

Minutes
Little Home Church Council Meeting
December 8, 2015

In Attendance: Valeri Baldwin, Carol Berger, Barb Braulick, Kathleen Sullivan Kaska, Bob Kaska, Alex Kentfield, Ann McLaughlin, Frank Muno, David Russell, Kristen Thornton, Susi Winqvist, Art Zwemke

Absent: Anne Bouchard, Chip Braulick, Jane Shelton

Moderator Alex Kentfield began the meeting at 7:15 pm after everyone enjoyed treats shared among members. Joys and concerns were shared. Pastor David Russell gave an opening prayer.

Approval of Minutes: No corrections were made to the November minutes. Valeri moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Susi. Minutes approved.

Pastor's Report: Pastor David submitted the following report for December

- The **Christmas** energy and excitement is on the air! I look forward to the two Christmas Eve services; the 5pm family friendly service with candlelight; and the 11pm candlelight communion service. I will visit shut-ins bringing a poinsettia and thoroughly enjoy Cantata Sunday 12/20 with you. But I will be away in Reading, PA at a family wedding this weekend so I will miss the pageant and lasagna dinner. Larry's niece, Rev. Jessica Scholtan, current UCC Interim in Madison, WI will be filling the pulpit
- We had a wonderful **retreat at Gethsemani Monastery** in Kentucky Nov. 20-23 with Frank Muno, Barb and Chip Braulick, Judy Hopkins and Norm Miller.
- Just to make sure you are up to speed on our **new members:** Jamie and Vanessa Kokoszka who I officiated the marriage of and live in St. Charles; Betty Riley who lives in Wayne and came here last spring when her husband died looking to do a funeral; and Mary Fleishman who lives in St. Charles.
- I'm excited about the **Revisioning Team** that is picking up the ball from the New Beginnings process. We met yesterday to get things moving.
- I will be taking a **vacation** week at home between Christmas and New Years and be back in the pulpit Jan. 3 Epiphany Sunday. As we did last *year Sunday Dec. 27 will be a service of "Lessons and Carols and I am inviting those of you on Council who are available to help read scripture and liturgy. I will pass out a signup sheet at the Council meeting.*
- On another personal note, for those of you who didn't hear about it, I had a **car accident** Oct. 29 and my car was totaled. No one was injured and not my fault. Now I am driving a 2015 Chevy Volt and traveling here from home on electricity!
- Kathleen helped me become one of the Administrators of our **Facebook** account. So you will see my "posts" there from time to time.
- What a powerful testimony to the faithfulness and power of prayer of this congregation as we rally around **Sam Shelton** and his family

- Let's keep our experience with the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community on the radar for doing something with them in 2016 so that our initial dialogue becomes a force for peace and not a forgotten event.
- We had to **cancel the proposed mission return trip to Back Bay Mission** in Biloxi due to limited interest. *Should we leave our deposit with BBM and schedule a date in 2016 in hopes of having better luck in sending out some more mission workers?*
- I will be at the Council meeting at 6:30pm tomorrow night **with hot wassail to drink and yule kaka to munch on**. See you then!

At council, Pastor asked for volunteers to lead the "lessons and carols" service on December 27th. David also announced that the mission trip to Biloxi was canceled. David wanted to know if we should ask for the deposit returned or left for a possible future retreat. Discussed followed. The majority of the council felt that the deposit should be left on account.

Treasurer's Report: Art Zwemke submitted his report for November. The following is the cover page of the report. The complete report is on file in the church office.

Treasurer's Report
November 30, 2015

A – 1 Total Operating Receipts YTD of \$189,001 is 77.14% of Total Receipts Budget for 2015 of \$245,000 versus 88.31% three (3) year average. Total pledges received of \$145,375 are 85.51% of Total Pledges Budget of \$170,000 versus 91.16% of three (3) year average. *Overall Receipts are well behind historical trend. Received \$18,875 toward Budget Deficit from Challenge Match.*

B – 1 - B - 6 Current YTD Net Income (Loss) of (\$30,806) in 2015 compared to Prior YTD Net Income (Loss) of (\$52,595) in 2014 and Budgeted YTD Net Income (Loss) Budget of (\$20,890). *With a budgeted loss of (\$33,295) for all of 2015 against a budgeted YTD loss through 11/30/2015 of (\$20,890), all things being equal would project a loss of (\$12,405) for the remaining month. With a YTD loss of (\$30,806) plus the projected loss of (\$12,405) = (\$43,211) minus receipt of the remaining Challenge Matches.*

C – 1 – C - 2 Comparative Balance Sheets. Overall financial position of \$227,507 at 11/30/2015 compared to \$253,808 at 11/30/2014 and \$219,815 at 10/31/2015.

