required so no additional funding required
  - ii. Mold issue will be addressed once gutters are on
  - iii. Trees have been trimmed
  - iv. pipe update from chapel – no discussion
- c. Other
  - i. Movie night 23 September
    - 1. Despicable Me
    - 2. Fire pit and marshmallows

- 3. Kids in PJs and sleeping bags encouraged
- ii. Basket Raffle
  - 1. Combining with silent auction
  - 2. To be conducted same night as meatball dinner (November 14)
  - 3. More information to follow
- iii. Sibley Homecoming parade staging this coming Friday in our Charleton Avenue parking lot
  - 1. Hot dogs for students
- iv. God's Work Our Hands
  - 1. Tremendously successful effort
  - 2. Call out to church members (via Update) to bring in unused sleeping bags that will be provided to Sandwich Man's ministry
- v. Thank You committee having trouble getting volunteers
  - 1. Expand the request beyond the committee to see if can get any volunteers

#### **4. New Business:**

- a. Portable audio/visual equipment – will cost less than \$5K
  - i. Could be used for multiple venues
    - 1. Bridge
    - 2. Outdoor movies
    - 3. Usable in lounge, fellowship hall, Christmas programs ...
    - 4. Priced equipment list submitted concurrently with these minutes
- b. Wednesday nights – No discussion
- c. Outdoor worship – see notes regarding Wednesday outdoor meeting
- d. Adult Ed – No discussion
- e. The Bridge – No discussion
- f. Bring a Friend to Church Sunday
  - i. Looking to try this again this year – encourage all council members to bring a friend to church
  - ii. Will be promoting more heavily in the future
- g. Single Sunday Service Discussion
  - i. Brings more people together at a single service – increases Christian fellowship
  - ii. Easier to find volunteers
  - iii. Should be driven by mission not efficiency
  - iv. Will continue to evaluate
    - 1. Council agreed to have single Sunday service on last Sunday in December and for all of the month of January
      - a. 9:30 service
      - b. Intergenerational services on Wednesdays in January
      - c. Fewer attendees due to members leaving for warmer locations

2. No Bridge for the Saturday (one day) after Christmas

**5. Old Business:**

- a. Marketing Plan “right sizing”
  - i. Requesting more concrete analysis of demographics in our area
  - ii. Possibly focus group
  - iii. Website: work on pieces to keep it fresh, possibly volunteers? A blog would be great (we could use free ones like weebly.com)
  - iv. Requesting a pared down list of media upgrades needed to enhance web
    - 1. Ask them to define what content should be on our web page
      - a. site map first
      - b. Include target segment as part of group that defines content
  - v. Current web page status is:
    - 1. Home page is up-to-date
    - 2. Had 505 visits in August (378 were unique)
    - 3. New visits were 74%
    - 4. Easiest upgrade is to use what we have now and pay extra fee to have our current provider to design a web page for us
      - a. ~\$600 one-time charge
    - 5. Other options
      - a. Word press
      - b. Square space
- b. Wednesday to worship
- c. Finance Activity-based Budget

**6. For the Good of the Body**

- a. Staff is doing a “Meet the Team” on Facebook
  - i. Planning on extending this to Council and Exec
  - ii. Small paragraph of what St. Stephen’s means to me and a small biography

**7. Adjournment: - Lord’s Prayer**

- a. Meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm
- b. Next meeting to be held on Wednesday, October 21, 2015 at 7:15 pm

Committee Reports that were received this month and that are included with these meeting minutes

- a. Pastor’s Report
- b. Worship
- c. Stewardship
- d. Finance
- e. Associate Pastor’s Report
- f. God’s Work Our Hands
- g. Fellowship

#### h. Youth

Documents reviewed or referenced during the meeting and attached to or submitted concurrently with these minutes:

- Basic Portable and Outdoor System List

Recorded and Submitted by  
Doug Schmitt,  
Council Secretary

# Attachments to 2015 Parish Council Meeting Minutes

## Committee Reports:

### **Pastor's Report (Pastor John Snider)**

September 14, 2015

#### **Looking Back:**

The church is often called "*glacial*" in our speed of decisions, action and change. But our leadership and membership's response to the **new roof** has been "*lightening*". It is always important to bring as many people along with education and buy-in, which I think was done and the hammers are pounding as I write this.

