

## 1919 COUNCIL MEETING NOTES

8 January (pp. 16–18) - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which the treasurer presented his quarterly report. The chair declared the business of 1918 closed. Election of officers for 1919 followed. Friedrich W. Maute was chair *pro tem*; J. Louis Schaefer was elected permanent chair. The chair reported that the board of trustees had already met and elected him president of the congregation. Henry von Runnen was elected secretary, and Anton B. Schmidt treasurer. Herren Schaefer and Fred Hoeffner had posted the usual bond for the treasurer. Appointments to the Repair Committee followed. After congratulating the newly re-elected chair, Pr. Koepchen reported that the War Community Service Committee had informed him that the church could close the soldier's rest space. He also stated that the Sunday School had purchased English hymnals for 65¢ each. The Repair Committee announced the completion of the necessary repairs.

20 January (pp. 19–26) - Quarterly CONGREGATIONAL MEETING at which 18 members attended. The treasurer read his annual report. Herren Maute and Heinrich Bruns reported that accounts were in order. Frederick Breuse was welcomed into membership.

Pr. Koepchen then presented his annual report (pp. 19–25):

After a long war, unlike any seen before, when the news came of an armistice on November 11, 1918, jubilation broke out in every state. [There followed a homiletic section giving thanks for the end of the war and the beginning of peacetime.] He noted the difficulties the church had faced because of suspicion and opposition, but God had protected and preserved St. Luke's through this difficult time.

After much serious deliberation, he continued, the congregation began conducting a portion of its public worship in English, so that the youth could also participate. He thanked the church council for its guidance during this transition.

The Bible Classes, the Sunday School, and the Saturday School had continued faithfully teaching God's Word under the direction of Herr Maute and the devoted teachers.

The Ladies Aid Society had worked hard and made a significant contribution to the church: \$800. This money supported the congregation and others in need.

The Bible Class provided an opportunity to continue strengthening the relationships young people had begun in Confirmation class. These relationships were bolstered under God's care through the activities of the Young People's Group. Without such wholesome groups, he maintained, the young people might stray elsewhere.

The choir contributed greatly to the Sunday worship. It had suffered greatly as the men of the church went to war. Now, many of those who returned were happy to rejoin the choir.

Seven percent of St. Luke's men went to war. Of these, one died in the war and two died of the epidemic [Spanish flu]. During the war, the church provided a place of rest and relaxation for returning soldiers, many of whom expressed appreciation for this service. Because of other financial pressures during the war, contributions to the church's charities had diminished in 1918.

Pr. Koepchen noted that God preserved the congregation from the Angel of Death. 1918 saw only 52 deaths, 8 fewer than in the previous year.

On financial matters: the church council hoped that the members who attend worship services would increase their giving to fulfill their duty to the church. Church officers also intended to transfer the current debt from interest-bearing to interest-free bonds. This would save the congregation some \$600 to \$700 a year and allow St. Luke's both to decrease its debt and increase its giving to charitable causes.

Statistics from the pastor's report:

- Baptized: 47
- Married: 47 couples
- Communed: 1,034

The election of delegates to various institutions followed the pastor's report.

Herr Maute then presented the report of the Sunday School for 1918:

167 children were enrolled in the morning classes. Average attendance was 122 per Sunday. Income was \$777.49 and expenses \$556.71. On January 1, 1919, the Sunday School account totaled \$220.71.

The Support Committee next gave its report:

On January 1, 1918, the account held \$1,023.03. The income for the year was \$335.69; the disbursements were \$261.00. On January 1, 1919, the account balance was \$1,097.72.

The Missions Committee reported that:

On January 1, 1918, the account held \$244.31. The income for the year was \$161.65; the disbursements were \$322.40. On January 1, 1919, the account balance was \$83.56.

Finally, the voters decided to issue \$10,000 in interest-free bonds on the church property to satisfy debt until April 1, 1919.

[No church council meeting minutes recorded for February, 1919]

5 March (pp. 25–26) - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which the treasurer reported that the Missions Fund had collected \$1,221.08 to date. The council decided to repay the Support Committee \$1,000 when it repaid other debts on April 1. They received an inquiry from the Lutheran Laymen's League to assist the widows and orphans of pastors and teachers and those who were no longer able to continue their calling because of age or inability. The council sympathized with them but postponed a decision on the request because the congregation had decided to engage in any new activities.

2 April (pp. 27–28) - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which the treasurer presented his quarterly report. On January 1, 1919 the account held \$76.25. The income for the last three months was \$16,370.16, totaling \$16,446.42 [the sum is off by \$.01]. Expenses were \$15,871.37, leaving a balance of \$575.05. The council decided to print *Altes und Neues* once again. They also agreed to hold the Reunion Service on the Sunday after Easter, April 27, in the evening. On Palm Sunday eight young men and seven young women would be confirmed.