D- 1 Consolidated Fund Activity

E – 1 - E – 2 2015 Human Resource Budget and RE Proceeds & Operating Deficits. *Need direction regarding timing of new pastor and Operating Deficit projections for 2015, 2016 and 2017.*

Art reviewed the financial report, including future estimations. Discussion followed regarding the “unidentified contributors.” Carol mentioned that the members of the congregation question why there is a deficit.

Bob Kaska provided a sample income scenario for 2016.

Pledges	\$180,000	
Identified Cont..	20,000	
Misc.	10,000	
Other	<u>5,000</u>	
	215,000	Possible income for 2016
	245,000	Estimated expenses for 2016
	(30,000)	Possible deficit.

Discussion regarding balancing the budget followed. Due to the fact that the church is not receiving the contributions that it once did in the past, the budget needs to reflect what we can afford. The council discussed how the church could continue to support its ministries and missions at the same time as making sure that its fixed expenses such as salaries, insurance, utilities are met. Concern was expressed regarding limiting financial contributions to missions. It was discussed that money for our missions could be raised by our church from the local community instead of continually asking church members for additional funds, as has been done during the past year. Our church could become the vehicle for funding ministries within the community.

Some additional ways to balance the budget were mentioned. One was to have a more conservative deficit such as \$15,000 instead of \$30,000 as in the past year. However, we would eventually run short of money if we continue to spend more than we take in. Again, Bob Kaska suggested that we have a major fund raising event that could raise \$15,000 or more for our missions. Lastly, another “challenge” could be made to the community where the Little Home Church would match any monies that the community could give us towards a mission.

Ann M. mentioned that we are obligated to continue to fund the UCC missions and that our contribution will need to be part of the budget.

Art reminded the ministries chairs to turn in their budgets if they have not already done so.

Susi moved to approve the treasurer’s report which was seconded by Bob. Report approved.

Moderator’s Report: Alex submitted the following report for the past month.

This month was a very busy month for all of the ministries, all of which will provide detail in their individual reports.

Pastor David and I “broke bread” as we do every month, and covered current and future issues and topics. He will surely discuss some of them in his Pastoral report. Of significance is the current status of our search for a sitting pastor, and David’s need to continue to plan for his current flock’s (i.e. our) spiritual needs. Lent will come early this year as of course will Easter. In summary, I told him that a new pastor is many months away.

I discussed with him my thoughts on the book that he gave me to read the month before: “Really Good Church”. We both felt that some discussion of it in Council would be good, so I added to this month’s (Dec.) council meeting agenda.

We also discussed the budget in generalities. This month council members will discuss preliminary budget input both expenses (ministries and programs, salaries and overheads), and revenue (pledges, and whatever other revenue streams we have), so we also need to take as realistic look as we can concern what we wish to accomplish, and at what cost. We can’t be all things to all people, and our budget will need some critical prioritization, and hopefully will move in the general direction of where we see ourselves in a revisioned church (i.e. the New Beginnings process).

We discussed possible dates for the “Janual” meeting, taking in consideration David’s schedule.

Moderator Elect: Kathleen submitted the following report regarding the past month.

- **Hanging of the Greens:** Bob and I helped WSG ministry to set-up for the potluck and install the greenery. Many volunteers participated in that effort.
- **Women’s Advent Tea:** A committee was quickly formed when Jane Shelton was unable to continue leading the project: Debra Galloway, Jen Haseltine, Susannah Lesswing and Kathleen Sullivan Kaska. Committee meeting held on Nov. 27 (day after Thanksgiving)
Attendees: 60 Worship
Leader: Nancy Schatzeder
Speaker: Rev. Pat Kitner from Congregational Church in St. Charles
Choir ensemble: Jen Haseltine led a group of six women from the LHC choir
Offering for Tammy’s Trace: \$469.00
- **Re-visioning Committee:** Attended first meeting of the team, and will be compiling a list of resources for team members to contact for information on needs of the community. Suggestions will be provided by all team members.
- **Small Group Facilitator:** Three meetings of the Sunday Small Group have occurred. We currently have nine members participating.
- **Social Media Support:** Helped Pastor David create a personal Facebook page and also established him as an Administrator for the LHC Facebook Page so he can post directly to it. Will work with David to coordinate tweets for the LHC Twitter account as well.

