

## **Minutes of Church Council Meeting Sunday, March 21, 2010**

### **Members present:**

J. Barnett, R. Nesbit, S. Layman, R. Lebron, A. Lorton, K. Johnson, P. Loesel, E. Vickroy

### **Absent:**

K. Gaither

Meeting called to order at 1:00 PM

Pastor opened with a prayer

Correction to minutes: second entry under treasure's report changed to \$60,000 from \$60.

Amended minutes approved by council

### **Pastor's Report:**

- Palm Sunday Service to be hosted by us because of Mittie de Champlain's illness.
- Good Friday liturgy to be shortened in light of the uncomfortable length in the past.
- Sunday, May 2 scheduled date for congregational meeting.

### **Treasure's Report:**

- We have had many changes in personnel during 2010, so we have no inputs at this time.
- Financial management meeting planned for Thursday, March 25
- Two points to be discussed:
  - Family School West's agreement with us. We would like to charge them closer to what the market rate is for comparable spaces in the area. The suggestion is a use fee starting at \$52,000 with 8% increases over the next 5 years. We will propose this, and see what discussion and negotiation ensues. This issue we would like to have completed by the time of the congregational meeting.
  - The Endowment fund. Many are of the opinion that with Bernstein the fees are too high and they don't view us as needing funds for immediate operational costs. As of now, we are paying them \$6,000 in fees. In our talks of moving it to someone else, Jeff MacDonagh has recommended Lauren Wolcott Coolidge who would manage it for \$3,000. Jeff claims that the bulk of the investment would be in bonds, and that they would give us a bit more freedom in taking out funds in a way that would harm us least
- The discussion turned to an important consideration as to the nature of the investment. Since we are a faith based institution, it is important that we steer

clear of our money being invested in alcohol, tobacco, pornography, firearms, etc. It is important that we invest in more socially conscious businesses and concerns.

Scott Layman made a strong recommendation that we stay with Bernstein. Interestingly enough, we have recouped most of the money that we lost in the big fall of 2008, leading him to believe that their aggressive style of investment would benefit us in the long run.

We will review the pros and cons and revisit this issue in April. We would like to finalize our decision before the congregational meeting in May.

**Pastoral Care:**

We addressed the issue of volunteering for leadership and assistant roles in the service, without much resolution. How do we get people to actively volunteer for Sunday service duties without the constant pleading and begging....all suggestions welcome!

**Property Management:**

Marv Bettis has offered to serve on a committee to take care of property management. We would also like to ask Sarah Poist if she would be willing to work on this committee as well.

**Old Business:**

- Website proposals: We have been receiving proposals around the \$5,000 to \$7,000 area, The concern is that we had received an original proposal of \$1,000 from the young lady who designed Koinonia's site. Our original intent in sending out the RFP was to try to find a less expensive alternative.
- Banner discussion: This included some valid criticisms of the content to be included on the banner, and led us to look into some possible revisions to the original design. We are looking for proposals of companies to create it.

**New Business:**

We would like to explore our options in creating a workshop to study our audit requirements.

Our next scheduled meeting: Sunday, April 25th

Meeting Closed with the Lord's Prayer

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Nesbit, Secretary

## **Minutes of Congregational Meeting Sunday, May 2 2010**

Council members present: J. Barnett, R. Lebron, S. Layman, P. Loessel, A. Lorton, R. Nesbit, E. Vickroy  
Absent: K. Gaither, K. Johnson

### **Meeting called to order by council president, Judy Barnett at 12:26 Pastor opened with a prayer**

The meeting started with an introduction of the Church Council members.

#### **Pastor's Report**

Pastor introduced our new mission statement:

***A Community Called Together by Christ;  
Celebrating the Challenge of Passionate Faith;  
And Seeking to Inspire Creative Service***

Created by Michele Mikeska, Jean Ruhland, and Kate Sheeran, Pastor explained that it is not a statement of what we are, but more of who we strive to be. A reminder that faith is an active pursuit, the congregation overwhelmingly agreed to the effectiveness of the new statement.

