

Council Minutes

February 19, 2024

Attending: Dan Strehlow, Dolores Pemble, Alex Zuzek, David Fry, Natalie Carda, Maria Gathje, Jen Klos, Pastor Geier and Lois Twedt

Call to Order by President Dan Strehlow at 6:00 p.m.

Pastor led us in a prayer in remembrance of the Burnsville tragedy. Dan led us in devotions.

Secretary's Report, Lois Twedt

Dolores pointed out that the Treasurer's Report should have stated that we acted on December's Financial Report, not November's. With that change Natalie made a motion to accept the Secretary's Report. Dolores seconded the motion. The Secretary's Report was approved.

Treasurer Dolores Pemble

No Council Action Required

The Finance Ministry Team met via zoom on Monday, Feb. 12. The January Finance Report was reviewed and minimal discussion followed. Report was approved.

As a result of the budget review meeting on January 28, there will be some revision made to the weekly grid that is printed in the bulletin. The purpose is to make our financial situation more transparent for the congregation.

Deborah reported that the open job postings have been republished in multiple places. There was also some preliminary discussion regarding Ellen Diischer's now open position.

No additional information has been received regarding Ruby's Pantry progress.

Treasurer transition is moving forward. Dolores has met with Christine, had fingerprints done and signature has been recorded with the bank. In new business Deborah also reported that WELCA voted to make a principal payment toward the mortgage of \$1500 accrued from bake sale profits and funeral luncheon donations.

A motion was made Alex and seconded by David to accept the January Treasurer's Financial Report. The motion passed.

Vice President Alex Zuzek

No Council Action Required

Buildings & Grounds did not formally meet but projects have been ongoing through the holidays and up through February.

Repair was done in the restroom near the library by Steve Wolverton sparing the church from calling in a plumber. Many thanks to the members whose skills can manage needed repairs like this.

2. The Upholstered pew benches and all the oak upholstered chairs in the sanctuary were cleaned at the end of January. Also cleaned were the 100 plus, blue upholstered folding chairs which are frequently used plus the large, upholstered chairs in front of the picture board at the west end of the narthex. Hawkins Cleaning and Renewal, Burnsville, did the job for \$3,165. It was a two-day effort. This referral came from

Our Savior's which also uses this service. This was the pews' first cleaning. Waiting another 10 years would likely be just fine.

3. At present is the upcoming replacement of a broken window in the old sanctuary, facing the courtyard. Bill Pavlish is heading this up through Gordy's glass. Bill will do a fair amount of work removing the sash and replacing the new window once it has been fitted with new double glass. Steve Wolverton will be assisting Bill in this. Again, huge thanks for dollars saved.

4. Two 3-ton mini split AC units have been ordered through Bathricks for the old sanctuary. This will make that space more welcoming during months of high heat. The two units should be installed in April with the old ones removed and disposed of for roughly \$13,000. This improvement was put in the 2024 budget.

Welcoming a new member as of this month: Tricia Bremer

Serving Ministry David Fry

No Council Action Required

Fellowship Ministry

OLD BUSINESS:

1. ANNUAL MEETING AND POTLUCK ON FEB. 4: There were 84 members in attendance. It was good to have the Sat. morning set up. Food was adequate in all categories. Good help by Fellowship Team members.

2. BLOODMOBILE MARCH 14: Noon-6:00pm Katy Lindberg has a Sign up Genius set up, and it was advertised in the newsletter. We'll look into work times at the March meeting.

3. LADIES NIGHT: An outing at A Minnesota Saints Game for all age groups was discussed. It seemed to be agreed that a change like this may be worth the try. Camille is to get information from the Saints' office.

4. CARE PACKAGES FOR 2023 GRADS: Five notes were written and mailers addressed and left open for inserting \$10 Visa gift cards that were ordered from the preschool fundraiser. Gift cards should be coming the third week of the month.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. SIGN UP GENIUS: Tom Bullington is stepping away from being in charge of Sign up Genius for Hastings Family Service food rescue volunteers. Lista is willing to take over the duties. The fee of \$17/month was approved to come out of Fellowship funds.

2. LEADERSHIP RETREAT: Leadership retreat is February 25, 11:30-5:30. The entire Fellowship Team is invited. Response should be made back to the office. Our team is not needed for food responsibility.

3. OUTDOOR SERVICE: We don't know information yet from Worship and Music.

Stewardship

The Stewardship Ministry Team met in JA to evaluate the results of the fall campaign. We were pleased with the theme "Community Grows Here" which will run through 2024. The introduction of the Advent mural as a part of the campaign gave the congregation a new way to work together. 59 people participated in the painting of the mural covering 299 in volunteer hours.

Reviewing the campaign, we discussed that 100 pledge cards were returned which is 17 less than one year ago. While this is disappointing, the amount pledged was slightly over the previous year which was encouraging.

The subject of Simply Giving was raised as we know it could use more promotion. We followed that idea with messages on the worship screen, the Sunday Bulletin and the FE newsletter. This resulted in about three more enrollees in the Simply Giving program bringing it to about 37 households. While Simply Giving is not a program for every choice, it is favored by enough people to keep it offered. Forms are at the Welcome Center and the program can be started at any time with NO fee attached for its use.