Kathleen commented on the positive efforts by everyone for the Hanging of the Greens and the Advent Team among other activities in the month.

MINISTRY REPORTS

Christian Education: Frank Muno reported that an “end of life” educational series for the upcoming year was being considered. However, it was mentioned that the topic was researched by Maureen O’Donnell last year and she determined that there was not enough interest from the congregation so she did not proceed. Another program, “Theology on Tap” is being considered where members can discuss the sermon or other topics after church.

Congregational Life: No report.

Evangelism: We have three new members and have a few more that are that are in consideration.

Facilities: Anne submitted a written report. Items on her report include the following.

Completed:

- Temporary repair of downspouts and exterior wall, soffit, fascia between nursery and bathroom in GH addition
- Regraded and added foundation soil in alcove area mentioned above
- Two dead trees removed in front of GH and near office
- Assessment of furnace problem in sanctuary and repaired
- Added salt to all softeners
- Replaced filters in GH and office furnaces
- Contracted for snow removal with last year's service provider

Working on:

- Stump grinding in front of GH
- Planting replacement (memorial) tree in front of GH
- Receipt of door and equipment for power assist door
- Gutter cleaning
- Salt delivery contract for water softeners
- Need new filters for sanctuary furnace
- Maintenance contract for HVAC systems (previous contractor has retired)
- Service for generators (may be under warranty)
- Maintenance contract for Exit light bulbs and batteries
- Cost assessment for all repairs needed on all buildings

To Do:

- Bids for concrete repair to plaza in front of sanctuary, and several spots on the sidewalks
- Bids for repairs to the stone wall under the handicap access ramp in front of the church
- Bids for roof between sanctuary and Guild House
- Building contents inventory for insurance
- Repair of railings and stairs of GH
- Re-hang the blinds in the nursery (?? -- might be done)
- Install air conditioner in Bride's Room in Guild House (next spring)
- Repair locking mechanism on north door in Parish Hall
- Replace glass circle on one chandelier in PH
- Repair/replace vent for stovetop in kitchen
- Repair roof and additional exterior wood on the box bay on the southeast corner of the Guild House
- Create specs for repair/replacement of fire escape door on second floor of Guild House

At council, Art mentioned that the power assistance doors have been ordered.

Outreach: Valeri submitted the following report.

- Community Crisis Center - Happily accepted our donated toiletries. Thanks to everyone who lugs their soaps, shampoo, and conditioner back from trips to benefit the Crisis Center.

- Feeding Northwest DuPage – Most of the Christmas food baskets are spoken for...just have 13 meals left! The drop off is Saturday, 12/19, 7:30-9:00. For those unable to drop off on Saturday, there are options. Feel free to drop off your meals during food pantry business hours which are: Mon & Thurs 10-1, Tues 1-4:30, Fri 4-5:30
- Fox Valley Volunteer Hospice - No new activity to report.
- Midwest Shelter for Homeless Veterans – Garnet, the 2nd homeless veteran moved into Tammy's Trace early November. She is occupying the room that LHC donated the furniture for. November 22nd, Richard and I took Garnet shopping for new bedding. She chose a Cuddle Duds taupe & off white comforter with off white, blue & taupe matching sheets. She was very excited about it and our hearts were elated for her.
- Renz Addiction Counseling Center - No new activity to report.
- Transitional Housing - No new activity to report.
- NEWEST MISSION ***Playdate***- Play Date continues to be on Mondays from 9:00 - 11:00. Fun was had by all in November who toured the Fox Valley Fire Department fire truck and ambulance. Everyone loves a fire truck!!! Children and their care givers also met Wayne Police and a picture with a news article showing the Halloween party was in the Wayne Examiner. Future Play Date planning is underway and we want to bring in a bee keeper who will show us how to extract honey from the honey combs and also a baker who will work with the kids to make a "cookie" Christmas ornaments. An invitation was extended to everyone to participate in children's Christmas pageant. The more children the merrier and costumes, as always, are provided. Pageant practice is also on Sunday Dec. 6 and Dec. 13 during church service rather than Sunday school with the pageant performance also on Dec. 13 at 5:30 followed by a lasagna dinner at 6:30.
- Blood Drive - LHC's annual Blood Drive was November 16th and like past years was very successful. Lori Prang coordinated the event and 18 pints of blood were donated this year. The Blood Bank thanked everyone this year with a coupon for a free scoop of ice cream at Colonial Café.

