

St Stephen Lutheran Church

Church Council Meeting Minutes, January 10, 2022

Ken Smith called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm via ZOOM.

Present: Pastor Jim Woodruff, Paul Colaizy, Patsy Olson, Chris Sheldon, Betsy Clark, Ken Smith, Mira Stearns, Ted Schaff, Jill Sandvik (guest)

Absent: Abby Ternus,

Devotions: Pastor Jim Woodruff – reminder past two years, pandemic, really frustrating, new information, inaccurate information. In the book Lamentations (profit Jeremiah during the time of Babylon) during the destruction of Babylon, people were distraught, but amidst all the grief, in middle of book there is a small portion that gives people hope. PJ read Lamentation 3:21-26 (...the Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul who seeks him. It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord).

Prayer Concerns: Continued prayers for Jean Sawyer (recovering at home); Phil Dahl completed surgery, other leg collapsed and broke the femur in his other leg, back in hospital. John Farmer (last week has deteriorated with his dementia), Carol Leahy.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes for December council meeting as amended were voted on.

A motion was made by Patsy Olson, 2nd by Mira Stearns, to approve the December 2021 council minutes as amended. Voted on and carried unanimously.

Adjustments to the Agenda – Added in New Business: Furnace update (Ted 5 minutes); Synod grants (Ken 5 minutes); Adjust wording to Constitution gift committee continuing resolution (Pastor Jim 5 minutes) agenda)

Treasurer's Report –Patsy Olson

Balance Sheet: Total cash assets \$220,905.99.

Benevolence Fund: Balance \$1,249.87; In 2022, Patsy will make recurring journal entries into the TZ scholarship and mission trip accounts from Benevolence every month.

Capital Fund: \$97,886.06. Plenty of funding for next phase of furnaces. Ken. Did canopy work come out of this temporarily? 605 capital expenses "other" \$86,913.79 includes a combination of the canopy payment and the first phase of the furnace. We did recover the canopy expenses taken from capital funds from Insurance. Patsy only paid what insurance paid us (a wash). When we get another insurance check, we will pay balance due.

Cash Reserve: \$28,335.35. Brought in \$10,694.14 for 2021.

Current Fund: \$382,916.44 total income. \$373,777.28 total expenses. NET: positive \$9,139.16.

Special Designated Fund:

Special Designated Accts \$24,000.52; Funding Accts \$19,197.88; Tanzania Accts \$21,982.29; Tecate Accts \$2,900; Special Designated Memorial Accts \$17,842.87; TOTAL \$85,923.56.

Ken mentioned that Pastor Ulime (former Pastor of Lukani who is getting his PhD at Luther Seminary) may need help getting money for ticket back to Tanzania (around \$800). We still have money in Spec Designated account for Tanzania. His Home Synod was supposed to take care of the ticket to the US but they didn't. Also have general account for Tanzania (usually used to offset for mission trip). So there is money to use, will discuss this when the TZ mission team meets.

No other questions.

A motion was made by Paul Colaizy, 2nd by Ken Smith, to approve the Treasurer's Report. Voted on and carried unanimously.

Pastor's Report – Pastor Jim Woodruff

Last month was busy with Christmas, 29th living nativity. This year 2022 will be the 30th. We should do something special. Christmas eve services were held, numbers still significantly lower than pre pandemic. Next month there will be a Youth event on Martin Luther King day. Annual report biggest thing. Tami Heart not available, stuck in Jamaica, not sure when she will be back. Annual meeting on January 30. Stewardship – Dec 21, still needed to raise \$40,000 (\$24,000 still deficit and another \$16,000 expenses) raised all of that plus the additional \$9,139.16. Congregation is very generous. Still waiting on the final reimbursement for the canopy repairs. Staff temporarily settled. We are planning on shared ministry between Redeemer and St. Stephen for Youth Ministry. Paul Schultz will stay on as Children Ministry Director. Gift policy additional language on agenda later on in meeting.

Ministry Team Reports – Ken Smith

Tanzania Mission Team - Ken Smith

Tentatively will make a trip in 2022, but still in planning stage, dependent on how things are going.