A finance committee was instituted this past spring, created to set up guidelines as to how our investments are handled. The main objective of this committee is to constantly explore ways to guarantee that funds are guided in a responsible way so that we will always have a sizable reserve.

Pastor highlighted the various events and activities of 2009. He related the attempt to setup an environment where we are a self-governing congregation has been largely realized by the creative and interesting events that have taken place over the past year.

He discussed upcoming events and activities for the remainder of 2010, most notably the 160 year anniversary of Saint Luke's. He also reminded us that this year marked his 10 year anniversary with us.

We welcomed Pastor Martha Jacobi as associate minister. The Synod has been called, and we are hoping for an official installment during Pentecost.

Once again, he highlighted Rosemary's call to service, explaining that our service duties are directly related to our spiritual growth, and that an assisting job is a chance to explore the word of God more deeply. He emphasized the devotional aspect to serving.

#### **President's Report**

Much of Judy's report was a discussion on our visibility. This is to be achieved through our banner, e-mails, and website.

#### **Treasure's Report**

Ernie reported that the financial committee made great strides this year in keeping costs down. A major change was the elimination of the administrator position which will be divided between a part-time temp and volunteers.

Ernie explained the three prongs of our income:

1. investment
2. use fees
3. our giving

1. We are working toward exploring ways where we can move our money with the least amount of damage to our endowment.

2. Proposed aggressive rent increases.

3. Good news: we have exceeded our budget for personal stewardship and giving.

Ernie explained that going into 2010 looks good. We haven't had to remove anything from the endowment, but we also should be prepared for any worse case scenarios. This issue is all the more relevant since we receive the greatest amount of our income in rent. For this reason we must always make sure the building is well-maintained and kept up to the highest standards possible.

In the past we have been dependent on the Endowment Fund. It is recommended that we should never take out more than 5% per year. If we decide to move our money, we need to explore ways of doing this with the least amount of damage to our investment.

We have talked in the past of working with a different investment firm. Though we lost quite a bit in the 2008, Bernstein was able to recoup much of it in 2009. This leads us to believe that perhaps their aggressive style of investment may be in our best interest.

Another aspect of investing that we would like to look into (since we are a Christian and faith-based institution) is to work with a team who chooses investments in socially responsible companies and firms.

These issues will be continually discussed in the future, and Ernie would like anyone who would want to be a part of the financial committee to explore possible options to speak with him.

At the last council meeting, it was suggested by Pastor and voted on to become a member of the Protestant Welfare Agency. They have given us a sizable grant for the Soup Kitchen.

### **Pastoral Care**

More discussion from Rosemary about the deeper understanding and appreciation of our spiritual worship in performing service duties. She suggested a training session to help demystify the duties.

### **New Business**

Mike Brouwer offered up a suggestion to start our own Facebook page. This would be a very good way to stay socially connected.

We discussed the creation of our website.

Pastor also suggested setting up a committee to plan activities for our 160th anniversary.

a motion was made to adjourn.  
motion seconded, and moved to adjourn.

### **Meeting Closed with The Lord's Prayer**

Potluck luncheon served with a wonderful variety of foods including Red Velvet Cake

**Minutes of Church Council Meeting  
Sunday, September 25, 2010**

Members Present:

J. Barnett, K. Gaither, S. Layman, R. Lebron, P. Loessel, A. Lorton, R. Nesbit, E. Vickroy

Absent:

K Johnston

**Meeting called to order 12:55**

**Pastor opened with a prayer.**

**Minutes read and approved as written.**

**Pastor's Report**

The \$160 cost of attending the benefit this year was determined at \$1.00 per year for our 160 year anniversary. It was estimated that the total cost per person was at about half of that, so the minimum that we asked of people to pay was \$80 for those who were not able to afford the total cost.

Three important church festivals that are coming up: Reformation Sunday on the 31st of October, All Saints the following week, and Christ the King.