**God's Work. Our Hands.** What a lovely launch to the fall program year, gathering people to work together, in new ways, in new teams, for good. It is always a great orientation and reminder that our life of faith is really about willingly, joyfully, serving God each day.

#### **On Going:**

**Sanctuary Renewal Committee** is waiting on some costs before putting together a proposal for change. I'm pleased that the recommended renewals: lighting, location of the sound/visual equipment, glass back doors, children's worship area, will have immediate impact for a relatively small cost. Watch for more details.

**9:30 Sunday worship** is such an uplifting experience because the sanctuary is comfortably full. It makes for more inspiration, more energy. It is the kind of worship experience where we can invite people to attend without feeling uncomfortable. The question before us is what would be involved in maintaining this worship time? Who would it affect? What would we gain? What would we lose? If we go for a single service on Sunday are we able to offer strong, alternative services? We will change back for the fall, anticipating discussion, discernment and perhaps action for the New Year.

**Portable Bridge.** Part of the answer to ongoing worship offerings is strong alternatives. I believe that we can grow the Bridge easier with **portable equipment** making use of smaller spaces. Our goal has been to create an avenue for people who aren't connected to church to have an opportunity to experience God in worship in a less "churchy" way. We can do that in the lounge and in the Fellowship Hall. The good news about this equipment is it is easily useable in many other ministries: education and experiments with worship on Wednesdays among them.

#### **Looking Forward:**

**Henry Sibley Homecoming Parade** (this Friday 9/18) staging is always in our Charlton Parking Lot and it is an opportunity to express welcome and hospitality. In so many ways we are the church of the district, especially with the Noreen Activity Center after school program. Come and join in the festivities. Stop by and say welcome, we're glad you're here, how can we help?

The Bishop asked us what we would ask for if she could grant us any request. On reflection I would ask for **stronger experiences of the community** of St. Stephen's. The **Fellowship Committee** is doing a great job on this: Saturday, September 26<sup>th</sup>, **Outdoor Movie Night** (kids in PJ's welcome) and Saturday, October 24, a **Progressive Dinner**. The gift of you participating would be wonderful!



Christian-Muslim Conversations for, by and with ordinary people. The **third Thursdays of September, October and November, 7-8:30 p.m.** I will be co-leading with Dr. Nadia Mohamed, professor of religion. We will bring together Christians and Muslim to do more than learn about each other's religions; to learn about each other. Dr. Nadia is expecting 15-20 people, I hope we can do as well.



If you are going to choose one learning experience this year, I recommend this one. Centering Prayer is a practice of Christian prayer that will renew you and through you this community. We will meet on 4 **Wednesday nights, 6-7:15 October 14-Nov. 4** or 4 **Thursday mornings 10-11:15 a.m. October 15-Nov. 5**. Both in the Noreen Center Lounge. This book and this practice is a life-changer for good.

### **Discernment Item:**

We have been talking about and working on **“rocks”** for staff; those special focus items, those areas that are always front of the mind. What would you consider a **“rock” for leadership at St. Stephen's?**

### **Personal Item:**

With Pastor Cassie back Polly and I are taking our **“summer vacation”** Sunday evening, September 27-Saturday, October 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Thank you** all for sharing your faith here at St. Stephen's. You have the extra challenge of sharing your faith in leadership. That is not always easy but I hope rewarding and educational. Together we continue to be about **God's Work with Our Hands**.

Blessings!