21 April (pp. 28–29) - Quarterly CONGREGATIONAL MEETING at which 18 members attended. The treasurer read his report. The congregation voted to cancel the evening worship services and the Sunday afternoon Sunday School from June 1 to September 14 and the morning services and Sunday School during August. Herr Bruch was welcomed into membership. The Ladies Aid Society announced a congregational birthday party on April 30 and hoped that all would participate. The congregation decided to cancel worship on the last Sunday in June to attend the festival at Bethlehem Orphanage. The president of the congregation invested \$1,000 from the Support Committee at 7% interest in a first mortgage in the *Compania Agricola Garabeglio*. This benefitted the Support Committee, which was currently receiving only 5%. The congregation then approved the Sunday School's June Walk in Central Park.

7 May (pp. 29–30) - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which the treasurer announced that the church had satisfied its debt through the interest-free loans. He further reported that the congregational birthday party had yielded \$320.55. The secretary was tasked with writing the Ladies Aid a letter of thanks. Herr Maute reported that the Sunday School's June Walk in Central Park would take place on June 14 and that all were invited.

7 June (pp. 30–31) - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL in Pr. Koepchen's apartment. They mourned the death of Herr von Runnen and passed four resolutions honoring him.

[No Church Council meetings in July and August, 1919.]

3 September (pp. 31–33) - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which the chair announced that, after long deliberation, the probate court had ruled that the Ladies Aid Society could receive the \$500 from Fräulein Hochhalter's will. The treasurer would deposit the money in their account. Pr. Koepchen reported that worship services would resume on September 7. On the following Sunday, his son, Heinrich, would be ordained at St. Luke's and then begin his ministry at a mission church in Elizabeth, NJ. The service of ordination would be conducted in English. Pr. Koepchen also noted that he had purchased communion wine because there was very little on hand. The treasurer was instructed to reimburse the pastor. The chair reported that Herr Dr. Lasser had donated the \$100 bond he had purchased back to the church. The secretary would send him a letter of thanks. The council decided to resume the evening worship services on the third Sunday in September. Finally, they elected Hermann Brummer to complete Herr von Runnen's term as secretary.

8 October (pp. 33–34) - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which the treasurer read the financial report of the last six months. At the beginning of this period, the account held \$8,155.70. After expenses of \$7,706.13, \$449.63 remained in the account on October 1. The council received a letter of thanks from Frau von Runnen for its expression of condolence. Pr. Koepchen reported that the Confirmation class had started with 35 students and that the Bible Class also had a good beginning, as had the Young People's Group. He reported that Concordia College in Bronxville had more students than ever before. He also noted that the previous Sunday had been a collection day for the hospital in East New York. He then thanked the council members for their active participation in his son's ordination. The council agree to reimburse the pastor and Herr A.H.W. Kirchoff for their expenses in attending the synod meeting. The question of replacing German hymnals in bad shape was postponed to a future meeting. Finally, the council decided to purchase calendars with the church schedule to sell or give to the congregation.

5 November (pp.35–36) - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which Pr. Koepchen suggested replacing the Sunday evening worship services with Sunday afternoon services. After much discussion, the council decided to continue deliberation on this matter at the next meeting. At the pastor's request, the council agreed to hold a special collection for missions on December 2. Because of financial problems, the council also agreed to relieve the Sunday School of its annual assessment of \$75 for cleaning. The request was granted for the current year. The chair then named a nominating committee to find candidates to fill upcoming vacancies in church offices for the next election.

3 December (pp. 36–38) - Meeting of the CHURCH COUNCIL at which they approved a request to cancel the evening service on the Sunday before Christmas so that the young people could decorate the trees. The council also agreed to hold a special collection for the hospital in East New York on December 28. The chair reported that the bazaar organized by the Ladies Aid Society had yielded \$1,200 and that they would donate \$1,000 of that amount to the congregation. The council decided to use that money to pay off interest-bearing bonds on the church property. The election to identify candidates for church offices in 1920 followed. Following the election, the council tasked the secretary to write a letter of condolence to the family of Elder Henry Bruns. [The minutes include the text of the letter, including several resolutions honoring his life and service.] Pr. Koepchen reported that the Hospital and *Altenheim* in East New York, as well as Bethlehem Orphanage were all doing well. He further reported that Concordia College in Bronxville was running a deficit because the cost for boarding students were higher than expected.

26 December (pp. 39–40) - Quarterly CONGREGATIONAL MEETING at which 24 members were present. Several people were welcomed into membership. The congregation voted to write a letter of thanks to the Ladies Aid Society for their donation of \$1,000 and to use the money to repay interest-bearing bonds. Elections and the rental of pews for 1920 followed.