We have extended an invitation to Saint Clements Church for our traditional Thanksgiving Eve service, and they will be attending.

December 5 will be our annual congregational meeting where we will vote for new council members and approve the budget.

We will need to vote for five new members of council. Alex Lorton is relocating to San Francisco and Kevin Johnson is attending undergraduate school in Boston, so they will not be able to fulfill their terms.

Lee Ritchey and Mike Brouwer have been approached to temporarily fill the positions until we vote for new members.

The council member term endings are as follows:

2010	K. Gaither, R. Lebron, R. Nesbit
2011	K. Johnson, S. Layman, P. Loessel
2012	J. Barnett, A. Lorton, E. Vickroy

It was decided at the December meeting, that the three candidates with the most votes will fill the three departing 2010 members' positions, and the next two candidates with the most votes will fill Kevin and Alex's positions respectively.

Pastor discussed having a designated mission per month, alternating between a local and a world mission. Haiti and Koinonia were a couple of suggestions. Tanzania was also discussed, especially in light of the fact that Gayle volunteered there for five years, and Stephanie is now living there and actively involved in the program.

Pastor also introduced us to "Pelican Missions", a mission organization that offers trips abroad, and talked about the possibility of our congregation taking part in this program.

We decided that the ELCA Bread for the World would be our 4th quarter mission.

Pastor reminded us that concentrating on missions outside of ourselves is a very healthy way to approach our ministry and our lives.

Finally, Pastor reported that the Bible Study group is off to a very successful start.

### **Treasure's Report**

The good news is that we haven't had to take money out of our Bernstein account for over a year.

Ed Gaines has had a successful theater season, and has been able to bring up the monies which were in arrears.

Both Lutheran Social Service and Montessori School have new agreements, incomes that are keeping us from keeping us from using the endowment fund for operating costs. We are also looking to bring in a new tenant for the space in the basement.

We need to address some structural problems, but on a positive note, Family School West is offering to renovate the women's rest room at their expense. Also, Sarah Poist, Marv Bettis, and Eric Zollinger are interested in forming a property management committee to go over the ELSA architectural report and start to address this issue.

We had a motion to upgrade Quickbook 2001 to something more current. It was suggested to bring in Marsha Stone for a \$250 fee and to spend the \$150 for some new software to make the 2011 financial work easier.

Ernie proposed that we reinstate the financial investment program that we introduced five years ago. It was a program that offered high interest rates on members' investments. We would use it in order to pay for structural problems. ie: handicap access, toilets, elevator.

Finally, our endowment is up over \$24,000. Our current balance is \$745,000. We decided it might behoove us to investigate what kind of position we would be in had we gone with a less aggressive investment firm. We need to also approach Bernstein with the question as to whether or not we can set up a different percentage schedule if and when we need to take monies from our endowment for expenses.

### **Pastoral Care**

It was decided that this committee would take on the project of quarterly missions.

Rosemary suggested that we try to work towards a more definite and permanent schedule for service positions.

Richard volunteered to be on the call committee to get prospective council members on the ballot.

### **Old Business**

Discussion on the church banner.

The Oral History project is continuing with Ernie interviewing Virginia, and John Danielson interviewing Pastor Hanson. We still need to find someone to interview Jen Savio.

Much of the discussion centered on the set-up and execution (set-up, decoration, catering, etc.) of the anniversary benefit.

### **New Business**

The discussion of replacing new council members. (see Pastor's Report)

Future council meetings planned for Sunday, October 31 and Sunday, November 21.

motion to adjourn and accepted  
meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Nesbit, Secretary

**Minutes of Church Council Meeting  
Sunday, October 31, 2010**

members present: J. Barnett, M. Brouwer, K. Gaither, S. Layman, P. Loessel, R. Nesbit, L. Ritchey

absent: R. Lebron, E. Vickroy

**Meeting called to order at 1:05 pm  
Pastor opened with a prayer  
Minutes read, amended and approved.**

Kevin Johnson is attending graduate school in Boston, not under-graduate school.

