

**Council Minutes**  
**10 November, 2015**  
**Start 7:00pm**  
**ILC Library**

Brenda Tonjes called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Brenda T. – devotion

Scott Sabin – refreshments

Opening Prayer

Paul Stordahl – faith story

Motion Made	Made By	Second	Outcome of Vote
Review and Approve October Minutes	Jen Johnson	Scott Sabin	Motion Passed
Approve opening credit line of \$50,000 at Bremer Bank	Sharon Peterson	Paul Stordahl	Motion Passed
Send Employee Handbook to staff for review	Julie Tufford-Olig	Paul Stordahl	Motion Passed
Approve congregational meeting to vote on selling donated property and using the funds to purchase home for shelter use	Sharon Peterson	Julie Tufford-Olig	Motion Passed

Scott – faith story sharing – prayed for finding balance in life, was contacted about a job! Prayers answered!

Before approving October minutes, it was confirmed that Generosity Sunday was intentionally named, and is the same as Stewardship Sunday. Also, change “Britta’s baptism” to “planned baptism” in font repair discussion.

**New Business**

Looking ahead to the 2016 budget, an increase of \$25,000 above the 2015 budget is planned to cover increased expenses (Increase from \$1,160,000 to \$1,185,000). As of now, contributions have remained

similar to 2014 up to this date. The 2015 budget is \$25,000 greater than that of 2014. Being that giving is similar to that of 2014, we would need to make up approximately \$50,000 for 2016.

The increase was determined primarily based on 3% salary increases for clergy and staff, as well as health insurance cost increase of 7%. It was mentioned that a member of the congregation spoke at the last annual congregation meeting, stating they thought clergy and staff should have increased compensation. A congregation member also researched salaries from congregations of similar size in the area and thought an increase would be appropriate. A stewardship e-mail will be sent Thursday to address this point, and the congregation member's letter will be attached.

Benevolences will be reduced 2% based on current income and a projected \$25,000 increase in budget for 2015 and again in 2016. The ELCA will receive 10% and 7% will go to other benevolence commitments. This number does not include special offerings and giving.

Budget projections may have been affected by past lighting and computer/phone upgrades, and Bill mentioned many dedicated budgets not being used for their specific purposes. There is \$9500 in dedicated accounts not being used.

Committees were encouraged to work on budgets for 2016.

Bill brought up that there is a cash flow issue this time of year, and that Executive Committee discussed opening a line of credit at Bremer Bank as a safety net. It isn't expected that we would use the credit line. The motion was passed to open up a credit line of \$30,000-\$50,000, and Bill will begin the process.

### **President's Report**

John Urbanski was absent. Coming elections were discussed, and Pastor Paul will be gathering names for a nominating committee. Sharon, Paul S., Brian N., and John U. will be going off of council.

### **Font**

Thursday 8am – Minnesota Surfacing will come to reseal the leaks in the font. Northland Monument Co., the company that originally installed the font is unable to service it due to employee leaving and backlog of work. To completely fix it requires heavy equipment and will cost \$8000-10,000. The resealing service Thursday will cost \$1100. It was mentioned that font repair could be a component of the coming stewardship campaign.

### **Summer Camp**

Paul S, Martin Rathjen, and Pastor Paul met today to discuss the decision of Children's Ministries to attend camp at a location other than Camp Onomia. It was discussed that there are issues that will require more than clean up of the camp, and that children's camping will be held elsewhere for at least the next two years. Confirmation Camp, the Men's retreat, and Family camp will still be held at Onomia.

### **VP report**

The Employee Guidebook is close to being finalized, and was reviewed by council. Questions were asked and addressed. Most questions involved vacation days and sick days/PTO, and how they would be allotted based on employee hours per week, and based on the Letter of Call for pastoral staff. Whether vacation would be carried over was also discussed. It is not feasible to keep track of sick days,

and it is thought that sick days can be dealt with case by case with a staff this size, as well as being addressed in annual reviews.

There was concern expressed that discriminatory practices could occur without set guidelines for sick days, but it was stressed that the handbook is more realistically a guidebook, and that it is not meant to be legally binding. There is also no HR department to create a more formal document.

Craig Holje from Richfield School District reviewed the document and indicated there would be no legal implications. Further research will be done regarding employment law and insurance coverage.

### **Congregational Vote for special allocation of donated funds for home purchase**

Kim Rathjen approached council to ask for a congregational vote that would allow an anonymous donor to donate land to the church, which the church would sell to a committed buyer and use the funds to purchase the house on Luther Way to use for a temporary emergency youth shelter. Funds would go into a dedicated account versus being a line item in our budget. The income from selling the donated property will cover the cost of desired property. Youth ages 10-17 would have access to shelter. Average stays are 4-7 days. Kim has researched the needs of our community and found that there is an overwhelming need for emergency youth shelters. People and organizations in the community are willing to help, but are in need of a location. The church would just provide the house, and a foundation would be formed to fund staff and programming. Kim indicated any zoning requirements should not be an issue. It is a good location as well, being by bus lines, grocery store, and school. Council approved a congregational vote for November 29<sup>th</sup> after the 9:15am service to approve purchase of the house with funds received from selling donated property. Announcements will be sent through e-mail and in church November 15<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>.

