

# Council minutes

St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Arlington, Massachusetts

12 April 2010

**Council Members Present:** Airin Cherian, Pastor Ross Goodman, Anne-Louise Klaus, Mark Olson, Dana Ramish, Alison Roberts, Heather Sheridan, Brian Sniffen, Marilyn Waehler.

**Also Present:** Vicar Andrew Heisen, Kirsten Lienhard, Don Mitchell.

**Absent:** Marianne Brown, Wendy Stack.

## Gathering

A quorum was gathered and we came together in God's name at 7:35PM. A candle was lit to remind us that Christ is present with us as we meet.

## Check-In

We shared what we found meaningful this Lent and Easter season. Many mentioned music and the holiness felt during the Tenebrae service. Maybe we need more darkness and silence in the liturgy.

## Agenda

The agenda was accepted.

## Devotions

Alison Roberts then led a devotion on the experience of visiting the tomb, the terror of approaching a place expecting a dead body, and the sometimes greater pain and terror of experiencing a resurrection. Next month, Marilyn Waehler will lead devotions.

## Hymn

We sing *Christ is Alive! Let Christians Sing* (389).

## Word

### Minutes

The minutes of March were accepted as amended.

### Financial Reports

#### Treasurer's report

Kirsten Lienhard gives her first report as Treasurer. The transition is going well so far as she picks up a sense of the flow and timing of the job—when are good times to pick up documents from committee heads, how long will processes take, etc.

We've overspent slightly for custodial expenses; we can hope some of that is backed up work that will be done, and it'll drop back to under twenty hours/week over the summer. Marilyn Waehler suggests a cleaning party, which idea is taken up happily.

#### Financial secretary's report

One donation of stock was entered into the incoming accounts as for u2, but was shown to the Treasurer as m1. The coding error inside the accounting software has been corrected. Other than that, it's been a good month.

We don't currently do anything special with special offerings (Thanksgiving, Ash Wednesday, etc.). It just goes to the general fund, but doesn't count for pledges. We could look for matching funds and consider announcing special purposes for those funds in advance. We could stop using those envelopes. We could continue to use those envelopes and count it towards pledges. We'll bring up the issue for business next month.

The new graphs showing this year's receipts plotted against last year's are well received.

## New Business

### Social ministry

The Social Ministries Committee hope to partner with Village Help for South Sudan to have the Midwife Kits shipped to the new clinic in the village of Wunlang. Details are still being worked out. If that partnership does not work out the kits will be sent to Global Health Ministries, as has been done in previous years. The SMC has also applied for Thrivent  $\frac{1}{3}$  Matching Funds. Last year the total expense was \$4,682. Congregation donations accounted for \$1,935. Thrivent Grants paid \$635. Last year we used \$2,117 from N7.

**Motion 1.** *We approve the Social Ministry Committee request for up to \$3,000 from N7 for expenses related to Midwife Kits such as supplies, shipping and education.*

MOVED, SECONDED, CARRIED.

### Worship & music

The worship and music committee would like to initiate a 15 year plan to update our current piano and organ. The addition of a grand piano to replace the current piano (owned by the Korean Congregation) in the sanctuary would provide a much better instrument for our musical purpose at both services. The cost of the Yamaha G2 grand piano may be as much \$15K. The plan would be to take out a couple rows of pews in the front of the sanctuary to allow for the space needed.

The organ also needs to be upgraded to support the size of the congregation and the quality of music we enjoy. In discussion with the organ technician two options are being considered. There are a couple of churches that have an organ that would fit and work in our space. In the event one of the churches need to close it may be possible to purchase and move their organ for an estimated cost of \$15000–20000. The second option would be to add additional pipes to the existing organ to be put the choir office at a cost of approximately \$25–30K. While there is a dedicated account for the replacement of the organ, the funding will not grow if there is no planned effort to raise the money needed.

|                                    |                |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
| Yamaha G2 Piano                    | \$15000        |
| Damp-Chaser climate control system | 750            |
| Pew removal for 1-2 rows of pews   | 500            |
| Piano shipping costs               | 500            |
| Total Cost for piano               | 17500          |
| Organ replacement or addition      | 30000          |
| <b>Proposed amount to raise</b>    | <b>\$47500</b> |

Table 1: Estimated costs of piano and organ replacement

The first priority is to purchase the piano. If an organ becomes available the funds would be used to purchase the organ first. See Table 1.

Anne-Louise Klaus asks how we budget for maintenance of our instruments.

Alison Roberts asks that we consider what this money could do for the poor or for the outcasts among us.

Don Mitchell asks whether we use a piano enough to justify removing two pews, since we have had a full hall several times this year. Moreover, perhaps we could bring the pipes to the front of the sanctuary, freeing room in the choir loft.

Mark Olson describes this as part of a vision for the evolution of the church, and mentions other plans, including bringing the choir to the front more often and bringing a cantor to the front instead of the back.

**Motion 2.** *The council authorizes the creation of a dedicated account to receive money towards the expenses associated with acquiring musical instruments.*

MOVED, SECONDED, CARRIED.

After the concerns raised about space, we ask the Worship and Music Committee to study the use of the pews and prepare for potential donations of money or instruments. Marilyn also asks that we look at the speaker system in the far back.

### Personnel

Mary-ellen Coviello has resigned her position effective 16 April. Martha Zirbel and Taryn Weaver have agreed

to temporarily assume the Parish Administrator duties until a permanent replacement is found. The personnel committee is drafting a new job description in light of the hiring of the Church Business Administrator.

Alison Roberts and other long-time members raise serious concerns about hiring a member of the congregation into this position.

**Motion 3.** *The Council authorizes hiring Martha Zirbel and Taryn Weaver to serve as temporary Parish Administrators beginning April 19th at a rate of \$15 per hour.* MOVED, SECONDED, CARRIED.

## Updates

### Church business administrator

The position has been announced through Craig's list and has been brought to the attention of the church synod office. A committee has been formed including Pastor Goodman, Marianne Brown, Kirsten Lienhard, Bob Waehler and Mark Olson. One candidate has been interviewed and more interviews will be scheduled in the coming weeks. The committee hopes to be able to make a recommendation to the council by May. A special council meeting may be called to seek approval to hire prior to the next regular council meeting. All potential finalists for the position will be asked to give permission for a CORI check and checks will be completed prior recommending to the council.

## Pastoral reports

Pastor Goodman speaks first about Clearwire's recent visit. They'll be visiting with cranes and antennae some time in the next few months. We don't really know what they'll pay, and we're not sure what it'll look like. He specially thanks the Altar Guild for their extra work around Holy Week. He'll have a little more work mentoring other churches for Natural Church Development. Andrew's six-month evaluation is almost done, with documents recently back from the committee.

Vicar Heisen says he has only one thing to talk about. He's noticed in his time here the wonderful importance

of fellowship. Later this spring, he'd like to organize a Progressive Dinner for the congregation, perhaps 19 June 2010—the weekend the church switches to its summer schedule. This sounds different from the possible Christian Education picnic.

## Meal

Pastor Goodman gathers us in prayer and leads communion at 9:14PM.

Respectfully submitted, Brian Sniffen

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Next regular council meeting: 10 May 2010 at 7:30PM.

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