NO other reports from Ministry Teams

A motion was made by Mira Stearns, 2nd by Chris Sheldon, to approve Pastor's report and Ministry Team reports. Voted on and carried unanimously.

New Business

2022 Budget discussion – Jill Sandvik

Highlights of budget discussion

- Mary Beth has estimated that Envelope Income for 2022 will be \$320,679
- Additional income needed \$54,245.33
- Staff salaries have been increased by 2% (except for new staff person Greg)
- Digital Media Coordinator (Zach) budgeted for \$5000

- Children’s Ministry Director (Paul Schultz) will continue in this role part time and has agreed to be paid a stipend, budgeted for \$12,000.
- We did not budget salary for Contemporary Service Director as we will be continuing with one service this year.
- Youth Ministry Director is budgeted for \$24,000. We will be discussing sharing Youth Ministry Director with Redeemer and paying a portion of Melissa Whitman’s salary. We feel very positive about the combined Youth Ministry position sharing Melissa Whitman with Redeemer.

2022 Forecast Excel Spreadsheet – Jill Sandvik

- \$74,319 was December income, operations were less than expected
- Actual income for November and December 2021 were high
- 2022 Capital fund, Jill has budgeted for furnace expense.
- Year to date current fund balance December forecast of \$57, 161 does not include additional income needed placed in the budget.

Chris Sheldon ask with this number, \$57,000, when do we need to start worrying. Monthly report that Patsy gives, that gives us the real picture of how our finances are doing. Typical that we need to be recovering from the summer starting in October through December. Finance, Stewardship keep track of the numbers and request special appeals if necessary.

A motion was made by Ken Smith, 2nd by Ted Schaff, to approve the 2022 budget as submitted and reviewed. Voted on and carried unanimously.

Redeemer and St. Stephen Proposed Shared Ministry – Pastor Jim

Idea came from our inability to find CYFMD. Initially proposed by Melissa Whitman. Pastors from both churches have met with Melissa and discussed this. Benefits both congregations. Both have similar numbers of children and youth. Redeemer has more children and St. Stephen has more youth. This will benefit Redeemer by us paying 25% of Melissa’s package to Redeemer. Pay Paul stipend to be CMD. Programs are very similar in both churches. Want to have large enough group of kids that you have excitement and enthusiasm and invite friends. We have already begun doing combined activities. One of which is confirmation.

Plan is to do VBS, confirmation together. Special events we do together as well as some possible alternative worship opportunities. Right now the main focus is on Youth ministry. Youth group meetings will begin in February 2022. Redeemer families comfortable changing from 6pm to 7pm. National Youth gathering will be done as a shared ministry.

Plan is for Melissa to be 4 days/week at Redeemer and 1 day/wk at St. Stephen.

Financial benefit – reduce cost for Redeemer and help us not have to pay for a full-time CYFMD.

Shared program will start in February and in July get together with youth ministry teams and pastors to evaluate how well it is working. If doing well, recommend continuing with this program.

Chris – Redeemer has social justice initiatives. What are they? We already do some JOINT youth ministry with 4 different churches. They have same concern about us. Redeemer carries out some social ministry. St. Stephen will not be tying any youth ministry into any of that. Redeemer mostly does programs like feeding the hungry, affirming people into the body of Christ.

Imperative – treat all people equally.

There is no documentation in this youth ministry document that talks about any collaboration of social justice programs.

A motion was made by Pastor Jim, 2nd by Betsy Clark, to move that St Stephen affirm and approve the shared ministry plan for youth ministry grades 6-12 between St. Stephen Lutheran Church and Redeemer Lutheran Church beginning in February, 2022. Voted on and carried unanimously.

Stewardship Update 2022 – Pastor Jim

Already discussed in Treasurer’s report and 2022 Budget discussion. We made up our deficit and went into 2022 with \$9,139.16.

Annual Meeting Planning/Discussion – Ken Smith

Annual Meeting will be held Sunday, January 30. We will be meeting in person in the sanctuary so we can live broadcast. Members have to be physically present to vote. Not sure how we will handle any questions from people at home. Dessert before hand?? Recommend we don’t do any gathering/dessert before the meeting.