### **Scott Belseth – Financial Secretary**

So far this year we are \$12,000 over budget. Church expenses are \$4000 under budget, and programs are \$5600 over budget. October giving was higher than last year, and November giving is slow. This is generally common for this time of year. Usually 15% of giving for the year occurs in December.

The mortgage will be just under \$200,000 after the December 1<sup>st</sup> payment. Bill did not receive the current mortgage statement, but indicated contributions are less per month for the 5 for 50 campaign. The mortgage will be paid off by December of 2016 making the minimum payments. It was discussed that completing the mortgage payments before the next capital campaign begins will make the next campaign more successful. Some think the campaign is over and the mortgage has been paid off, so it was thought the 5 for 50 campaign should be advertised to remind the congregation of where we are at with the mortgage payments.

### **Paul Stordahl – Stewardship**

Stewardship Sunday, also called Generosity Sunday will be on November 22<sup>nd</sup>. A letter from Jerry Figg was sent and related the importance of fairly compensating staff. He also related information gathered from other similar congregations in the area about pastoral and staff compensation.

### **Sharon Peterson– Social Concerns**

Committee will be meeting on November 16<sup>th</sup>.

### **Jen Johnson – Adult Faith Committee**

A meeting was held on Oct. 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Feb. 27<sup>th</sup> retreat

Grow nights are going well, and are well attended. The 40 top bible readings are getting positive responses from the congregation. January 19<sup>th</sup> will be the next meeting.

### **Katie Thormodsgard – Children’s Ministries**

God Squad – We are seeing increased numbers of 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders attending over last year, and feedback has been positive.

Trunk or Treat – We had 29 cars participate, and about 100 trick or treaters attend. The weather was cold and rainy, but people still had a great time. We will plan on doing this again next year!

Operation Christmas Child – The box packing event will be on November 15<sup>th</sup>. Thank you Kim for all of your work on this!

Christmas Program – It will be headed up by Gretchen Roepke and similar in format as last year. The theme is ‘Candles of Christmas’, and will focus on the meaning of Advent. Gary Thrasher and Gretchen have been working together to make this a successful program!

Camp Onomia Meeting – Three parents will be meeting with Paul Stordahl to discuss the decision to hold Children’s camp at another location this summer.

### **Julie Tufford-Olig – Evangelism**

All Tables of 8 groups have met, and the program is receiving positive responses from participants.

### **Scott Sabin – Youth Ministry**

The Youth Ministry committee is discussing fundraising options. They also want to increase visibility of youth in the church on a weekly basis. The confirmation retreat will be taking place this weekend, with 120 campers and 5 ½ student leaders. The committee will be meeting again this month and discuss stretch goal ideas.

### **Brian Heinzen – Properties**

Curb repair won’t happen any time soon. There was poor response from contractors, and the job is too small to be of interest to them. Changing tables will be installed in all of the restrooms. Sharon mentioned was from a candle in church dripped on the floor and caused the floor to become slippery, even after cleaning. The grout is also dirty and probably needs to be cleaned.

### **Melanie - Fellowship**

120 people are eating at Grow on Wednesdays.

December 3<sup>rd</sup> will be the Advent Dinner.

The wedding accounts are doing well, and funeral accounts are in the red.

### **Staff Reports – Bill Hawkins**

Thursday people are coming to repair the font.

HVAC fall preventive maintenance will take place.

The het needs to be checked in the music rooms.

A new copier was obtained. The old contract was cancelled, and a new contract with a new company was renegotiated for less money, so now we pay \$1100 instead of \$1800-1900 per year. It is the same as the old machine, but faster.

### **Martin Rathjen**

The previous week was the last week of stepping stones for the year. There will be more stepping stones starting in January.

The communications team is working on capital appeal themes.

A designer is looking at the Monday morning e-mail format. They are looking to improve the visual aspect, and decrease textual content.

### **Pastor Angela**

Welcome!

Thank you to council for service.

Further conversation will occur about the amount of time Pastor Angela and Pastor Susan will be present.

### **Pastor Paul**

Welcome Angela!

The theme of the stewardship campaign is Transformative Generosity. He encouraged people to have conversations with friends and family about what transformative generosity means to us. Pledge cards are going out on Friday. Simply Giving is a good option for giving as it drives more consistent giving and is not dependent on attendance. Laminated Simply Giving cards will be available to put into offering baskets. Sign-up for Simply Giving is available through the church website.

There will be a trip to Germany next year led by Pastor Paul.

Men's Ministry will be having a retreat next spring.

Thanksgiving Pastor Paul will host a 5k run/walk at 9am.

Martin Rathjen, Deb Garvey, Grace Roepke, Kathy Meyer, and Brenda Tonjes are working on fine tuning our church mission statement in order to form a vision statement. The values expressed in the vision

statement are based on the values assessment done last spring. Conversations on values will continue next month, and feedback would be appreciated.

End in Prayer