Pastor John

### **Worship Committee (Lori Ritt)**

**September** – Set up times to wash acolyte's robes and communion robes. Mary and Cleone will take robes to laundromat on September 15 to be inspected, washed, dried and return to church.

**October**- Confirmation October 25 Reformation Sunday – all red, will hang Holy Spirit banner and dove.

**November**- decorate Fall/Thanksgiving November Sunday, November 1. All Saints - Tables with candles for both services. Working on All Saints banner(s). Will decorate for Thanksgiving after November 1.

Will check on prices for flowers for Christmas after All Saints.

**Advent** - November 29 - December 7, 14, 21. Check for advent candles. December 24 –change Christmas balls to red – get hand candles ready. Discuss options for Advent decorating.

**January-February** –3 Sunday Epiphany

### **Stewardship Committee (Laura Vitelli)**

9.15.15

- As of 8.31, envelope giving continues to be ahead of budget while general plate offerings are behind. Overall, we're running about \$6,000 under budget for contributions. Will include message about shortfall in Q3 pledge summaries and/or Update.
- Planning for 2015 campaign will begin soon. Hoping to have activities/program based budget.
- Thank you committee's internal communications plan not yet being executed. There haven't been any volunteers to take on tasks.

Laura Vitelli

## **Finance Committee (Beth Hostager)**

The Finance committee met on Thursday September 3rd. Members present included Sue Clark, Debbie Pirkel, Dave Bergeson, Pastor John, Diane Meyers, and Beth Hostager.

### **August Financials**

The YTD August deficit of \$61,500 is \$9,900 favorable vs. the YTD budget. August income of \$44,600 was \$14,700 higher than budgeted driven by an \$11,000 favorable variance in envelope contributions, and a \$4,500 favorable variance from rent and other income sources. These favorable income variances are primarily driven by timing differences between actual vs. budget. Expenses were \$2,300 favorable relative to the monthly budget.

### **2016 Budget**

The committee is working toward a ministry-based budget for 2016. We discussed information needed to allocate salary expenses to ministries and reviewed income and expense sources that should be contemplated in the operating budget vs. dedicated accounts. More information will be shared with the Council as the 2016 budget process rolls out in the near future.

### **Roof Repair**

The down payment for the roof repairs has been paid. An insurance adjuster inspected the roof with a representative from Les Jones Roofing and no insured weather-related damage was identified.

### **Executive and Committee Chair Follow-Up Items**

Areas identified for follow-up with the executive committee or committee chairs include the following:

- Youth - we will schedule a meeting with Sitraka and the Youth co-chairs to discuss the use of operating vs. dedicated accounts for youth-related expenses.
- Property & Maintenance - a fire inspection was completed in August 2015. For 2016 budgeting purposes, how often are fire inspections supposed to be completed?
- Executive - direction will be needed on strategic expenses to be included in the 2016 budget.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Hostager and Diane Meyers, Finance co-chairs

## **Associate Pastor's Report (Pastor Cassie Nault) September, 16 2015**

I'm still settling in after my sabbatical. The last 3 weekends have gone well; it's good to be back! There are a lot of details to attend to though, especially in this busy fall season. Here is what I'm up to:

**Confirmation** classes for 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, & 8<sup>th</sup> graders officially begin tonight. It looks like we'll have a total of about 25 students in our 3 classes. In addition, we will be confirming 12 students (9<sup>th</sup> graders) this fall. Beginning tonight, I will be meeting with each 9<sup>th</sup> grader to discuss their faith statement and to prepare them for Confirmation Sunday.

**Worship** We are returning to three worship services each weekend beginning this weekend. 5pm Saturday continues to be our Contemporary, band-led worship service; 8:30am remains our traditional liturgical service; 10:45am will be less liturgical and more modern. All three services feature the same message and theme.

