

Church council Minutes-Immanuel Lutheran Church

May 9, 2017

In attendance: Jen Johnson, Bob Peterson, Susan Weaver, Wendy Wurscher, Cari Larsen, Julie Tufford, Zack Hansen, Jody Ebert, Scott Anderson, Mike Lindahl, Tammy Vergeront, Beth Hansen, Ben Orton, Paul Nelson

Devotions by Mike Lindahl

Faith story by Bob Peterson

Secretary's report- minutes were read, Susan Weaver moved to approve, Cari Larsen seconded, passed.

President's report-Beth thanked all for attending the council retreat at the Synod office, it was a good day. SWOT analysis will be used in long-range planning.

Financial secretary's report-Bob Peterson reported that April was a very strong month with attendance, giving was at \$128,000, significantly ahead of budget, so we are caught up.

Treasurer's report-Mike Lindahl reported that we are ahead of budget by \$11,000. Some timing shifts in the budget-spending continuum were resolved. Capital campaign update-\$364,000 of \$700,000 is in, most of the bills are paid. Thrivent will close our account when all liens are satisfied.

Evangelism-Julie Tufford spoke briefly about Welcome Sunday weekend. Since we are paying for the tent for the entire weekend, we will have an event the Saturday night before with bingo and food trucks, etc. Susan Weaver suggested fliers distributed to the adjacent neighborhoods with a free bingo card.

Staff reports:

Tammy Vergeront -the AED machine has been replaced. Asked that we check our mailboxes frequently so she can pay our bills. There was a break-in at church last Sunday night, resulting in the loss of a small amount of cash out of mailboxes. A security update with a camera (about \$2,000) was discussed.

Pastor Susan Weaver-The Synod Assembly was enjoyable. Susan reminded us that our seminarians need our support and asked that we budget \$1,000 for the seminary next year. It's estimated that we will have a clergy shortage in the future, support our youth! We got three trees from the Synod, will be planted on our grounds. To celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation, take a Flat Marty along on your summer trips! She thanked adult faith formation small group leaders.

Pastor Paul Nelson – thanks for a wonderful council retreat. Men’s retreat is coming up with golf and other activities. Baccalaureate is June 4, Paul Erdman and Paul Nelson will be a part of this. Faith 101 has started with 11 participants.

Stewardship- Ben Orton reported that Stewardship has been featuring an internal ministry and an external ministry story each month, illustrating how our giving affects our community with examples of how we share our time and talents. This year’s theme is ‘generous living changes lives’.

Social concerns-Cari Larsen- 6 Wednesdays this summer will be devoted to outreach to our neighbors.

Senior High-Jen Johnson reported a successful garage sale, with much less labor due to the no-pricing experiment. The final financial report is coming next month.

Properties-Scott Anderson encouraged us all to come to spring cleanup is this Saturday, 8:30-noon.

Old business-

Zack Hansen is planning a 4th of July event in connection with the community members who use Immanuel’s parking lot to watch Eden Prairie’s fireworks-bottled water just needs church permission. We discussed giving water away with worship times attached. Free will donations will be taken for PROP. Paul will ask his police friends to direct traffic.

New business:

Haven House update-

Memorandum of Understanding covering responsibilities has been reached and initialed. They are ready to buy a house: 4 BR close to a bus line, for four 18-22 year olds. Due to the change in business model from that originally proposed which had younger residents, the yearly operating expense budget is now greatly reduced to under \$100,000 a year.

Recall that the original donation to purchase the house was \$217,000. With the nature of the housing market, more funds are necessary to obtain a house that will meet their needs. They have asked whether Immanuel is ready to donate the portion of funds allocated in the capital campaign of \$100,000, AND if the Haven House board is able to use those funds to assist with the purchase price, rather than only as operating expenses. This additional funding would allow them to purchase a house fitting their needs. There aren’t many houses on the market now that would meet their needs with only the \$217,000 donation. Would council support the use of our funds in this manner?

Council discussion followed.

- There were questions and concerns regarding the level of community funding, and whether it would be sufficient to fill any gaps remaining in upfront operating costs after the donation was repurposed.
- It was expressed that the purpose is unchanged and that this request is in line with that original purpose: that “seed” money is starter money to be used at their discretion.
- Several council members expressed that using the donation for part of the purchase price is actually MORE comforting to them as the campaign was for “capital,” after all. This also reflects favorably on Immanuel’s balance sheet as the portion of the donation remains as an asset in the form of property (similar to the original donation).
- Several members commented that they knew the Immanuel members on the HHB (Kim Rathjen, John Urbanski and Andy Vergeront), and expressed their confidence in those individuals and their ability to act responsibly and make good decisions that are in line with Immanuel’s goals.

Whereas the Haven House board has requested to spend all or part of the \$100,000 seed money on the house purchase over and above the \$217,000, Mike Lindahl moved to authorize up to \$100,000 from the capitol campaign over and above the original \$217,000 for house purchase or seed money at the Haven House board’s discretion, or bring it to congregational vote if required by our bylaws. Seconded by Jen Johnson. Discussion followed these two motions, but a vote was not taken at the meeting. The executive committee has agreed to research the original congregational vote taken when the donation to purchase the house was made. After ascertaining that this motion agrees with the original motion approved at the congregational meeting, the council will vote by e-mail.

The meeting adjourned with the Lord’s Prayer.

COUNCIL MEETING FOLLOW-UP EMAILS SUBSEQUENT TO 5-9 COUNCIL MEETING:

Beth Hansen emailed council on May 16th to report the following:

...we have received advice regarding the requirements for a congregational vote to purchase the property. It seems clear to us now that the vote taken last year to allow Immanuel to purchase the house IS SUFFICIENT to cover additional funds allocated to the house. No additional vote is required to grant Kim’s request. The specific language included in the vote regarding the cost of the house was added in order to clarify that the sale of property would be used in the house purchase, NOT that the purchase was ONLY to utilize those funds. I specifically recall that a discussion took place regarding the cost of a house might be greater, and that additional funds might be donated or secured elsewhere, leaving us in the spot we are in right now.

Considering this feedback, I believe that we should encourage HHB to use the seed money in the best way possible, and that granting this plea is consistent with our original intentions. As we discussed on Tuesday, our current capital campaign is sufficiently funded such that the initial promised donation of \$100,000 can be made to HHB at any time. Recall that this donation is above the \$217,000 that was donated from an individual last year for the specific intention of purchasing the house in question, which Immanuel has been holding since it was donated.

Furthermore, in response to questions regarding community funding, Kim Rathjen provided the following on May 18th via email to Beth Hansen, which was forwarded to Council:

The City of EP has time and again told us (HHB) that there are funds available for rehab because of the population we will be serving. I've heard anywhere from \$40K - \$75K. Being able to increase the funds available for the purchase of the house will also put us in a better house that won't need as much rehab.

There is much community interest in supporting this kind of house in EP. Although we have not begun a fundraising campaign we have already received \$25K from donors in the community who have heard of the project. We believe this is a good indication that we will be able to raise the needed start up and operating expenses.

Submitted by Pat Hammer, council secretary.