Ramsey County infection rate, far above what they ever were during the peak last year when the church shut down. Ken would like to have masks required at annual meeting. Have to be physically present so want people to feel comfortable coming to the meeting. Safest approach. Infection rates continue to rise since Ken pulled infection rates off computer.

Motion by Ken Smith, 2nd by Ted Schaff, to communicate to congregation that masks are required at annual meeting to encourage broadest possible participation by the congregation at the meeting.

Discussion: Chris is not in favor for mandating masks. Patsy is very much in favor, it will impact the participation. Mira feels it very necessary, during this meeting we are asking people to come, respect them and make it more comfortable for them to come knowing that people are wearing masks.

Voted on: Motion passed with 6 yes, 1 no.

Furnace Update – Ted Schaff

Recommend the third phase furnace to be next to be replaced (two furnaces, 1962 age, oldest of the furnaces) covering the original building. The second phase furnaces, if one furnace went out, we would still have heat. Quote in 2019 was \$27,300 (will need to get a revised quote, probably more like \$30-35,000).

Plan is to have the third phase part of the furnace replacement done this year.

Roof work – David Thrud will look at giving a bid for re-doing the roof.

Synod Grants – Ken Smith

Upcoming synod grants – applications accepted January 1 to February 14, 2022. Link is <https://spas-elca.org/gleaning-from-the-harvest-ministry-grants/>

Adjusting gift committee wording in Constitution – Pastor Jim

Council voted last month of wording change. Pastor Jim has two additional requests for wording changes for council review and vote:

1st Change (1d.)

1. Memorial Gifts: A memorial fund is set up to honor a person. This gift is considered unrestricted or restricted based on the definitions below. When Memorial Gifts are received:
 - d. If the fund does not reach the dollar amount necessary for the stated purpose or use, the gift committee will contact the family in a timely manner to suggest an alternative gift **or seek to join it with other memorial gifts.**

2nd Change (3e.)

3. Restricted Gifts:
 - e. For a gift to be approved it must be deemed appropriate and large enough for the project or fund. If the gift is not usable at this time, the chair of the gift committee will notify the giver and discuss alternatives **or seek to join it with other memorial gifts.** Left-over funds after the project is completed can be used as the gift committee sees fit.

Council reviewed changes to 1d and 3e. This is part of the continuing resolutions so does not need congregation approval.

Motion by Pastor Jim, 2nd by Ken Smith, that we approve additional wording in 1d. and 3e. of the Gift Committee Responsibilities of the Constitution. Voted on and carried unanimously.

Recommend that summary statement go into the Annual Report outlining the changes to this section (from this month and last month) along with the full document of the gift committee continuing resolutions so congregation members can review and understand.

Old Business

Update on Canopy Insurance Recovery – Pastor Jim

No additional information from insurance company.

Council nominations for 2022 - Update – Patsy Olson, Betsy Clark

Persons agreeing to be on Council:

- John Rohr – 2 year for sure (possible 3 year)
- Judee Bramscher – 1 year
- Marla Amborn – 3 years (if takes on a part-time pastor position, will have to leave)

- Ken Smith has agreed to stay on for one more year
- Mira Stearns will be President

Council nominating committee 2023 – Karen Smith and Cindy Scott

Upcoming Synod Training Opportunities – Ken Smith

Tool Kit for Congregation Leaders, Saturday February 26, 8:30 to 12:15 Prince of Peace in Burnsville. Mira was going to try to do it.

Review Meeting Highlights – All

- 1) Annual meeting date and mask requirements
- 2) Council approval of 2022 budget and will be presented to the congregation at annual meeting
- 3) Approved shared youth ministry concept with Redeemer Lutheran Church
- 4) Planning to move ahead with another furnace replacement (phase 3)
- 5) Affirming again our financial situation, ended in the black.

Adjourn at 8:50 pm

Close with the Lord's Prayer

Respectfully submitted,

Betsy Clark