**Judy welcomed Lee Ritchey and Mike Brouwer as replacement members**

**Pastor's Report**

Pastor reported that even though the annual benefit was more expensive to produce than originally thought, it was both an artistic and financial success, netting \$3,000 due to generous contributions from past and present members. We are still waiting on possible donations, and we will also receive money from the selling of the show's DVD. We also discussed different possibilities for future shows. Pastor also thanked the council for our gift of remembrance of his 10 year anniversary at Saint Luke's.

We discussed the various upcoming festivals

All Saints' Sunday-Day of Remembrance  
Christ the King-Sunday, November 21st  
Thanksgiving Eve.-with St. Clement's Episcopalian Church as our guests

Pastor will continue bible study through the Advent season with a study of the history of the early church, centering the discussion on the importance and significance of the virgin birth.

We need to discuss when the soup kitchen will close for Christmas vacation.

The services for Christmas will be as follows

10:00 Christmas Eve  
11:00 am Christmas Day  
11:00 am Sunday Service

We discussed alternate Christmas gift giving: instead of a material gift to a family member or friend, a more meaningful way to go would be to give a gift to World Hunger in the name of the recipient.

Pastor discussed the possibility of making January 2nd Epiphany Sunday.

We also discussed a few building maintenance issues: though the roof leak and skylight leaks have been solved, there is still a problem of a roof leak near the tower wall. We have a \$5,000 bid from a company that would install scaffolding to see what needs to be done. More discussion needs to take place before we decide on this course. Pastor is also talking to Marv Bettis, Sarah Poist, and Eric Zollinger about forming a building maintenance committee.

We also discussed the reinstatement of the financial plan that Ernie suggested. This loan system was successful in the past and gave us the cash reserve that was necessary to make



physical improvements on the building. Pastor suggested that we put together a visual package to demonstrate the mechanics of this plan to the congregation.

### **Treasure's Report**

*Good news on the financial front:*

Building and maintenance is under budget and we will probably not exceed it this year.

Our endowment is up \$42,000 with Bernstein from the January 1st to October 29th fiscal year. We haven't had to take anything out this year.

Montessori School is current.

West End Artists is working on and close to being current.

*A few minor issues:*

L.S.S. is behind a month in their rent, and we are waiting to see what kind of restructuring is taking place within their organization.

We are searching for a new tenant for the space downstairs.

We need to discuss instituting a capital improvement fund for special projects such as the stain-glassed window repair. We are looking toward a goal of reaching \$20,000.

Scott suggested a financial committee meeting to talk about where we are heading in 2011. In reviewing COLA (cost of living allowance) we have decided not present any of our employees with raises in the past two years. However, benefits have gone up. He reminded us that 50% of our costs got to salaries.

### **Pastoral Care**

The discussion was centered on our quarterly mission program. This quarter, the world mission is World Hunger. We discussed the possibility of making Habitat for Humanity another of our quarterly missions.

### **Old Business**

The Banner: Judy said that there are 3 different companies that we are reviewing. Pastor suggested a possible way to keep costs down is to inquire about "standard dimensions" and see if that is a more inexpensive way to go other than a custom made size.

Agreed to adding a "Reconciling in Christ Congregation" to the website. We agreed to a link to Stephanie:s Tanzania blog to the the site as well.

We discussed adding a "member check" to our agenda, and talked about which committee this would fall under.

We discussed having a "decorating for Christmas" Saturday at the church.

Staff reviews and evaluations: It is important to have a sit-down with all of the employees and discuss their job performance and description. It was agreed that this is necessary and helpful for the well-being of the employee. We would also like to do a self-evaluation on what the council has accomplished and would like to accomplish in the future.

**Next meeting scheduled Sunday, November 21st**

**a motion was made and seconded to adjourn  
meeting closed with The Lord's Prayer**

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Nesbit, Secretary

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## Minutes of Church Council Meeting Sunday, November 21, 2010

members present: J. Barnett, M. Brouwer, K. Gaither, P. Loessel, R. Nesbit, E. Vickroy  
members absent: S. Layman, R. Lebron, L. Ritchey

Meeting called to order at 1:09 pm  
Pastor opened with a prayer  
Minutes approved

### **Pastor's Report**

Very brief, Pastor reported that the schedule for the church year was completed through [Epiphany](#) and was published in the newsletter.