**Upcoming Weekends:** Please note that while Pastor John is away, I do have one weekend that I too will be away. My younger brother is getting married in Wisconsin on October 3<sup>rd</sup> and I'm officiating. I will be gone from Friday, October 2<sup>nd</sup> through Sunday, October 4<sup>th</sup>. Pastor Mary Kaye Ashley (from Burnsville) will be preaching and presiding at our worship services that weekend and she'll be covering our pastoral care needs for that weekend as well.

**News from the Nault Family** Tony, Eli, Ollie, and I are delighted to be welcoming a baby boy to our family this February. We are grateful for this blessing.

Peace,  
Cassie

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

*\*Context \*Empathy \*Harmony \*Individualization \*Input*

## **God's Work Our Hands (Ann Anderson)**

September 16

We had an outstanding turnout for sandwich making this year! Our first year we made around 150, and had very few donations. Last year we made just over 300, with all donated supplies. This year, we received enough cash and material donations to make 482 sandwiches! It took around 15 volunteers nearly an hour to complete them! We also completed 5 blankets that day. Individuals took fabric home to make more blankets.

Here is some information about the organization we made sandwiches for. What an amazing man!!

For some recent background on MRD, in 2014 Allan was featured in a new documentary titled [The Starfish Throwers](#) by Twin Cities filmmaker Jesse Roesler. [The Sandwich Man](#) links to a YouTube video with footage from the film showing Allan working on the streets at night, and scenes including several MRD donor groups. In addition, last December NBC Nightly News ran a feature on Allan titled ['Sandwich Man' Delivers Helping of Hope to Hungry](#) , and KARE 11 News did a recent story on 4/19/15 called [The 'Sandwich Man' is crazy kind](#) .

## **Fellowship (Patrice Katzenmaier)**

9/3/15

Attended: Sara Ruff, Diane Johnson, Patrice Katzenmaier, Pastor John

The Saint's game at CHS field on 8/10/15 was very much enjoyed by all 25 who attended. Car pooling went smoothly.

God's Work, Our Hands Sunday is Sept. 13th. We will be serving donut holes and coffee in styro cups. Dianne has offered to pick up the Cub order and also to get some small baggies for to-go bags.

Sept. 26, we will be showing an outdoor movie, Dispicable Me 2. Projection will be on the sanctuary wall outside on Charlton & Wentworth. Children can bring their sleeping bags. We will provide popcorn, juice and S-mores. We will need one more portable fire pit. Sitraka will handle the sound system and Matt will do the projector. This will take place after the 5pm Bridge service around 6pm. We need publicity. Anne, are you available?

In trying to avoid the Nov. 1st date for the progressive dinner, we came up with Oct. 24th but then realized that Via de Christo is that weekend. After having further a conversation with Sara, she and I decided to go ahead with the original plan for Nov. 1st and start out our evening in the lounge to avoid the concert goers. We think that this should work because we wouldn't be at church for long. Sara is checking into catered food, possibly German. After we finalize our date, I will be asking all of you to confirm hosts.

Patrice Katzenmaier, Fellowship chair

## **Youth (Darcy McKenzie)**

Off to a great school calendar year start with dates securely planned, awaiting implementation.

Sitraka and the Youth Group will be offering hot dogs for the Henry Sibley Homecoming Parade participants. We set out a basket for a free will offering and it runneth over! Our entire family is participating in the parade in one way or another so we are unable to assist Sitraka with this endeavor. Many of our youth are parade participants as well. Can any of you put on a warm St. Stephen's smile and dole out some dogs??? Would really help out and spread some of that St. Stephen's good will.

Special fundraising notation: We are combining the Basket Raffle with the Silent Auction. Details to come as we plan the Silent Auction (same night as the Meatball Dinner, Nov 14th).

Special upcoming event:

Sept. 30th - Wednesday ALL FAMILY Night - JOIN US!

--- *Darcy McKenzie*  
1415 Cherry Hill Rd, Mendota Heights MN 55118  
c) 651-261-3439 h) 651-554-0572

"I think people should feel encouraged to be themselves." **Dave Grohl, Foo Fighters**