

St Stephen Lutheran Church

Church Council Meeting Minutes, August 14, 2023

Marla Amborn called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Present: Marla Amborn (President), Ted Field (Vice President), Cheryl Skrypez, Phyllis Ballata, Denise Ashley, Interim Pastor Sharon Kelly, Scott Zieman, Bethany Zenner. Guest Robin Eberlein.

Absent: Kathy Stickler

Devotions –Included as part of the Cottage Meeting later in this meeting.

Prayer Concerns – Deferred this meeting.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes for July 2023 reviewed prior to the meeting. No changes noted.

MOTION: A motion was made by Denise Ashley and seconded by Ted Field to approve the July 2023 Council minutes. Voted on and carried unanimously.

Addition to Agenda: Pastor Kelly noted that Dave and Lynell Keller have informed St. Stephen to take them off their database. They are now worshipping at Community of Grace.

Adjustments to the Agenda: NONE

REPORTS:

Treasurer's Report – Marla Amborn

The treasurer's report was provided to council members for review prior to this meeting. There were no questions.

MOTION: A motion was made by Ted Field and seconded by Phyllis Ballata to approve the July 2023 Treasurer's Report as presented. Voted on and carried unanimously.

Pastors' Reports – Interim Pastor Sharon Kelly and Pastor Juli Thompson

Written reports from Pastor Kelly and Pastor Thompson provided to council members for review prior to this meeting. There were some comments and questions:

- Livestream attendance is absent from Pastor Kelly's report. She will provide that data next meeting.
- Worship attendance numbers were confusing as written and Pastor Kelly was asked to clarify. Worship numbers for the month of July & August 2:
 - Sunday July 2 (71), Wednesday July 5 (15)
 - Sunday July 9 (108), Wednesday July 12 (29)

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- Sunday July 16 (81), Wednesday July 19 (17)
- Sunday July 23 (75), Wednesday July 26 (30 – tacos served)
- Sunday July 31 (87), Wednesday August 2 (17)

Ministry Team Reports – ALL

Fellowship – Cheryl Skrypez

Fellowship has begun planning for Rally Sunday. Betsy will not be available that weekend so she has been assigning leaders for various tasks. First meeting was held to discuss food, volunteer needs, signup sheets, other tasks. Betsy made announcement about signup sheets in church Sunday August 6.

Worship and Music – Alter Guild – Cheryl Skrypez

Pastor Kelly has asked for some changes for communion – larger wafer to use at beginning of communion so online worshipers can see it. Wants 4 people for communion. Pastor Kelly said that she feels now 4 people serving communion won't be necessary. It was suggested that the musician leader (Cindy Bittner most of the time) take communion at the end so music can be played for the entire time of communion. PK said she has suggested that to Cindy but Cindy declined. Cheryl said that we do have aluminum wine trays that are not so heavy as the current silver trays, so we will switch to those as they are easier to hold.

Worship & Music – general meeting – Denise Ashley

The offering has been added back to Sunday worship. Noisy offering not started yet. We don't have children at the service. PK will be meeting with CYF ministry and maybe start the noisy offering after school starts. Discussed hybrid worship (live and online) and how things need to look during worship service for those watching online. Jill Sandvik has a committee meeting regarding sound system issues.

MOTION: A motion was made by Denise Ashley and seconded by Bethany Zenner to approve the Pastors' Reports and Ministry Team Reports. Voted on and carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS:

Galilee Lutheran funding request – Denise Ashley

Jill Sandvik wants to wait until Patsy and Mary Beth transition completed. And also wait until the gift committee can meet (planned mid September) and discuss whether there is additional money in benevolence to go toward Galilee fundraiser. Denise said that she would try to find out where Galilee is with their fundraising and whether they have met their goal or are still looking for funds.

NEW BUSINESS:

Announcement – Pat Miles Event September 24 – Marla Amborn

Pat Miles, former newscaster, will be guest speaker promoting her book Before All is Said and Done: A Practical Guide to Living and Dying Well. Planning when a person dies. Evergreen team reached out to Pat and she agreed to talk about her book. The event will be Sunday Sept 24 at 2:00 pm and will be open to the general public and congregation. Advertising will be done at SPAS and local papers. Goal to get people from outside and our congregation to attend. Council is encouraged to purchase Pat's book, read it, and attend the event prepared with questions to ask. After the speech, she will do a book signing and we will have refreshments. We plan to have music both before and after the presentation. Lake Country Booksellers will provide a discount for whoever buys the book for the event. Please encourage people to attend. Rebecca Palmgren, from ELCA Foundation, will also be there for 5 minute intro of herself and schedule appointments to meet with people at later dates to discuss estate planning. A person needs to be a member of an ELCA church in order to meet with Rebecca. We have an endowment fund and want to encourage people to put St. Stephen in their will.

Cottage Meeting discussion – Robin Eberlein and Ted Field

Council members participated in a Ministry Exploration Cottage Meeting discussion. Notes were taken and the ideas expressed are included in the summary of Cottage Meeting responses with other congregational Cottage Meeting participant responses.

Other essential council business – ALL

Adult learning – Scott Zieman

Scott met with PK on other ideas for adult forum speaker ideas. PK's ideas cost money. There is currently no budget for speakers. Ted said that we can find money if needed. Outside speakers in the past tended to draw small attendance. If people from congregation were presenting about personal topics, that tended to draw bigger attendance. Topics that were related to things that touched personal lives were well attended because people were learning more about their neighbors.

Sunday Bulletin –It was agreed that we will use an asterisk (showing when to stand) in the Sunday bulletin so people know when they are supposed to stand.

Apostle's Creed – have gotten feedback that people are missing it in the service. PK said that we are a credal church whether or not the creed is said in each worship service and she will think about how to address this interest in more frequent use of the creed in worship.

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Ways to bring in families/kids – Special events that have bouncy house, sno-cone machine, popcorn machine are big attractions used at the interim church that Marla is currently at and staffing the nursery is another way to get more young families to attend worship. If you plan something and want to have kids attend, you need to do things that will attract kids and parents.

Council Highlights:

1. Council members participated in MET cottage meeting discussion.
2. Pat Miles special event Sunday September 24.
3. Council wants to start adult forums again after church. If anyone has a topic of interest, please speak with Scott Ziemann, council liaison.

Communion signup list – was sent around and people signed up through September 24.

- August 20 – Pastor Juli
- August 27 – Pastor Juli
- September 3 – Scott
- September 6 – Cheryl
- September 10 – Ted
- September 17 – Scott
- September 24 – Denise

MOTION: A motion was made by Cheryl Skrypez and seconded by Phyllis Ballata to close the Council meeting. Voted on and carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:39 pm

Closed with the Lord's Prayer

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING: Tuesday September 5, 7:00 pm (NOTE CHANGE IN DATE)

Respectfully submitted,

Betsy Clark
Council Secretary