

COMMUNITY OF GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Council Minutes

October 15, 2020

Call to Order & Roll Call

Present: Sandy Anderson, Ken Colberg, Dennis Engman, Wendy Fitzsimmons, Maia Hendrickson, Jeff Hovis, Mike Mathisen, Dan McMahon, Jeff Montgomery, Tim Orf, Mark Schuneman, Michelle Sherman, Darrin Vick, Angie Way.

Excused: All present

Meeting called to order at 7:09 p.m.

Devotions: Wendy Fitzsimmons shared a poem about her conversion as a child. Glory to God!

Minutes for September approved with one correction.

Reminder to send highs and lows to Sandy Anderson.

Pastor Darrin's Report:

Recently, the staff discussed the "stuff we can't do," and this is difficult. The Church has always had challenges and limitations, so we need to stay focused on God's mission and our vision. Jesus described two types of shepherding: taking care of the existing flock and going out after lost sheep. Likewise, we take care of those we have, but need to reach out to those who are not with us yet. Stepping away from the flock to find the missing ones involves risk, but this is our calling.

The staff are creating a new normal. They are loving each other and making professional adjustments. Christi Torgusson has stepped up and provided confidence to the staff. Overall, they are doing well. Remember to encourage the church staff.

Sunday services include experimenting with Worship Gatherings at 10:30 a.m. Please invite people to try this style. At the end of November, we will consider opening the 9 a.m. livestream service to some in-house attendance. Being present with one another encourages the church. New ventilation/air purifiers are coming to provide additional safety. We plan to keep the livestream at 9 a.m. This gives members options. Please share thoughts about worship options with Pastors Darrin and Angie. We have heard that many traditional worshippers would prefer to have the 9 a.m. timeframe. Holding the traditional service at 10:30 a.m. is not a permanent plan. The question was raised about an overflow plan for the ushers if needed. Hannah has been working on this.

Pastor Angie's Report:

Regarding personnel, the drive-up thank you for Ishaya was successful. He and his wife were appreciative. Please uphold Melinda in your prayers as she grieves the loss of her mother. The LCMC Annual Gathering included several wonderful speakers. Topics included mental and emotional health. Our January series will address finding God in grief and loss. In February and March, we are contemplating a potential series on the Ten Commandments. Thanksgiving Eve will be a "drive-in" service and it will include pie.

Sandy asked about the mental and emotional health of our Pastors and staff. Mary Ellen Steinkraus, an LCMC Pastor, will provide substitute traditional worship assistance if needed. Concern about our church members has been weighing down the staff. We have a good understanding of the status of our traditional worshippers, but staff are less certain about many contemporary worshippers. Connecting by telephone is a strategy to consider.

Core Team Reports

Children's Ministries: Wendy Fitzsimmons

Britta appreciates knowing that we share the needs of the Children's Ministries at our Council meetings. Overall, Children's Ministries are doing well. The families attending "HISKids" have been consistent. Britta wants to provide ways for families to worship from home. The Trunk or Treat event went well. Please continue praying for Britta and her ministry.

Student Ministries: Dan McMahon

Most of the meetings are over Zoom, and attendance is very good. Presently, they are finishing a series on judging others. The next series is "How to argue as a Christian." The first "BIG NIGHT" was last Wednesday with 67 students attending! A similar event will happen in November. The Senior High will serve a meal. Confirmation will be its own service this year.

Adult Ministries: Jeff Hovis

Growth groups that meet at the church building are going well. Attendees have been wearing masks and social distancing. Those meeting in the evening have been able to let members in safely with the locked doors. It is challenging for groups that meet in homes since it is more difficult to maintain social distancing in the smaller settings. We are also challenged to find groups for those who are looking to become connected because many groups are at capacity or cannot meet due to COVID-19 constraints.

Grace Gatherings on Sundays are not seeing large numbers. Last Sunday's first indoor gathering had 30 attendees. We will reevaluate these gatherings at the start of Advent.

Seniors: Ken Colberg

The traditional worshippers would prefer the 9 a.m. worship hour. Quilters have been very busy.

Worship: Tim Orf

No report.

Welcome/Hospitality: Dennis Engman

Welcome/Hospitality core team has provided Hannah with some extra help. It feels good to be back in the building.

Missions: Michelle Sherman

The Service and Missions Team met, and they introduced Christi, Angela and Jeanne to the team.

Fare for All takes place tomorrow and again in November. The Diaper Drive communications are coming, and volunteers are needed for Wednesday evening before Thanksgiving. To support the food shelf, we will participate in "Give a Gobble" again this year. The food shelf appreciates regular volunteers and financial donations.

For a December service project, we plan to support the 44 seniors living at White Pines. We plan to provide gifts with online giving. In addition, we will assemble care packages for homebound seniors that are part of our church family.

Michelle read a September update from Michaela Koll. Please remember to pray for her and her team.

Infrastructure Reports**Treasurer and Stewardship Report: Mike Mathisen and Jeff Montgomery**

At this time, we are \$90,000 behind. Expenses are under budget by \$80,000. Over the last 2 months, we started falling behind last year's giving by \$38,000. A letter went out with giving statements.

Missions continues to trail behind. We may need to help make this up next month.

Letter campaigns are underway for November and December, so the congregation clearly understands how we are tracking against our budget.

The budget for 2021 will look similar to this year's budget.

Facilities: Jeff Montgomery

Air cleaning systems will arrive in about 2-3 weeks. Placement locations include the office space, sanctuary, the Commons and Fellowship Hall.

The school board is dealing with concerns about facemasks in schools. Parents can opt children out of masks. This year, the schools have record enrollment.

Secretary's Report: Maia

Thank you to our Pastors during Clergy Appreciation Month!

Vice President's Report: Mark Schuneman

We were blessed to have both pastors participate in the Trunk or Treat event.

President's Report: Sandy Anderson

The Annual Meeting is coming. Our constitution does not permit anything but in-person voting, but we could amend the constitution to permit voting remotely. Darrin shared the plan used by the LCMC, and they found people were very willing to be flexible with the budget and service terms. If we do not have a quorum of 100, we would need to schedule another meeting. The council discussed possible solutions for making the annual meeting work.

Other new business: none

Pastor Darrin closed with a passage from James and prayer.

Meeting adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

Next meeting November 19, 2020.

Respectfully submitted by Maia Hendrickson