

## **Council Minutes**

**December 16, 2024**

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

### **Call to Order by President Dan Strehlow at 6:02 p.m.**

#### **Secretary's Report, Lois Twedt**

There were no revisions to the report, and Natalie made a motion to accept the Secretary's Report. Dave seconded the motion. The motion passed.

#### **Treasurer's Report, Dolores Pemble**

##### **No Council Action Required**

The Finance Ministry Team met on Monday, December 9 in SPLC Conference Room. November Financials were approved. FMT was pleased to hear that the 2025 Spending Plan was approved by the Council. \$20,000 Completing the Dream funds were disbursed to pay down the mortgage principal as directed by the council. We discussed and approved the Interim plan for the Business Manager position. After much research, Deborah with help from Dolores, has crafted a comprehensive list of finance duties. We met with Lori Anderson (her firm has been handling the payroll for several years) and she has confirmed that her company can handle more finance responsibilities. Some of the in-house finance duties are already being handled by church volunteers. The bulk of the items that remained were coding, scanning and filing invoices. Dolores will take on those responsibilities as part of the treasurer's duties. This interim plan will be reevaluated in 6 months.

Tithing amounts were discussed. FMT voted to keep the ELCA amount at 9.5%, keep Green Lake at the current amount and add the Young Life amount to Lutheran Social Services.

Budget Informational meeting will follow the service on Sunday January 26, 2025.

Maria made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report. Jen seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

#### **Vice President Alex Zuzek**

##### **No Council Action Required**

The B & G Team did not formally meet in December. It had a display during the "Ministry Fair" which displayed all of what B & G includes. One young man offered to be on the team when his school schedule allows. Shovels and salt are at hand in the vestibule. Work continues on organizing the former library into a utility room for custodial equipment and general storage. Steve Wolverton and Bill Pavlish led this task.

## **Serving Ministry Report—Dave Fry**

### **No Council Action Required**

#### Fellowship:

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

1. **EDUCATIONAL APPRECIATION:** Thirty \$10 Caribou gift cards were sent in notes by Camille Johnson-Oster and Marge Peterson as appreciation to members of the congregation to those in the educational field.
2. **PHILADAZZLE DEC. 1:** Our Philadazzle evening was enjoyed by 75 dinner guests and 147 in attendance for a multimedia “Christmas Around the World Concert” by Chris Falteisek. Our dinner had some disappointments, as what we requested did not meet our expectations. But the concert was very entertaining. Chris was guaranteed \$400 but would receive all of the free will offering. With \$2 per ticket sale and free will offering, we were able to give \$420 more to him for the evening. Three leaders and 8 scouts helped with serving and cleaning up. Natalie Carda stepped in as emcee. Our committee had a follow up meeting on Dec. 6 reviewing what went right, what could improve on. We are already looking forward to next year with some new ideas. We gave a gratuity to John Diischer on sound and video board, Natalie Carda, and Lista for all of her graphic design help. We had a very dedicated and diligent team that helped brainstorm, plan, advertise, organize, sell tickets, purchase, decorate, keep the kitchen, and clean up. We couldn’t have done it without them! Margaret Goderstad, David and Geneva Weisser, Gladys Campbell, Deb Frandrup, Lois Twedt, Lois Wroge, Raul Jackson, Camille Nelson.
3. **PRAYER SHAWLS:** It appears they are being used and new ones are coming in as well. So good to have the visibility and not hiding in a closet somewhere! Concern was voiced about the display. The prayer team said they like the display in narthex the way it is.
4. **LEDUC PIE AND CONCERT:** Glenda will write up a newsletter article asking for someone to take over leading, maybe co-chairs. The physical moving of materials to the site is a very big job!
5. **CHRISTMAS CARDS:** We had 25 names to whom we’ll send Christmas cards.
6. **VISITORS PACKET:** we’ll keep in mind for future reference.
7. **PRAYER POSTCARD HELP:** Carol Tobin, Jeannie Evans, Tammy Krey, and Karen Swanstrom stepped forward to help Darla and Beth. They will plan a meeting to discuss the way to set it up. Thanks, Beth, for helping with it for many years as you hand over the reins. A reminder to keep the staff birthday cards included in the monthly correspondence.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

1. **ANNUAL REPORT:** we quickly overviewed last year’s report. We’ll address more details for the upcoming report next month.
2. **POTLUCK:** Will remind Lista to include a mention in the January newsletter and the postcards later in the month. We’ll ask her if there’s something we can do to help with sending out the postcards.
3. **FINANCIAL STATEMENT:** Up to date Expenditures for year
4. **FUNERALS FOR ELAINE WILBUR AND RICK EDSTROM**
5. **STEWARSHIP:** Breakfast set for over 120. 84 pledges and 64 talent sheets have been turned in so far.

