

1917 COUNCIL MEETING NOTES

[List of Church Officers for 1917 (Elders, Council Members, Trustees), including addresses (p. 460)]

25 January [pp. 461] - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which the treasurer presented his report. After naming auditors for the 1916 accounts, the council declared the business of that year closed. They then elected its officers for 1917. The board of trustees had organized itself and provided the necessary financial security. The council appointed a repair committee and noted that the fire insurance premium was due. They were also informed of a \$350,000 offer for the church property. The council decided to hold a special collection for Bethlehem Orphanage on February 18 and to continue collections using the envelope system. The meeting thanked J. Louis Schaefer for returning the interest on the loan to the church. A gift of \$10 was raised for John Strickland.

29 January [pp. 461–466] - Quarterly CONGREGATIONAL MEETING at which the treasurer presented his annual report showing \$7,277.99 income and \$7,190.30 expenses, yielding a surplus of \$87.69 for 1916. The meeting received the report with thanks. Pr. Koepchen then gave his annual report [pp. 462–466; [written in Latin script—I believe that Pr. Koepchen wrote this himself.]

According to the New York Federation of Churches, 60% of the Protestants moved out of the district in the last 10 years. The number of children in the confirmation classes and Sunday School seem to confirm these statistics. But the number of communicants is about the same as it was 10 years ago. (Many who have moved away still return to the church.) There is also minor progress through new members brought to the church by God. Even though the number of children in the Saturday and Sunday Schools is smaller, there is still the same effort and enthusiasm. Bible classes are conducted in English. English services are also held on Sundays from 9–10AM, as well as in the evening (poorly attended). There are also regular services in Polish and in sign-language for the deaf. St. Luke's has also provided a meeting place for Bethlehem Orphanage, the Lutheran Hospital, and others. The Young People's Group still offers a good opportunity for fellowship, even though its numbers are somewhat smaller. The Ladies Aid Society was very active, providing many gifts for God's work of mercy, preventing the church from falling into deficit.

Statistics for 1915:

- Baptized: 62
- Married: 49 couples
- Buried: 48
- Communed: 1,040

Sunday School statistics [p. 466]:

- German: 159 children, 10 male and 11 female teachers
- English: 44 children, 3 male teachers
- Average attendance: Mornings (German) - 143; Afternoons (English) - 36

- Account balance on January 1, 1916 - \$131.75; Income - \$432.33; Expenses - \$479.08; Account balance on January 1, 1917 - \$85
- Donations: Mission - \$127.05; Hospital - \$20
- Books: 1,078

Following the pastor's report, other committees gave their reports and the meeting elected delegates to organizations. The meeting set the usual collection for the orphanage for February 18 and approved continuing the envelope system. They also voted to print *Altes und Neues* and to use the Reformation collection for the Atlantic District's Church Construction Fund. J. Louis Schaefer reported an offer of \$350,000 for the church. He also reminded the meeting that the fire insurance premium was due.

7 February [pp. 460–467] - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which Herr Bruns announced that the books for 1916 were in order. The chair reported an offer of \$350,000 for the church property: \$5,000 down payment, \$10,000 when the sale confirmed, and \$85,000 on June 1, \$25,000 also given to the church and the remaining \$225,000 in mortgage at 5% for two years). The church may retain the altar and chancel furnishings, bells and cornerstone, and several other valuable items. The council unanimously voted to recommend the proposal to the congregation. They renewed the insurance for three years and voted to distribute envelopes for the congregational budget. The council agreed to allow the Sunday School to hold its Easter Festival in the church on the evening of April 8.

7 March [p. 467] - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which it was reported that the offer to buy the church was invalid and that the fire insurance had been renewed for three years. Herr Schaefer paid the accident insurance premium of \$5,000. The council sent a letter of condolence to the widow of C. Fred Gennerich [son of the former church president], and their son, John Gennerich, was unanimously named church sexton. The council decided to hold the reunion of the confirmands on April 15. It was announced that beginning on April 22 at 8 PM and for the next six to eight weeks, there would be hold an illustrated series on the Lutheran Reformation. The collection for the orphanage had yielded over \$800. The Lutheran Hospital asked members for their support. The council scheduled the next congregational meeting for April 16.

4 April [pp. 467–468] - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which the treasurer presented his quarterly report. The meeting decided to hold the reunion worship service on April 15. The information on the Reformation lecture series was reiterated. The meeting decided to store coal. The council permitted the Sunday School to take the children to Central Park in June. All were asked to attend the concert for the Orphanage on April 19.

16 April [p. 468] - Quarterly CONGREGATIONAL MEETING at which the treasurer presented his report. On April 1 there was a surplus of \$495.98 and the collection for the Orphanage yielded \$780.53. The council was asked to help distribute the remaining envelopes. The Ladies Aid Society was requested to arrange a handiwork festival after the summer vacation. Charles Krumweide passed away on April 1. The council learned that the

Lutheran Hospital, along with the addition, was made available to the government. They were alerted that there were plans for a new hospital and that the church should prepare to help pay off the debts. It was reported that the Pilgerhouse [?] was sold for \$85,000 and that the \$25,000 from Hawthorne was also paid [no further details]. The meeting gave the Concordia student body permission to hold a sacred concert at St. Luke's on May 25. They assigned Herr Kirchof to distribute the thank offering books for the construction of the chapel for the *Altenheim*.