Tammy's Trace had a ribbon cutting ceremony which Valeri attended. Also, Kathleen mentioned that \$470 was raised for Tammy's Trace from the Women's Advent Tea offering.

Valeri also reminded everyone that ministries are vital to the church and should be budgeted for.

Kathleen added that a big 'thank you' goes to Lori Prang for organizing and managing the Giving Tree project again this year. It was very successful and a total of 80 gifts were provided to the Wayne Township General Assistance Office for eight families.

Stewardship: Bob submitted the following report. We are off to a fast start with the 2016

Here are the results of the Stewardship Campaign as of 11/30 per Ann:

2015			2016		
Number	Amount	Week #	Number	Amount	Week #
37	\$94,766	One	46	\$109,052	One
40	\$106,186	Two	52	\$126,222	Two
42	\$109,986	Three	56	\$146,162	Three

Pledges are

Up	26
Down	3
Same	20
New	6
Renew	1
	<hr/>
	56

We are on target for a total of \$180K if the remaining pledges come in similar to prior years. It was suggested that we offer a way in which church members can pay their pledge through an electronic system.

Worship and Spiritual Growth:

Carol with Mary Roach and Mary Jean has been working together to prepare the pageant in the absence of Jane Shelton.

Members at Large/ Communications: Kathleen submitted the following report.
Completed...

December BTW Newsletter

Sent December 1, 2015 — (189 sent; 107 opened; 57% open rate)

Web site—Monthly updates on homepage; Sunday schedule; Flowers & fellowship; Events; and Book Club pages —

Email messaging:

- Dec BTW News Reminder — Sent Nov. 16 (20 sent; 9 opened; 45% open rate)
- Prayers Needed for the Shelton Family — Sent Nov. 17 (131 sent; 100 opened; 77% open rate)
- Sam Shelton Information — Sent Nov. 19 (131 sent; 97 opened; 74% open rate)
- Hanging of the Greens — Sent Nov. 27 (188 sent; 96 opened; 51% open rate)
- Reminder...THIS Saturday (Advent Tea) — Sent Dec. 1 (204 sent; 104 opened; 51% open rate)
- Sam Shelton Update — Sent Dec. 5 (133 sent; 98 opened; 73% open rate)

Twitter —@LHChurchUCC — 6 ‘Followers’, 1 ‘Following’, 4 ‘Tweets’

Facebook page — Up to 144 ‘Likes’—**Women’s Advent Tea** — Banners(2) displayed in front of church property

To Be Completed...

Email blasts — Pageant email blast

Wedding brochure/package — In writing/layout design stage

Endowment Fund brochure/presentation materials — Work w/Janet Figge to create content; layout design for review

At council, Kathleen reminded everyone that the Annual Appeal letter did not go out.

Search and Call update: Alex reported that the search continues. Kathleen added that it would be good to have a Search update with some numbers for the next issue of *By the Way*. The congregation is starting to question what has happened with the search.

New Beginnings Update: The committee, led by Susi, met recently and laid out some strategy regarding the new re-visioning which will be presented in the New Year.

OLD BUSINESS: Already discussed.

NEW BUSINESS:

Discussing the “Real Good Church” will be postponed until the January meeting. Alex asked all of the council members to please read the book so we can discuss it.

By the Way deadline: **Dec. 14.**

Next Meeting: Tuesday, **January 12**, 7:00 p.m.

Move to adjourn the meeting was made by Susi and seconded by Kathleen.

Pastor David gave the closing prayer at 9:12 p.m.:

Respectfully submitted,
Kristen Thornton
Church Clerk