### **Treasure's Report**

The proposed budget for 2011 was completed by the [finance committee](#). It was reviewed by Ernie, to be voted on by council, in order to be presented to the congregation at the annual voter's meeting in December.

We reviewed the 2010 budget. Under Scott's watchful eye, we were able to come in under budget, with no monies being removed from the endowment. There have been several key factors. Use receipts have been up, and expenses have been kept down. Not only did our tenants agree to the raises in rent, most of our renters are either current or close to being on time. Incomes have been dropped or haven't been raised in accordance with COLA. The congregation has been generous in their offerings, as well. The balance of the endowment under the hands of Bernstein Investments was also up.

Jeff MacDonagh visited the meeting to offer council and advice on what needs to be done with the endowment investment over the long run. The ongoing discussion has been whether to continue working with Bernstein or to move to an investment firm that makes less risky investments.

We also discussed reinstating the loan system that we offered to the congregation a few years back, which gave us the reserve to make physical improvements on the building. We discussed the possibility of Ernie creating a package to present at the annual voters meeting in December.

Options of where we need to make physical improvements to the church structure were discussed, such as handicap accessibility, air-conditioning, high pressure toilets, windows, roof. The side windows are due for restoration, and the sanctuary needs repainting. We also talked about asking Sarah Poist and Eric Zollinger to head a committee that would go over the building and present ideas of potential projects at future council meetings. Pastor emphasized the importance of being proactive.

Finally, Pastor reminded us that the long-term goal of a church endowment, is not to use it for operational or structural purposes, but to bring ourselves to a point where the money is used to support missions.

A motion was made to accept the budget as presented. It was seconded and approved.

### **Pastoral Care**

Very brief, as well, we discussed the on-going problems and possible solutions to having people

volunteer for leadership positions in the worship services.

### **Old Business**

We discussed the agenda for the voter's meeting. It was decided as follows:

1. Pastor's Report
2. Voting for Council Members
3. Finance
4. [Property Management](#)
5. Pastoral Care

It was decided that Eric and/or Sarah would present the building management report, Ernie would present the budget, and Richard would discuss pastoral care.

The voting was decided as follows:

Due to the resignation of [Kevin Johnson](#) and Alex Lorton, instead of 3 positions, it would be necessary to also fill in the 2 unfulfilled terms, therefore, we would need 5 new council members. We decided to have the members of the congregation vote for three. The top three with the most votes would fill the 3 year positions, and the 2 runners-up would fill the unfulfilled positions respectively.

Judy has been in touch with a few banner companies, and happily reported that it is a very doable project, costs being quite low.

We also discussed staff reviews and it was decided that the following staff members would be reviewed by the two council members as follows:

Scott	Mike and Ernie
Pastor	Judy and Lee
Pedro	Judy and Paul
Suzanne	Ken and Richard

We discussed what the main bit of advice for new council members would be. It seems we are very good at coming up with ideas. We all seem to have great input and are good at identifying what needs to be done. The problem is the "follow-through". With the new council, the proposed goal is to "take the next step, move forward, and accomplish the task by following through."

We noted the previous years accomplishments:

- We made great strides financially.
- We have a new website.
- The administration is running smoothly.
- We created two extremely successful benefits.

### **New Business**

We discussed the importance of membership follow ups, people we haven't seen in a long time. Mike discussed our potential involvement in a facebook page that would help to bring the Saint Luke's community together.  
a motion was made to adjourn, seconded, and approved.

**Meeting adjourned with the [Lord's Prayer](#)**

2:31 pm

## **Congregational Voters Meeting Sunday, December 5, 2010**

Meeting called to order at 12:45 with a prayer.