#### Stewardship:

The Stewardship Ministry Team has had a very active two months. Creating and assembling the Mid-Nov. Stewardship mailing to 335 households is a two plus hour task. This is the first year the Time and Talent sheet was included which should boost our volunteer potentials for all ministry teams.

Dec 8, was Stewardship Sunday with the following results:

Pledge Cards Remitted YTD - 84. (2023 yielded 110 by Jan)

Time and Talent Forms YTD - 64. People have all of Dec. to return their stewardship responses.

No amount pledged has been calculated at this time.

The breakfast was enjoyed by 120 members. The breakfast is a celebratory event which lifts the continuing need for “top of mind” attention to the two needs of the General Fund and the Capital Fund every calendar year. “Abiding in God’s Abundance” was the 2024 underlying theme, which I feel was well received. Thanks, are also due to the three temple talk volunteers, Marjorie Peterson, Virginia Spence and Alex Zuzek.

## **HR Report—Natalie Carda**

### **No Council Action Required**

No report.

## **Worship Ministry Report— Maria Gathje**

### **No Council Action Required.**

Service Debrief: Attendance continues to be good with an average of 169 for December. Children’s sermons are appreciated. Bells and choirs are warmly received. Advent candle lighting with families participating is nice. Pastor’s sermons have had a focus on the times we are living in and much appreciated. Having musical vocalists with microphones and congregational mics on during hymn singing is critical for the online production. This had been addressed.

Praise Worship: As we continue to have one worship service per month be a Praise worship, it was suggested that an announcement in the newsletter describe this service which usually occurs on the first Sunday of the month. This could vary when guest musicians lead worship or a special event occurs to change it. It was suggested that the monthly calendar indicate Praise worship when scheduled. Song leaders and accompanists for this service would like the music in a timely manner to prepare for the service. Becky will prepare a draft for the January newsletter describing the service for staff to edit. Lista has the music available for musicians.

Blue Christmas Service, Dec 21, 3 PM: Kelsey will set up on Friday, Dec 20, 50 candles for people to light. She will lead the singing. Prayer team will be available for individual prayers. Becky will worship coordinate. Jay and John at the soundboard.

Flowers: Coburns will no longer provide a florist to arrange flowers for the altar. The altar guild is looking into alternatives. Poinsettias will arrive Friday, Dec 20 at 9:30. They will be put in the old sanctuary until Monday morning, Dec 23, to be arranged.

Flower, Candles, Pew Inserts: Candles will be put together on Dec 20. Flowers will be arranged in the sanctuary on Monday, Dec 23, at 9 AM. Pew inserts will be replenished at that time. Lori and Becky will put away candles on Dec 25, 9 AM.

Jan 5: Pastor will be on vacation. Pulpit supply will be used.

Music planning:

- Dec 15: Children’s Christmas program with Sam Willis
- Dec 22: Lori Best, song leader
- Dec 24, 3 PM: Bells; Annette Raimann: solo(offertory) and song leader
- Dec 24, 5 PM: Raul Jackson solo(offertory) and song leader; Violin and guitar: Mary Ellen Fox and Brin
- Dec 29: Lessons and Carols; Adult choir singing “In the Bleak Midwinter”
- Jan 5: Praise Worship; Sam Willis, Kelsey Wormley: song leader
- Jan 12: Adult choir
- Jan 19: Unity
- Jan 26: Bells
- Feb 5: Children’s choir with Kelsey as song leader
- Feb 12: Margaret Cox on Cello

Song Request: There has been a request to sing “A Trumpet Sound”, Hymn # 531. This would best be done when the adult choir sings. This will be planned for in the new year.

Health Safety: An announcement will be put in the January newsletter and bulletin regarding alternatives to handshaking and availability of hand sanitizer. Becky has done this. Kelsey is looking into purchasing small fillable bottles for hand sanitizer to be put in each pew.

## **Learning Ministries Report –Jen Klos**

### **No Council Action Required**

#### Preschool:

Did not meet. No report

#### ASG:

Feedback from past Adult Forum speakers:

Dr. Tammy Champa: “Thank you for having us. I always enjoy the opportunity and will be back soon. Have a happy Thanksgiving.”

Chief Dave Wilske: “Thank you again for the opportunity to speak with the congregation. The group was very engaging and I enjoyed the conversation. Be safe.”

ASG has requested \$500 for 2025

Primarily for an occasional honorarium.

ASG has requested to renew the Wired World.

Adult Forum for December

Dec 1: Join us for something topical based on the Wired Word. Details in the bulletin you will get by email on the Friday before.—lead by Doug Schultz

Dec 8: Stewardship pancake breakfast. No Adult Forum; enjoy the food and fellowship!

Dec 15: For a variety of reasons, the Christmas season is not a happy one for everyone. Pastor Geier will lead a session on Biblical lament, focusing on Psalm 88.

Dec 21: (Saturday, time TBD): Blue Christmas service, lead by Pastor Geier, for those who find themselves less than jolly on the shortest day of the year.

