

St Stephen Lutheran Church

Church Council Meeting Minutes – August 16, 2021

Ken Smith called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm via ZOOM.

Present: Pastor Jim Woodruff, Betsy Clark, Patsy Olson, Ted Schaff, Chris Sheldon, Ken Smith, Mira Stearns, Abby Ternus

Absent: Paul Colaizy, Kristen Duffy (resigned), Marta Hohnstadt

Devotions: Pastor Jim Woodruff – Psalm 103 v 1-5 was read. This reading relates to us. Universal statement. “All” is mentioned several times. God is all encompassing in our lives and God effects every aspect of our lives and fills us completely and provides everything we need in life. Forgiveness of sins, remove our transgressions, we are dust, we make mistakes, but God is always with us as long as you live and renews our strength and energy as we bless the Lord.

Prayer Concerns: Annette Johnson, Maris Cinis, Teri Cinis, Peg Schaff’s dad (Howard Ellingson) and brother-in-law (Tim Kran), VBS kids – that they would remember the lessons they learned. And all those on our prayer list.

Approval of Minutes: July Council minutes were reviewed regarding COVID signage that the council made a motion on at last council meeting. (Motion was “that we drop most of COVID 19 related restrictions at St. Stephen while continuing to follow MDH guidelines, such as masking”) It was agreed to make a change to the minutes as Chris has changed his vote from “yes” to “no”. Chris disagreed with sign verbiage. So final vote was 7 yes and 1 no. Betsy will update minutes from last month to reflect this (*The motion carried ~~unanimously~~ with one dissenting vote*) and mail out revised minutes to council.

A motion was made by Patsy Olson; 2nd by Mira Stearns to approve the July 2021 council minutes (as amended above). Voted on and carried.

Adjustments to the Agenda – None

Treasurer’s Report – Patsy Olson

Reports received including 2020 comparisons.

Current Fund: negative \$-30,637.16. July biggest dip so far, outgoing expenses \$10,668 higher than incoming income. Biggest deficit month so far. Expect August to be the same.

Capital Fund: \$ 73,869.78. Paid for furnaces, expecting rebate either from NSP or Yale of around \$480 (Ted will contact Yale about this).

Benevolence Fund: negative \$-1,479.33

Special Designated Fund: \$ 101,362.17. Digital ministry payment (made last week) will cause this balance to go down. Around \$21,000 digital ministry final bill.

Cash Reserve Fund: \$ 23,747.25

Comparing the budget to same time last year, we were negative \$-45,780.12.

Pastor's Reports – Past Jim Woodruff

Operating regular schedule with some modification due to covid. Regular summer schedule. Finished VBS. Abby ran it, great job!

Live streaming begun. Still figuring out things, want to improve some things. People comments so far, have enjoyed it.

Staffing:

Paige Carter led the Revival Band for the last time yesterday. She will be making a corporate move Colorado or Montana. Not replacing that position any time soon. January, maybe September 2022. Not sure what we want to do with 10:30 service. Council recognized Paige's great job over the years.

Melissa Whitman wrapped up her time as CYF Ministry Director with July San Francisco trip. One assault incident against one of kids, hit in face. Surgery on tooth in SF, the youth is still being treated. Patsy has worked on getting our insurance involved and the person's insurance to get involved. People sponsoring us did not have emergency plan put in place. Melissa did everything correctly. Filed police report, got youth to emergency dentist. Patsy filed claim, did not get any info from the company. Person struck one of the kids with an instrument case. Tenderloin district in SF, tough area. Abby commented that it was a really good trip, brought lots of the girls together in a positive way; bad experience early on, gave us time to think and talk about it, zoomed with Pastor Juli about the issue. Mira agreed, sad about what happened but gave us the chance to be together, situation handled well.

Hired Zac Van dyke as digital ministry administrator. Expand what we are doing with the digital ministry.

Ministry Team Reports – Ken Smith

Finance team – Finance team met. One item brought to council is that finance feels the front entrance is high priority for fixing.

Fellowship – Rally Sunday September 12 (see “New Business”). Outdoor worship with Brenda Steady leading the band. They will continue after worship with some music. Will have outdoor picnic and that will be followed by God's Work, Our Hands service project in Fellowship Hall making bag lunches for the Union Gospel Mission. Council agreed that we should make phone calls inviting people to the service, picnic and service project. **ACTION: Betsy will work with Tami on getting sign-up lists. Betsy will get to council telephone directory lists and phone message.**

Worship/Music – They met, nothing new to report.

Property – Discussed front entrance (see “New Business”)

A motion was made by Abby Ternus; 2nd by Ted Schaff to accept the July Treasurer's Report, Pastor's Reports, and Ministry Team reports.

