

Congregational Meeting Minutes
Immanuel Lutheran Church
Sunday, January 29, 2017

Opening Music – “Standin’ in the Need of Prayer” by the Reformation Choir, directed by Gary Thrasher

Opening Devotion by Pastor Susan Weaver, who urged us to seek what God would have us do.

President Beth Hansen called the meeting to order. There were 82 members in attendance, giving us a quorum (60 voting members required).

Beth spoke about our congregation’s mission and fulfilling this mission through our Opening Doors Campaign by welcoming, collaborating and serving within our community.

The minutes from last year’s January 24 meeting were presented. John Urbanski moved to approve the minutes; Bob Peterson seconded this motion, which passed by voice vote.

The minutes from the June 26, 2016 meeting held to receive congregational approval for a mortgage to finance the Opening Doors campaign were presented. Maynard Goplen moved to approve these minutes, second by Tony Szczepaniak. The motion passed.

Special reports

President’s report – Beth Hansen

Beth spoke about the eight new council members who were elected last January. She thanked all council members for giving generously of their time and talent during a very busy year that included a capital campaign.

She urged those present to read each council member’s report included in the annual report booklet. She mentioned that with the update of technology there have been some growing pains that are being dealt with. We continue to strive to welcome our community.

Outgoing council members Brenda Tonjes, Scott Belseth, Scott Sabin, Alicia Hernandez, Lou Hernandez, Melanie Leite-Carroll, Paul Carroll, and Brian Heinzen were recognized and thanked.

Senior pastor’s report – Pastor Paul Nelson

Paul thanked Beth for taking on the council president’s job, especially in a capital campaign year. She has taken on the task with aplomb.

Thanks to our excellent staff.

Luther Hall, site of this year’s meeting, has changed vastly since last year’s meeting and is a much improved space with wonderful natural light. New chairs, part of Pat Hawkins’ legacy, make meeting much more comfortable. Martin Rathjen has worked ceaselessly on updating the technology portion of our ministry. John Ebert has given of his time and talent to update the church’s security, doors and lock system.

Paul invited us to attend the burning of our old mortgage on February 19.

Associate Pastor's report – Pastor Susan Weaver

Pastor Susan thanked pastors Paul and Angela Fairbanks Jacobson for their support of Immanuel's mission, noting "God's capacity to bless me exceeds my capacity to be grateful."

She thanked all Adult Faith Formation leaders, especially Jen Johnson who is the outgoing council member (moving to Senior High), and welcomed Jody Ebert who will serve on council in that capacity. She referred to the parochial report with its membership and worship statistics and reminded us that this report doesn't tell the whole story of lives changed and faith strengthened.

She praised the building improvements resulting from Opening Doors, which make our physical church more welcoming and accessible.

SALT (Seniors Actively Living day) is thriving and plans 3 events this year plus gatherings for service and socializing.

Benevolence – Kim Rathjen

Kim referred to the benevolence report on page 12 of the annual report, which shows a disbursement of \$226,155.77. Of this, \$206,735.27 were direct financial gifts to our partner ministries, including 12% of our 2016 income to the ELCA. Additionally, \$9,814.37 in designated gifts was distributed to our ministry partners. These numbers do not reflect the amount of time and talent given by our members to neighbors near and far. One example is the Tanzania trip coming up next week. When Kim asked for donations of \$1,000.00 for medical supplies to take along, donations exceeded this amount by \$500.00.

Election of new council members, nominating committee, audit committee and synod delegates

The following people were nominated and announced, asked to stand:

Tony Szczepaniak, vice president

Bob Peterson, financial secretary

Jody Ebert, adult faith formation

Mindy Johnson, fellowship

Wendy Wurscher, fellowship

Scott Anderson, properties

Ruth Lunde, worship, music and arts

Katie Thormodsgard, youth (incumbent)

Zack Hansen, youth member at large (write-in)

Gay Schmidt, audit committee

Taylor Kohl, audit committee

Nominating committee:

- Mark Anderson
- Paul Carroll

- Scott Sabin
- Scott Belseth
- Jerry Figg (incumbent)
- Mary Ellen Anderson (write-in)

Synod delegates:

- Pat Middeke
- Bill Middeke
- Mary Ellen Anderson (write-in)
- Bev Osekowsky (write-in)
- Rich Weaver (write-in)
- Dave Carter (write-in)

Alternates:

- Linda Toso
- Rich Strosahl

Paper ballots were distributed and collected. With 82 votes counted, the slate carried as printed and written in.

Financial update – Mike Lindahl, council treasurer

Mike thanked the council and staff, especially Bill Hawkins.

Our 2016 budget totaled \$1.2 million. Giving was on track through November, then December giving fell short by about \$30,000.00, to equal 2015's giving. This is the greatest net loss in our history. One less Sunday in December may have been one of the causes. Spending remained on track (0.3% over budget) leaving Immanuel with a deficit. Overall we are still financially healthy, but have drawn on reserve funds and need to be more conservative in 2016.

The proposed budget is the same as 2016's, \$1.2 million, with benevolence reduced to 18% from 19%. We will increase full-time staff salaries by 2½%, program budget will be reduced 0.3%. 2017 pledges are up from \$750,000 to \$800,000.

Questions were entertained:

Bonnie Warner expressed concern over a reduction in benevolence, which she would like to see remain at 20%. Mike replied that it sat at 20% for a couple of years, but that it is difficult to find \$30,000 in our budget. Beth assured her that if we exceed our projected giving, benevolence would benefit from those funds. Kim Rathjen said that this occurs naturally, since this is structured as a percentage of income. Pastor Paul asked that we disseminate this information to those members not present. Jennifer Urbanski asked if January giving was any better, but this was not known at this time. Kelly Kautz observed that our membership is a little lower but giving remains flat.

Ann Gallagher moved to approve the budget as presented, Kurt Steichen seconded the motion, which passed by voice vote.

Opening Doors capital campaign update: Of \$718,000 pledged we have received \$286,000. A \$100,000 check was presented to Redeemer in December as promised. The projects are mostly completed; stained glass goes in this coming week. The approved mortgage amount is \$680,000, our anticipated mortgage is \$633,000. To

date \$598,000 has been spent. Martin Rathjen showed a short (5 minute) movie summarizing the entire remodeling process.

New business:

Beth will recommend that the council vice-president chair the long-range planning committee, this will necessitate a change in church by-laws. Ruth Hustad expressed concern with the gap between contributing membership and those who simply attend. Growing our worship numbers and our membership will be on the long-range planning committee's agenda.

We look forward to the purchase of a house for the Eden Prairie Youth Housing Program.

Mary Ellen Anderson thanked Florence Gilbertson for chairing the funeral committee for the past 10 years. She is stepping down, and was given a round of applause.

Jacque Hagen complimented the staff for their excellent baptisms and funerals. Claire Kooiman expressed thanks to Bill Hawkins for his years of service, which drew a standing ovation.

Pastor Paul offered a closing prayer.

The meeting adjourned.

Pat Hammer, council secretary