Dec 22: Christians are not the only ones who celebrate this time of the year. Come join us to learn about fall/winter holidays in other religious traditions—lead by Jenny Thomas

Dec 29: Adult Forum will take a holiday pause. See you in January!

January newsletter article, Doug Schultz will submit

Tentative Adult Forum for January

Jan 9 & 12—How & what to include in your estate planning & inheritances

Writing a will...how to get started; what to include...

Doug Shultz to organize

Somebody from Lutheran Social Services, private sector, Community Educ

Jan 19—Understanding the Sermon, Program by Pastor Geier

Jan 26—Budget meeting, no Adult Forum

Feb 2—Annual meeting, no Adult Forum

Book Study

A quick review of a possible book study of Pastrix: The Cranky, Beautiful Faith of a Sinner & Saint.

Committee will look into in more detail.

#### Faith Formation:

No report.

### Interserve:

Sunday school has been going smoothly, with Kelsey leading many of our opening sessions in late Nov/early Dec to rehearse songs for the upcoming nativity play. We also had family Sunday School during the fellowship meeting/pancake breakfast last week, which went very well. Families, including parents and a few high school students, participated in a variety of crafts. Very relaxed way to close out the program year.

Sunday is our Nativity play during worship, with a morning rehearsal on the Saturday before. Should be a lovely event.

Confirmation had its last learning session this week; we are most of the way through the 10 Commandments at this point and will pick up there in the new year. Our Christmas party event is next Wednesday, which is being planned by Kristian Ronning.

We deliberately chose to not have a High School or Family Fellowship event during December, in order to give families a bit of a break. We do have 10 spots reserved for FMSC on January 15th for high schoolers, and a few adult volunteers too. We'll be sending out that information in the January newsletter, along with sign up info. We will also have a family Book Bingo event in February; details to follow.

## **Communication/Marketing/Tech Report – Warren Thomas**

### **No Council Action Required**

Bruce is going to reach out to Brian Flaten to get a quote to install four outlets. Two in sanctuary, one in hallway that goes into the old sanctuary and one in the west entrance for additional cameras.

I'd also like to let everyone know that I'm not going to do an extra term in council. Glenda informed Bruce that she contacted John Nye, and he accepted taking my seat.

An AV company has been called to see why the one screen in the sanctuary keeps shutting off.

## **Pastor Geier – December 2024 Council Report**

- Participated in ministry team meetings
- Visited nursing home and home bound members and celebrated Holy Communion
- Preschool chapel on November 20 & 21
- Hosted Hastings Ministerial Association on November 20
- Middle school wrestling tournament on November 21
- 5th grade orchestra and 6th-8th grade orchestra on November 21
- Led Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service on November 24 (\$673 raised for HFS and Food 4 Kids.)
- Led worship at Oak Ridge on November 27
- Led worship at Regina on December 2
- Officiated at service for Rick Edstrom on December 4
- Synod Candidacy Committee at Roseville Lutheran Church on December 5
- South Conference meeting at Easter Lutheran on December 10
- 5<sup>th</sup> and 6th grade vocal music concert on December 12
- Led Sunday School Christmas program rehearsal on December 14
- High School Holiday Vocal concert on December 14

. Working with Nick in Interserve reviewing existing job descriptions, to modify as needed, before creating a final job description for HR.

Thanks for your partnership in the Gospel.

Your Servant in Christ,  
Gregory A. Geier, Pastor

### **Old Business:**

The Revised Revenue and Spending Plan for 2025 was reviewed. The snow removal was included in Maintenance-Grounds, Garden and Snow so no need for a separate item.

Pastor presented 4 local and 4 out of county charities for the congregation to consider for Tithing monies. The local charities are Feed My Starving Children, Hastings Family Service, Rise Up Recovery, and United Way Food 4 Kids. The charities beyond Dakota County are ELCA Hurricane Disaster Response, The Food Group Mobile Market, Lutheran Social Services for Youth Homelessness, and My Very Own Bed. Natalie made a motion to accept these charities for presentation to the congregation. Dave seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Following a discussion on establishing Sympathy/Sunshine Guidelines, Natalie made a motion to use Caring Ministries funds with these recommendations—For death of an employee—a memorial of \$150 and flowers not to exceed \$100 and total of the two items not to exceed \$250; for death of a family member of an employee—either a memorial of \$100 or flowers/plant of \$100 or memorial and plant, but not to exceed \$100; for illness or surgery of an employee—a card from the Council members and prayer shawl. The motion was seconded by Alex, and the motion passed.

### **New Business:**

Food 4 Kids has asked to partner with St. Philips by providing a space for storage and packing the food. The Council is receptive to this proposal but needs more information. Pastor will connect with United Way and OSEL to learn more about the partnership.

A motion was made by Dolores and seconded by Alex to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 6:54 pm.

Submitted by Lois Twedt, Secretary (Natalie Carda)