2 May [pp. 468–469] - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which the council was asked to participate in the College Festival on May 30 and the Orphanage Festival on June 6. The council voted to repair Pr. Busse's gravesite and the stone fence behind the church. They asked the Ladies Aid Society to prepare a festival for the benefit of the church after the summer.

9 June [p. 469] - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which to the council canceled evening services until September 9 and the morning services on August 5, 12, 19, and 26. They also cancelled their meetings for July and August. The council was invited to the Garden Festival at the Lutheran Hospital on June 10 and the June Walk on June 16. Herr Barklage requested financial help for the Support Committee. Herr Schmidt reported that the boat trip to Bethlehem Orphanage yielded \$1,168. Further, the congregational account had a surplus of \$672. The secretary was asked to send out the bills for July. The meeting gave Pr. Koepchen permission to attend the synod convention in Milwaukee. The council decided to hold the Reformation Festival on October 28 and the banquet on October 29. There would also be a celebration at Carnegie Hall on October 31.

[No Church Council meetings in July and August, 1917.]

19 September [pp.469–470] - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which the treasurer reported that J. Louis Schaefer had loaned the church \$500. Herr Maute asked if the congregation planned on holding a Missions Festival, since the church would be celebrating the 400th anniversary of the Reformation and the coin boxes for that event already had been distributed. The council decided to cancel the Missions Festival. They also cancelled the evening worship services in October and November and agreed to hold illustrated lectures instead. The meeting also voted to participate in the Fall Festival at the Lutheran Hospital on September 23.

3 October [p. 470] - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which the treasurer reported that in the past six months the congregation had \$2,891.95 in income and \$2,259.69 in expenses, leaving \$132.26 in the account on October 1. The council decided to send out envelopes for the services on December 2 [no reason given] and to hold a memorial service for members of St. Luke's who had died. They also agreed to hold a Reformation service on October 28 and a Sunday School festival on November 11 at 7PM. Further, the council decided to prepare a plaque dedicated to those called into the military, along with their addresses, so that they could all receive spiritual care. The Property Committee was tasked with securing a ladder.

7 November [pp. 470–471] - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which they decided to ask the congregation if it would be advisable to offer interest-free bonds to help the congregation pay off its debt. The council appointed a nominations committee to identify candidates for the upcoming vacancies.

5 December [pp. 471–472] - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which Pr. Koepchen reported that all was in good order and that the U.S. government had appropriated seven acres on Staten Island from the orphanage for a military hospital for the duration of the war. The secretary requested the usual donation for the Lutheran Hospital on the last Sunday in December. The chair reported receiving a legacy of \$500 from the estate of Anna Hochhalter and had asked the Ladies Aid Society to keep the money for the time being. [Some question about the incorporation of the Ladies Aid Society.] The council decided to establish an Anna Hochhalter Fund, similar to the established Margarethe Hellenschmidt Fund with the Support Committee using the interest from these funds for those in need in the congregation. It was further decided to put a border around Frau Hellenschmidt's gravesite. The council agreed to close the church on December 23 to erect the Christmas Tree. A committee was formed to decide whether to distribute a newsletter. The council then selected the nominees for the upcoming elections.

[The following seems appended to the December minutes]

The church received \$1,017.25 from Frau Margarethe Hellenschmidt after the deduction for the burial costs and \$500 from Miss Anna Hochhalter, totaling \$1,517.25. After the sale of the Chicama Sugar Bond for \$90, the total came to \$1,607.25.

Bonds purchased:

1,000 New York Central R.R. at 6% / 1,935	\$870
1,000 Air Line Ry Co. at 4% / 1,959	\$540
100 US Gov't 4% Liberty Bonds of 1917	\$97.68
100 US Gov't War Savings Certificates	\$82.40
(Balance to Herr Barklege)	<u>\$17.18</u>
Total	\$1,607.26

26 December (pp.1–2) - Quarterly CONGREGATIONAL MEETING at which, in addition to the chair and the pastor, 29 members were present. The treasurer reported that the church received \$500 from the estate of Frau Anna Hochhalter. Frau Hochhalter requested that the bequest be invested in the Margaretha Hellen Schmidt fund and that the interest be given to the Support Committee for those in need at St. Luke's. Frau Hochhalter also left \$500 to the Ladies Aid Society, but it could not be accepted because that group was not incorporated. The meeting voted to permit the Ladies Aid Society to incorporate. It was announced that the \$725 Reformation collection had been distributed and that the members of St. Luke's in the *Altenheim* were doing well. Bethlehem Orphanage was permitted to issue \$25,000 in interest-free bonds for three years. Further, seven acres of land at the orphanage were transferred to the government for use as a hospital during the war. The first Christmas festival at the orphanage's new Staten Island site would take place on December 30 at 3PM. Elections followed. Those elected were to be installed on January 6.

Postscript: The congregation decided to hold evening worship services and other meetings in the schoolroom during the coal emergency. The above-mentioned bequests were invested by J. Louis Schaefer as follows (\$1,517.26):

\$1,000.00 in NY Central bonds at 6% (1935) = \$870.00

\$1,000.00 in Seaboard Airline Railroad bonds at 4% (1959) = \$540.00

\$100.00 US Government Liberty bonds (4%)

\$100.00 Second Liberty bond loan of 1917 - both US bonds = \$97.68

\$100.00 US Government War Savings certificate = \$82.40

Balance = \$17.18)

[Note: these investments total \$1,607.26, which differs from the amount noted above]