HR Report—Natalie Carda

No Council Action Required

Effective January 1, 2024, Minnesota's Earned Sick and Safe Time (ESST) law requires employers to provide paid leave to employees who work in the state of Minnesota. Each St. Philips' employee was given a copy of the ESST policy. We verified that our payroll system is accurately accruing this calculation on each employee's pay stub.

Two positions were posted on SPLC website: the Director of Children's Ministries and the Director of Youth and Young Adult ministries. These positions are part-time, 25 and 20 hours respectively. In addition, the positions were posted on the websites of the Minneapolis and St. Paul synods. At the 2024 Budget meeting, staffing was discussed. Some members will be forwarding to HR Children, Youth & Family website connections. We will pursue communication with those groups. In addition, Deborah Dreher discussed this at the Annual Congregation Meeting. And we anticipate we will discuss this topic at the Leadership Retreat in February.

Worship Ministry Report— Maria Gathje

No Council Action Required.

Service Debrief: In-person attendance has been increasing to near 150. Services have been going well. The children's choir did a very nice job and are much appreciated. The bells also are doing well with some complicated music. Thanks to Kelsey and LuAnn! There were a couple slides missing in one of the contemporary songs on Feb 4. Pr. Geier will check with John to get that corrected for future use. As the repertoire of praise music is continued to be used there should be consistency with the slides and musical arrangements, which should alleviate the problem. Kelsey will look into going over slides and music sometime during the week prior to when used, to check for edits. Because the children usually sing on that Sunday, it is difficult to have enough time on Sunday morning for slide review. There had been some comments from people regarding the volume of the bells being too low. The suggestion was to experiment with use of the mics. LuAnn expressed concern that the mics would hinder the balance of sound. Some acolytes appear to be uncertain about when to take communion. Becky will tell the worship coordinators to check with them to make sure they know when to do that and help with any other issues they may have. The advent mural will come down on Feb 11 and the railings will be put in place for Lent.

Sanctuary Doors: After discussion it was approved by unanimous vote to leave the sanctuary doors unlocked. Exceptions will be made as necessary; i.e. garage sale day.

Worship Leaders: Lori will have a sign-up sheet on the kiosk for Holy Week. It was decided that there will be two stations for communion on Easter Sunday at both services. Beginning with Ash Wednesday, the communion elements will be placed on the altar, as people will be served at the rails.

Summer Outdoor Service: An outdoor service will be provided on June 23. The Double Down Daredevils band is available for this service.

Alternative Contemporary Musicians: There is an interest and financing available to hire musicians, such as guitarists and a drummer, on a short-term basis. Kelsey knows of musicians who currently play the first Sunday of the month at another church in Hastings. She will contact them to see if they might have an interest leading a worship service at SPLC, at a fee of \$400. April 21 is a tentative possible date. Kelsey will report back at our March meeting.

Council Update: Thank you to Marge for serving two terms. Thank you to Maria for volunteering to be our new council rep.

February Music:

- Feb 11: Maria Gathje
 - Feb 14: Ash Wed., Unity
 - Feb 18: Unity; Lori Best
 - Feb 21: Wed Lent1; Maria* & Lori
 - Feb 25: Darlene Olson/Bells
 - Feb 28: Wed Lent2; Ryan Hummel & Maria*
- *David Weisser may do one of these in place of Maria

March Music:

- Mar 3: Sam Willis and Kelsey Wormley lead contemporary music/ Children's choir
- Mar 6: Wed Lent3; Raul Jackson and Maria
- Mar 10: Choral Ensemble
- Mar 13: Wed Lent4; Kelsey and Emily Wormley
- Mar 17: Unity
- Mar 20: Wed Lent5; Julia and Julian Ronning
- Mar 24: Palm Sunday; Raul/ Children's bells
- Mar 28: Maundy Thurs; Lori and Ryan/LuAnn, bell toller
- Mar 29: Good Fri; Becky Raimann
- Mar 31: Easter 8:30 AM; Lori Best/ Bells
- Mar 31: Easter 10:30 AM; Choral Ensemble

MS/HS Youth gathering: Kelsey informed the team of an interest on the part of a parent group that would like to look into having a praise worship followed by fellowship with games and food. It was suggested that she discuss this with the Youth ministry team.

Learning Ministries Report –Jen Klos

No Council Action Required

Preschool:

We did not have an in person meeting this month because we did not have a lot to talk about. The following information was sent out to our team via email for the month of February.

We had one three day a week kid bump up to 5 days for the rest of the year!

We had a successful nurse visit with nothing major to report on there.

Church members and current families will start registration Feb 20th at 8:00am.

We are getting ready for public registration and open house on Feb 27th.

ASG:

Discussed potential questions for Dr. Champa: How can faith community/congregations cooperate with schools to best support students and faculty? Now that you've been on the job for a while, what's your most pleasant surprise and biggest frustration with Hastings schools? Possibly something around discipline issues? (Pr. Geier noted awareness of issues in middle and high school with fights, etc.)