New Business

Rally Sunday – Betsy Clark

Rally Sunday September 12. Outdoor worship with Brenda Steady leading the band. They will continue after worship with some music. Will have outdoor picnic and that will be followed by God's Work, Our Hands service project in Fellowship Hall making 150 bag lunches for the Union Gospel Mission. Council agreed that we should make phone calls inviting people to the service, picnic and service project. **ACTION:** Betsy will work with Tami on getting sign-up lists. Betsy will get to council telephone directory lists and phone message.

Planting Hope – Ken Smith

Financial details. \$2,750,000 campaign detail. ELCA congregational commitment participation \$100/attendee. Challenge goal \$200/worshiper. Weekly attendance for St. Stephen is around 110 people. Would be \$10,000-20,000 range pledge (spans three years). Finance committee should be involved in looking at this – recommend to come back with recommendation – timing on when to do this campaign and when council should vote on this. Council needs to ultimately be the one approving this. Patsy commented that they saw something of this in San Francisco, a church got funding from other churches in the area to work with the homeless. Council should go to the congregation for their review as well. Some comments from council members: "We are spread too thin already, efforts should focus more on building up St. Stephen". "With all the capital projects, can't afford another project on top of them". "Sad to hear we are using the word "burden" to look at this". "Want to hear what Finance recommends". Congregation is entirely voluntary on how they can participate. Pledged amount over three years, individuals can make that pledge and St. Stephen can tally that. Might be only a few people or might be more. Doesn't hurt to bring it up to the church. We should think outside of ourselves, we have reality in the church, but as often as able, beneficial for God's people to support those outside of our walls. Maybe not \$100/per person but give it a go. **Action:** Ken proposes more detailed discussion with finance and to bring it back to council in September for review and vote.

AV system – Pastor Jim

We will need to purchase two more mics hanging from ceiling, one left side of choir and one by organ (dedicated mics). Also need to purchase two monitor speakers (for contemporary group, or special groups). Board set up to feed back to the group singing (board has house mix, has additional 12 other mixes we can use as well) so they can hear what they are singing. Need to replace our portable speakers as well (those we are using outside).

We have funds already for this in special designated and left-over funds in the AV fund.

Staffing updates – Pastor Jim

Zach VanDyke has been hired for AV Digital Ministry Director. We have two applications for CYF Ministry Director position. One is working in Texas synod ELCA, other bible camp sky ranch in Colorado. Kate Spencer from Staff Relations will make an initial call with each person. Interviews with people next week

hopefully. Position probably won't be filled until late September or early October. Staff Relations will present recommendation to council, PJ hires, but council will approve the salary.

Prioritize property projects and concerns – Ken Smith

Ken had a summary page of all construction projects council has discussed. All estimates two years old. Front entrance – seems safety concern. See if can upgrade without spending a lot of money. Only had one bid on that from construction company who did the NHN steps. People stumbling, entrance uneven. Don't know what depth of posts are currently. Bid was for around \$10,000 only concrete. If we change canopy, that will add several thousand dollars. At this point, looking at redoing concrete apron and checking on posts. No motion now but send to property to look at bids for concrete work at front entrance. Ted will have T construction look at front entrance and get updated bid for the concrete.

NHN three steps – There are cracks at three steps and Ted talked with T construction. He will send pictures of cracks on steps to them and see what they can do to take care of it.

Furnace rooms – Was a three year, one furnace section each year. Bbecause of COVID, we just got room 1 done this year. Ted wants to look at Furnace room 2 replacement, but we need to move the schedule back a year or two.

ACTION ITEMS:

- 1) Ken will call Ted field about the front entrance, see whether there is need for architect.
- 2) Ken will send out PDF of all the quotes from property (minus front entrance) to council.
- 3) Ted will get a couple of quotes maybe by end of September on the concrete under canopy (one of them T Construction).

Old Business

Covid status update – Ken Smith

Chris wants to state that CDC is stating tests are inaccurate and wants us to not follow CDC or MDH guidelines. Ken has not heard that. Chris wants to send links to Ken that show tests are not accurate. Wants this information to be added to next month's agenda. We discussed that St. Stephen continues to follow MDH and CDC guidelines. No changes at this time. Many local companies are delaying opening up.

Review Meeting Highlights - Ken Smith

- 1) Ask people about live stream, how is it going and any concerns? Chris looked at YouTube afterward, several minutes of nothing at the start of the service. Not sure what happened there.
- 2) Rally Sunday and community service project September 12.
- 3) Budget, summary

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Ken Smith; 2nd by Abby Ternus. Voted on and carried.

Ken Smith adjourned the meeting at 8:55 pm.

Next council meeting Monday, September 13, 2021. Ken not in town, Mira will run meeting.

Future 2021 meeting dates:

Oct 11 (Ken traveling)

Nov 15

Dec 12 (Ken traveling)

Pastor Jim Woodruff closed with The Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Betsy Clark