

# Council minutes

St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Arlington, Massachusetts

13 December 2010

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

**Also Present:** Kirsten Lienhard, Don Mitchell, Jen Nahn, Vicar C.J. Stratton.

**Absent:** Airin Cherian, 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 share our Advent preparations and hopes for Christmas: travel, family, music.

## Agenda

The agenda was accepted.

## Devotions

Dana Ramish then led a devotion on the music of the Christmas season and the carol *O little town of Bethlehem*. Next month, Vicar Stratton will lead devotions.

## Hymn

We sang *O little town of Bethlehem*.

## Word

## Minutes

The minutes of November were accepted.

## Reports

### Financial secretary's report

We are now slightly behind where we were last year, and expect to come in about \$5000 below budget. On the other hand, we expect to come in even further below budget in spending. One Tower rental check was misplaced in the office and not deposited until this week. The Korean congregation hasn't paid November's rent, but we expect them to make it up in December.

### Treasurer's report

We're spending under budget, but are very glad to have the carry-over for next year.

### Director of Christian Education

There's a new-baby group starting 9 January 2011. They'll be studying a booklet on *Parenting: a sacred path* during the education hour. The Christmas Pageant is on schedule to perform 26 December. We're caroling to the houses of shut-in members this Sunday—all are welcome.

On January 13, Pastor Mark Huber<sup>1</sup> will be offering a musical program for families at the church.

The Sunday School has been having a combined story for classes from pre-school through Grade Four. Attendance has been high enough that we'll be dividing into two classes.

The Safe Church sub-committee will meet this Thursday at 9AM.

We don't have a youth leader. We have Confirmed youth who return on Sunday mornings. These could be the seeds of a long-lasting youth group—but we need someone other than a vicar on a one-year term to lead that.

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<sup>1</sup>the same one who helped with the website

## New business

We spend an hour talking about the life of the congregation: most especially, how to encourage greater participation in the life of the Church. Marilyn Waehler calls for greater Council attention to the process of involving all members of the Congregation in the life and business of the church. Brian will arrange for notes about the Council meetings to be published in the weekly e-mails and in the Messenger. Vicar Stratton and Marilyn Waehler will contact committee chairs about the idea for a volunteer fair to introduce members to the committees that make our congregation work.

## Personnel

**Motion 1** *St. Paul hire Liza Marks as Church Administrative Assistant beginning December 14 at a pay rate of \$15 per hour based on twenty hours per week.*

MOVED, SECONDED, CARRIED.

## Mortgage

There's a proposal that we refinance the mortgage on the church building. Thrivent is offering us a rate several percent lower than our current mortgage, but we'd have to capitalize the refinancing costs into the mortgage. It's pure up-side, even so. We'll save tens of thousands of dollars over these years. We're given two options, one of which will give the budget committee of 2025 a job easier by fifty thousand dollars

**Motion 2** *We adopt the second option of those presented, refinancing for 15 years at about 5.5%.*

MOVED, SECONDED, CARRIED.

We'd like the financiers to come back to us if the payment will be over \$7700.

## Pastoral reports

Pastor Goodman speaks about concerns for the life of the congregation. The congregation is healthy, but we need to work on this process of continuing involvement.

Vicar Stratton reports that things are going well. The youth are awesome. They have things to share—they just need to be asked. Stuff with seniors is going really well. A divinity student at Harvard is doing an alternative spring break project in Haiti; can we use Coffee Hour funds for that for a month?

## Meal

Pastor Goodman gathers us in prayer and leads communion at 9:45PM.

Respectfully submitted, Brian Sniffen

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Next regular council meeting: 11 January 2011 at 7:30PM.

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