Pastor Geier suggested as a possible guest speaker a Hastings Family Service staff person who works on opioid abuse and fentanyl issues in the community. She presented at Hastings Ministerial Assn. recently. Chuck will follow up and try to schedule her with one of the open dates in the calendar.

Follow-up to last May's discussion on gun control:

Doug still needs to connect with someone at Hastings Police Department regarding their role in active shooter drills at Hastings schools, community action steps they would suggest, etc. Chuck will also try to connect with someone in the schools who coordinates such drills.

Chuck asked whether we should meet earlier in the month in order to get items in the newsletter more easily, etc. Will discuss with Jennie on Sunday.

Adult Forum calendar

1/28/24 Annual budget presentation and discussion – need blurb for Bulletin?

2/4/24 Annual meeting

2/11/24 Wired Word? (Jennie facilitate)

2/18/24 Pastor Geier – Discussion and expansion of today's sermon

2/25/24 ? Wired Word- Doug facilitate

3/3/24 ISD 200 Supt. Tampa Champa meet & greet

3/10/24 ?

3/17/24 Pastor Geier Gets Grilled

3/24/24 Palm Sunday – Need topic?

3/31/24 Easter – No Adult Forum

4/7/24 ? open

4/14/24 ? open

4/21/24 Pr. Geier Gets Grilled

4/28/24 Homelessness – Lisa Bergert

5/5/24 Homelessness

5/12/24 Homelessness

Future possible topics

Gun control; continuing discussion from May 2023

Representative from ISD 200 [Chuck will contact]

Hastings Police Department [Doug will contact]

Active shooter drills

Community action steps

Action items for St Philip's membership

Homelessness, led by Lisa

Target 4/28, 5/5, and/or 5/12 [Mother's Day]

Faith Formation:

Mentor meeting for confirmation is set for Wednesday 14th at 6:30.

The last Sunday school curriculum was ordered for this school year.

Save the date email went out to last year's volunteers for this year's VBS. Dates are July 22-25, and we will be doing Hotline Hero.

Hopefully we can get a March meeting scheduled.

Communication/Marketing/Tech Report – Warren Thomas

No Council Action Required

CMT didn't have a meeting and there is nothing new at this time to report.

Pastor Geier – February 2024 Council Report

- No one (other than Amy) “checked their tech” on Saturday February 3rd. I am thinking we no longer need to offer this as folks are more comfortable with this using Zoom.
- Special thanks again to Lori Best and Abby Mattimiro for their help navigating the Zoom portion of our annual meeting.
- I attended the Hastings Ministerial Association on January 24th and our synod's South Conference meeting on January 27th and our conference caucus on February 12th.
- I had two different meetings for our synod's candidacy committee on the evening of January 30th and then during the day on February 8th.
- I have also attended two meetings with synod staff and south conference pastors about what an ELCA presence in Rosemount might look like in the future.
- I led worship at Oak Ridge on January 31st and at Regina on February 7th.
- After spending a disproportionate amount of time for the task, I found mentors for all of our confirmands who needed them.
- Likewise on writing the confirmation/mentor handbook for this year.
- Our themes for our midweek Lenten services will be on some of the “I AM” statements of Jesus in John and those services will be livestreamed with a static shot.
- On February 24th, there will be a pre-assembly conference caucus for the election of a new dean and going over resolutions (and optional workshops) up in Forest Lake. I will invite our synod delegates, but since we are having our leadership retreat on the 25th, I am not expecting anyone else. (Poor planning on my part.)
- Of great impact on our ministry together is the passing of Ellen Diischer. Her influence on multiple generations of St. Philip's members is impossible to quantify. In addition, she was a dear friend and colleague to me. I am confident that we will surround John with every bit of love and support we can.
- There will be calls to hire new staff asap. I am thinking that it might behoove us to take some time to evaluate our ministry and determine what our staffing needs are to serve our mission as we move forward.

Thanks for your partnership in the Gospel.

Your Servant in Christ,

Gregory A. Geier, Pastor

Old Business:

No date has been set yet for Ruby's Pantry.

New Business:

Ten members have signed up for the February 25 Leadership Retreat at Schaar's Bluff.

The Council addressed the issue of information inadvertently omitted from the 2024 Annual Report. The addendum will be approved at the 2025 Annual Meeting.

Installation of new council members will be during the service on Sunday, February 25.

Alex made a motion and David seconded the motion that Council members make a financial contribution to the purchase of flowers for Ellen Diischer's funeral. The motion passed. Jen will purchase the flowers.

Alex made a motion that the church make a donation of \$250 to ADVANCE of Brookings, SD in memory of Ellen. Natalie seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

Following a discussion regarding future staffing needs of the church, Pastor volunteered to contact Interserv Ministries to see what possibilities an interim person might provide and to evaluate out needs.

A motion was made by Natalie and seconded by Alex to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Submitted by Lois Twedt, Secretary