

Church Council Meeting  
Immanuel Lutheran Church  
December 11, 2018

Those present: Pat Hammer, Pastor Paul Nelson, Pastor Angela Fairbanks Jacobson, Brent Apelt, Ruth Lunde, Jody Ebert, Anne Walbrun, Jackie Getchius, Cari Larsen, Wendy Wurscher, Scott Anderson, Zack Hansen, Jennifer Johnson, Tammy Vergeront, Tami Ehlers, Bob Peterson, Tony Szczepaniak, Beth Hansen

Thanks to Wendy for treats.

Tony gave devotions.

Jackie Getchius related her faith story.

Secretary's report: Pat distributed the minutes. Tony moved to approve the minutes with two changes, second by Cari. The motion passed.

Staff reports:

Paul: Faith Friends All In Event is February 2 and will serve as our council retreat. This event is not limited to staff and council, but is open to all members. The roof will need some work in the future but does not need to be completely replaced at this time, so will consider replacing as necessary and build up a reserve fund with the next capital campaign. Stewardship report shows 256 pledges for \$754,000 as of today.

Angela: thanks for including continuing education in the budget, she was at a Vibrant Faith retreat last month and gleaned much knowledge. Insight from one of the speakers: most congregations need to prune 30% of their programming (as they add programming and don't remove anything) and return their focus to building relationships. Advent worship is new this year and has been delightful and meaningful. Financial Peace University will be offered again in January.

Tammy: Several building issues have been resolved the past few weeks. Gas leaks on a Wednesday afternoon were quickly dealt with, thanks to Brent Hansen and the properties committee.

Year-end giving deadlines- Please give stock by December 21 so it can be processed. Credit card and Give Plus giving should come in by December 28. Cash should come in December 30 or before. Counters will be here on Sunday, December 30 so deposits are ready before the end of the year.

President's report: Openings on council coming up: Scott Anderson and Jody Ebert will serve second terms. Katie Thormodsgard's term on Children's Ministry is over. Wendy Wurscher and Mindy Johnson are stepping down from Fellowship. Zack Hansen will stay on council until he leaves for college. Jen Johnson is working on her

replacement for senior high ministry. Ideas have been generated for the three executive council positions that are open.

Vice president's report: Long range planning has finished their research, and the committee will meet with Paul and Beth before they issue their findings. They will share a summary of their report at the annual meeting.

Financial secretary: Bob reported attendance in November at 2,511, which is down from 2,616 for the same month in 2017. Giving for November was light. We need around \$200,000 in December in order to meet our annual budget projection.

Treasurer's report: Giving for November trailed budget and year to date is now below budget by \$34,000. Total expenses are below budget year to date.

2019 budget was discussed. A summary of discussions is provided below:

2018 Actuals:

- As December is typically the church's largest giving month of the year, our final net position for 2018 will be unknown until the end of the month.
- If there is a surplus at the end of the month, after expenses, Council discussed options of increasing 2018 actual benevolence (currently planned for 19%, with many of the payments at the end of the year), carrying a balance forward to fund 2019 expenses, or building cash reserves. Several people expressed interest in building cash reserves in lieu of increasing benevolence, if we are able to project a 2019 budget that is balanced and includes a provision for staff salary increases.
- If there is a deficit at the end of the month, Council agreed that benevolence would be decreased so we are not forced to dip into our cash reserves. The consensus was that the ELCA portion of the benevolence be decreased, if necessary, as the impact of a drop in our giving is smaller, as percentage, for the ELCA than it would be for some of the other ministries we support.

2019 Budget

- Council reviewed 2019 budgets that have been submitted to date and the projected total income for 2019 at a flat income/giving budget compared to the 2018 budget. With no salary increases and a benevolence target of 19%, a net loss is projected at approximately \$18,000.
- A summary of actual dedicated account balances as of November was also reviewed, with a comparison of budgeted 2019 expenses for each program.
- If actual giving in 2018 is higher than budgeted, we will make the decision of whether to increase the projected income for 2019.
- Council discussed different versions of the 2019 budget projection: if salary increases are allowed and/or benevolence target is reduced to 18%.
- Two additional options for expenditures to be discussed at the January meeting, depending on projected income and other expense items: 1) moving

the custodian to a full time position, and 2) adding a part-time God Squad employee (Children's Ministry request).

Committee Reports and Budget Notes:

- Social Ministry- Cari Larsen- plans to remain at 19% benevolence this coming year and build up cash reserves as income allows.
- Fellowship – Wendy and Mindy – getting a warming oven for the kitchen from memorials, annual meeting is the next task (January 27).
- Properties – Scott Anderson- wants to strengthen cash reserves due to the unpredictable nature of maintaining our physical plant. There were expensive HVAC repairs in November. Move custodian to full time? Probably necessary in a church this size. If he is full time, will also need benefits.
- Middle school and high school – Jennifer Johnson- 2019 - Middle school will be \$900 over; Senior high will be \$900 under because the Lutsen ski trip has been eliminated. Will clarify budget by January meeting as there is some confusion over the dedicated account balance, actual 2018 expenditures to date, and the budgeted expense for 2019.
- Worship music and arts – Ruth Lunde- They are running under budget this year as of November, but they will likely spend it as December worship expenses are typically higher than normal.
- Adult Faith formation- Jody Ebert– budget will be flat, dedicated accounts take care of expenses. January 12 is Women's retreat.
- Evangelism- Anne Walbrun– flat budget, dedicated account covered Bingo expenses. Will overspend this year, outstanding bills, and will plan to take that amount out of dedicated funds so that the general budget is not impacted. She will work with Tammy on this.
- Children's ministry will remain the same budget amount. Cindy would like to add a small part-time position to help with God Squad on Sunday mornings, which is one of the largest Sunday school groups in the church.

Annual meeting is January 27; please write your reports for the booklet. Reports are due January 8, which is the next council meeting.

The meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

Pat Hammer, council secretary