

# Council minutes

St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Arlington, Massachusetts

14 December 2009

**Council Members Present:** Beverly Dougherty, Sergia Hay, Mark Olson, Dana Ramish, Alison Roberts, Pastor Ross Goodman, Brian Sniffen, Wendy Stack, Marilyn Waehler.

**Also Present:** Vicar Andrew Heisen, Ken Heyda, Jen Nahn, Bob Waehler.

**Absent:** Airin Cherian, Darcie Sunnerberg.

## Gathering

A quorum was gathered and we came together in God's name at 7:41PM. A candle was lit to remind us that Christ is present with us as we meet.

## Check-In

We shared our favorite Christmas hymns and traditions: O Come Emmanuel, It Came Upon a Midnight Clear, Away in a Manger, nativity sets, *The Gift of the Magi*, Silent Night, candles, cards from distant friends, Rejoice in the Lord Always, O Holy Night, advent logs, children, Lo, how a Rose E'er Blooming, Go Tell it on the Mountain, trees, and the traditions themselves.

## Agenda

The agenda was accepted.

## Devotions

Marilyn Waehler then led a devotion on Advent from the Congregation's devotional of Advent 2008, on Psalm 89:2. Next month, Jen Nahn will lead devotions.

## Hymn

We sing *Oh come, oh come Emmanuel* (256).

## Word

### Minutes

The minutes of November were accepted as amended.

### Financial reports

#### Financial secretary's report

We received much more in November donations than expected, even taking into account the five Sundays this month. May it continue through December. We even received a few thousand dollars towards the Capital Campaign.

#### Treasurer's report

Thanks to a double payment from the tower rental companies, we have \$80000 in the bank. Bills submitted from now on will not be paid this year. As we plan for next year's budget, we should be mindful of the rising costs of many basic utilities. We have spent over \$3000 on water alone this year.

Bob Waehler points out that the church costs about \$10000 per week to operate.

## Web site design

Vicar Heisen reports that the committee met with Pastor Mark Huber, as mentioned last month. He'll work with this group to help them figure out what we really need, and whether he can do what we want and need—especially as regards St. Paul's requirement for an accessible website.

We raise motion 5 from November here:

**Motion 1** *We allocate \$1000 to build the structure of a web site for St. Paul.* RESUMED, REFUSED.

The budget committee has already set aside \$1600 for web site development next year.

## Social ministry

**Motion 2** *St. Paul contributes \$3000 from N7 to support the efforts of Mapendo.*

MOVED, SECONDED, CARRIED.

The church has a history of working with Mapendo and its founder, Sasha Chanoff. They've been covered in the Globe, been recognized by UN, and operate right here in Boston. Pastor Goodman speaks of their excellent work and of St. Paul's history of involvement.

## Budget committee

We have a letter prepared from Mark and the Budget Committee regarding the planned budget shortfall. Good news: We have \$465000 of which we are relatively certain. Bad news: our expected contributions will fall short of our expected expenses by at least \$36500.

Mark solicits advice from the council, and resolves to add a punchier first paragraph, express a direct request for action, include a spare pledge card, and offer his phone number and that of Dan Ries (chair of the Stewardship committee) for Christmas-season calls. Several writers from the Council also offer to help cut the text to one side of one page. The Congregational meeting will be January 24.

## Automobile

Mark moves:

**Motion 3** *We sell the car that Pastor Goodman has been using to him for \$1.*

MOVED, SECONDED, CARRIED.

This saves us money on insurance, and may work out better for Pastor Goodman and St. Paul in the matter of reimbursements.

## Personnel

From e-mail shortly after the November meeting:

**Motion 4** *St. Paul Evangelical Church hires Mike Valenti as Sexton beginning 1 December 2009 at \$15 per hour on a 90 day trial basis.*

MOVED, SECONDED, CARRIED.

## Staff reports

Pastor Goodman reports that November has had a record amount of Pastoral care. Many of our community are suffering illnesses or hardships of various kinds. He'll be making a hospital visit after the meeting tonight. Holly Nunes is now engaged. Another couple is here looking for pre-marital counseling. We have had more trouble with our neighbor. As a cost saving measure, he's talked about a joint internship with LSS next year—but it wouldn't save us much for 2010. It would save more in 2011, but would cost us the intern's involvement in every aspect of Congregational life. Neither Pastor Goodman nor Vicar Heisen recommend this plan for St. Paul.

Vicar Heisen is excited about the worship plan for the rest of 2009. The pageants and special services are a product of much work by the staff and volunteers. He's been working with the Bible Study and Confirmation Class programs, learning as the students do. He is touched by the generosity of the congregation in support of the LSS program at Hillside House.

Jen Nahn talks about the caroling this last Sunday. Fifteen went from St. Paul this year, accidentally joining a Unitarian group for an extended concert at one home. The advent figures have come out wonderfully, thanks to work by Lois Mitchell. Jen is screening nursery attendant candidates, thanks to a huge success from a paid ad on Craigslist. The meal-delivery<sup>1</sup> ministry to parents of newborns has been fantastically well received by new families and by the donors.

Mark Olson says that the social ministry committee received donations of \$200 at the Fair Trade Fair, which were moved to N5

<sup>1</sup>With the addition of recipe cards, as suggested by Beverly Dougherty.

## Meal

Pastor Goodman gathers us in prayer and leads communion at 9:25PM.

Respectfully submitted, Brian Sniffen

---

Next regular council meeting: 11 January 2010 at 7:30PM. We will also meet on 18 January 2010 to prepare a final budget proposal for 2010. The Congregational meeting will be 24 January 2010.

These minutes can be found online at  
<http://evenmere.org/~bts/Church/>.