### **Pastor's Report**

We reached an historic milestone this year by celebrating our 160th anniversary with two very successful benefits. This milestone also gave us the opportunity to reflect and review our mission by looking at the past and planning for the future.

One of the year's highlights was having Martha Jacobi join us as Associate Minister, and successfully leading the Wednesday night Bible study groups.

Pastor discussed our annual Christmas caroling on the front steps of the church, and the party that follows, and suggested inviting friends. He also requested help this year for the Christmas soup kitchen. He also reported that we would be celebrating Epiphany on Sunday, January 2, in order to keep us on our church cycle calendar.

Sarah Poist and Eric Zollinger were introduced to our architectural property committee in order to study structural and cosmetic projects.

Pastor also briefly discussed the idea of a congregational loan system, where parishioners would loan the church money to address architectural challenges, and receive interest on the loan. It is a method we had successfully employed in the past.

### **Council President's Report**

Judy Barnett thanked council members Ken Gaither, Rosemary Lebron, and Richard Nesbit for their service at the completion of their three year terms. She also explained the voting process this year, that not only would we be voting for three members to fill the fulfilled terms, we would also need to vote for two additional members to fill the unfulfilled terms of Kevin Johnson, and Alex Lorton, who moved out of the New York area earlier in the year. We would still vote for three members. Those receiving the most votes would serve three years, and the two with the next highest votes would serve Kevin's remaining one year term and Alex's two, respectively.

### **The congregation voted.**

### **Treasure's Report**

Ernie Vickroy presented the budget for 2011. He explained that they had budgeted slightly higher than in 2010. We had come under budget in 2010 by decreasing spending and increasing revenue. He discussed tithes and offering, and reported that giving by the congregation had also increased, and said that he is optimistic that there will be more of an increase in 2011.

He discussed an increase in rent for both Family School West and Lutheran Social Services, both who have expressed interest in continuing as tenants. We also talked about the nature of these tenants, and how they are the "type" of tenants we would like to cultivate. It was mentioned to keep "eyes and ears open" as to the possibility of finding more of these types for other areas of the church to be rented.

Ernie also briefly discussed the loan system which we had employed a few years ago, and said that we would talk more on the subject at the May 1st congregational meeting.

Besides our giving and revenues, Ernie also talked about our third stream of income, the investment fund. He happily reported that the last time we took money from the fund was in

September, 2009. We have been, and will continue to work toward not removing anything from the endowment. We would eventually like to find ourselves in a position where the funds could be used to support various local and global missions. We discussed the pros and cons of our investment team's aggressive style, and entertained questions and suggestions to eventually move to a firm with a more "secure" approach. This has been an ongoing discussion, and we will continue to reflect on this issue.

There was a 3% increase of salaries proposed for all full-time employees, Pastor Schmiede, Pedro D'Aquino, Scott Layman, Ann Thompson (whose salary was recently moved under "soup kitchen" to make it clearer as to what the costs are in order to run this mission), Valvina Rosario, and Rada Hussein. A question was raised as to why a 3% increase at this time, and it was explained that the salaries have been frozen for the past 2 years. The synod has recommended a 2.7% increase. We have still been able to keep salaries under budget due to the elimination of a full-time administrator.

There was additional input from Jeff MacDonagh, stressing the importance of the untapped potential within our property values, and to look into renting our spaces more closely to market rates. Helen Huff recommended that the congregation be a bit more active in finding a tenant for the space in the basement.

a motion was made to accept the budget as presented.

it was seconded.

the budget was approved as presented.

### **Results of the election**

Mike Brouwer, Sarah Poist and Lee Ritchey were elected to serve three year terms, with Cassandra Wilson and Susan Lay to serve the two and one year terms, respectively.

### **Pastoral Care Report**

Richard Nesbit spoke briefly about the importance of serving positions for worship services.

a motion was made to close the meeting, seconded.

meeting adjourned at 1:40 pm

### **Pastor closed the meeting with a prayer**

a potluck luncheon followed the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Nesbit