

St Stephen Lutheran Church

Church Council Meeting Minutes – September 13, 2021

Mira Stearns called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm via ZOOM.

Present: Pastor Jim Woodruff, Betsy Clark, Patsy Olson, Mira Stearns, Paul Colaizy,

Absent: Ted Schaff, Chris Sheldon, Ken Smith, Marta Hohnstadt (resigned), Abby Ternus

Devotions: Pastor Jim Woodruff – Phillipians 4:13 “I can do all things through him who strengthens me.” We need to live in Christ, look for positive, affirming and life-giving things as the God of Peace will always be with us.

Prayer Concerns: Gladys Petersen passed away, prayers to her family and especially her son Paul; Bonnie (Marla Amborn’s mother); everyone affected in any way by the events of September 11, 2001; Marta Hohnstadt, Matt (brother of Marta Hohnstadt).

Approval of Minutes: Approval of the August council minutes were tabled until next meeting due to not having a quorum.

NO MOTION TO ACCEPT AUGUST MINUTES DUE TO NO QUORUM – WILL VOTE NEXT MEETING

Adjustments to the Agenda – Note Marta Hohnstadt’s resignation under NEW BUSINESS.

Treasurer’s Report – Patsy Olson

Balance Sheet: Total cash \$62,814.12; Savings \$32,721.47; Total cash assets \$143,743.30

Benevolence Fund: negative \$-1,456.89. Needed to make payments to Lukani including some from last year in addition to what was owed this year. Anticipating catching up to a positive or zero balance without difficulty.

Capital Fund: \$86,328.67. There was an expense of \$10,566.54 for the audio equipment that was initially taken out of current fund. These funds have been transferred from Special Designated funds (Digital Ministry fund) back into Capital fund. Pastor Jim does not see the transaction clearly into Capital.

ACTION: Patsy will run a full report on the Digital Ministry fund transfers and present at the next meeting.

Cash Reserve: \$24,013.97. Grows about \$200/month. When it’s more calm, we should push to start building up this account again.

Current Fund: \$213,657.08 total income. \$254,083.19 total expenses. NET: Negative \$-40,426.11

Special Designated Fund: \$76,911.67

Pastor's Reports – Pastor Jim Woodruff

Rally Day was a great success. Worship service was great, Brenda Steady given high marks for having an excellent praise band. Attendance was around 80 people. Lots stayed for the picnic. About 100 bagged lunches were made during the service project and delivered to Union Gospel Mission.

Children and Youth Ministries will be starting up in the next two weeks. Sunday School starts this coming Sunday, Wednesday night activities start the following Wednesday. Wednesday morning Bible Study starts this Wednesday. Confirmation starts October 2.

Worship attendance – we still have about half of our congregation not attending in-person worship because of COVID. Live streaming with Zac is going well. Had some glitches with YouTube connection that we are working with. Scott Zieman doing well with the once a month fill-in.

CYF Ministry Director Position – still not filled. The two candidates we had both took jobs at other churches. We have an interim team. Paul Schultz will be coordinating the Sunday and Wednesday children and youth programs; Patsy Olson will handle the pre-confirmation kids; Zac and Abby will work with the middle school and HS kids (which include occasional events); Pastor Jim will work with the confirmation kids.

Ministry Team Reports – Mira Stearns

Fellowship (Betsy Clark) – We had about 8 people who participated in the event. The staff of Union Gospel Mission were very grateful for the sandwiches. They are requesting that St. Stephen consider making 50-75 lunches on a monthly basis for the Mission. Those present at Council were in favor of this but no quorum to make a motion.

Will add to the October Council Agenda for a motion and vote: Support the Union Gospel Mission by making and delivering 50-75 bagged lunches per month to them.

Finance team (Betsy/Pastor Jim) – Finance team wants the Council to bring back to Finance Team more information on how the money being raised through the SPAS Planting Hope will be specifically used. Mira will bring this back to Ken in hopes that Ken can assist with getting more specific information for the Finance Team.

NO MOTION TO ACCEPT the August Treasurer's Report, Pastor's Reports, and Ministry Team reports DUE TO NO QUORUM. WILL TABLE UNTIL NEXT MONTH.

New Business

Marta Hohnstadt resignation from Council – Betsy Clark

Council was alerted that Marta submitted her resignation a few days before the council meeting.

Planting Hope Initiative – Mira Stearns

See above discussion on this under "Finance". Mira will go back to Ken and see if he can more specific information on what the ELCA will be using the funds from this for.

Motion proposed for supporting Planting Hope was tabled as we did not have a quorum. Will present at the next Council meeting.

Staffing update and activities – Pastor Jim

See Pastor's report for update.

Property Projects – Entryway bids – Ted Schaff

Tabled until next month as Ted not present.

COVID status update – Mira Stearns

Mira presented information from Ken regarding COVID numbers for Ramsey County. Since last council meeting August 16 (and as of September 6) the 7-day average NEW infections has climbed about 50% from 89 to 120. Hospitalizations and %-positive test rates are also climbing. Other metro counties are similar. Since the beginning of the pandemic, at least 1 in 10 residents have been infected. Masking indoors continues to be recommended by the CDC and MDH. Council agreed that we should continue with the present recommendation of wearing masks for all persons.

Review meeting highlights – Mira Stearns

- 1) Report on Rally Sunday
- 2) Planting Hope Initiative

NO MOTION MADE TO ADJOURN DUE TO NO QUORUM. Mira Stearns adjourned the meeting at 7:49.

Next council meeting Monday, October 11, 2021. Ken not in town, Mira will run meeting.

Future 2021 meeting dates:

Nov 15

Dec 12

Pastor Jim Woodruff closed with The Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Betsy Clark