

Minutes
Little Home Church Council Meeting
November 2015

In Attendance: Carol Berger, Anne Bouchard, Kathleen Sullivan Kaska, Alex Kentfield, Ann McLaughlin, David Russell, Jane Shelton, Kristen Thornton, Susi Winquist, Art Zwemke

Absent: Valeri Baldwin, Bob Kaska, Barb Braulick, Chip Braulick, Frank Muno,

Moderator Alex Kentfield began the meeting at 7:20 pm. Joys and concerns were shared. Pastor David Russell gave an opening prayer.

Approval of Minutes: No corrections were made to the revised copy of the November minutes. Anne B. moved to approve the revised minutes, seconded by Jane. Minutes approved.

Pastor's Report: Pastor David submitted the following report for the past month.

- **October was an amazing** month for LHC and for me: four weddings; two retreats; two conferences-training events: an amazing Christian-Muslim Dialogue Sunday; one Association meeting and a partridge in a pear tree!
- One of the four weddings is bringing us two **new members**, Jamie and Vanessa Koszka plus 6 more new members Mary Fleishman, Betty Riley, Randy Smith, Melissa Smith, Madeline Smith and Ellison Smith who will be joining LHC this Sunday, Nov. 15 (Mary Fleishman will join in absentia).
- The **Fox Valley UCC Association Meeting** produced some good ideas that Alex, Anne and I will be sharing with you all in days to come. I also received some affirmations about many things we are doing and some new ideas particularly about church growth and marketing, e.g. putting a QR code in our bulletin which would lead people to our web site.
- One of ten conference-training events was for those of us from across the country in 15 different denominations who are **facilitating groups with clergy**. As I have shared with you I have been facilitating a group of newly ordained clergy who meet for 3 hours once a month here at LHC. The groups are intended to provide support, learning, guidance and encouragement for pastors. I will be sharing a brief video with you to let you know what you have been supporting though me and LHC this past year.
- I have been working with Susi to get our long range planning committee and New Beginnings Team combined group to meet and pick up the next steps in our **critical visioning process**. Looks like we will be getting this ball rolling soon.
- I will be **out of town** Sunday Nov. 22 while I am on a spiritual retreat at Gethsemani Abbey in Kentucky. Five folks from LHC are joining me on this retreat: Frank Muno; Chip and Barb Braulick; and Judy and Norm Hopkins. Nancy Schatzeder will preach. I am also sadly going to miss the Pageant on Sunday Dec. 13, when Larry Diffenbach's niece,

Rev. Jessica Scholtan, UCC, Wisconsin will preach. Gail and I will be attending a family wedding near Reading, Pennsylvania.

Treasurer's Report: Art Zwemke submitted a full treasurer's report for review. This is the cover sheet.

Treasurer's Report
October 31, 2015

A – 1 Total Operating Receipts YTD of \$159,443 is 65.08% of Total Receipts Budget for 2015 of \$245,000 versus 80.78% three (3) year average. Total pledges received of \$134,392 are 79.05% of Total Pledges Budget of \$170,000 versus 83.41% of three (3) year average. Overall Receipts are well behind historical trend. Received \$9,300 toward Budget Deficit from Challenge Match. Investments at United Church Fund took a beating in third quarter resulting in YTD loss of (\$6,783) of which \$5,631 was recovered through 11/09/2015 per F-2

B – 1 - B - 6 Current YTD Net Income (Loss) of (\$42,264) in 2015 compared to Prior YTD Net Income (Loss) of (\$50,848) in 2014 and Budgeted YTD Net Income (Loss) Budget of (\$19,993). With a budgeted loss of (\$33,295) for 2015 against a budgeted YTD loss through 10/31/2015 of (\$19,993), all things being equal would project to a loss of (\$13,302) for the remaining 2 months and an overall loss of (\$55,566), offset by the collection of \$10,000 +/- from the Challenge Match and upturn from the United Church Fund of \$6,000+/- that could result in a YTD deficit of (\$39,566) compared to our target of (\$33,295) for 2015.

C – 1 – C - 2 Comparative Balance Sheets. Overall financial position of \$219,815 at 10/31/2015 compared to \$224,857 at 09/30/2015 and \$255,589 at 10/31/2014.

D- 1 Consolidated Fund Activity

E – 1 - E – 3 Budget Worksheet for 2016. Need to turn in on or before 12/08/15 at next LHC Council meeting

F – 1 - F – 4 United Church Fund mailing and statement at end of 3rd quarter. Note opportunity for Endowment Trustees for valued added services from UCC including a conference on Planned Giving on 11/14/2015 in Chicago, near the University of Chicago.

The treasurer's report was discussed. Again there was concern on the deficit and the development of a balanced budget. Art reviewed line items which make up the largest part of the budget. Art suggested that a zero line item budgeting process be used in preparing this year's budget. He reminded everyone to prepare and bring their ministries' budgets next month.

Art also mentioned the upcoming Midwest Regional Endowment Conference and asked if anyone was interested in attending or getting more information. Information was distributed with the treasurer's report.

David was asked why the UCC -Illinois Conference - Our Church's Wider Mission billed us \$17,390. David found out that the billed amount was based on 4% of our budget and our past history of giving. Since we gave \$15,000 last year, the fee was increased to \$17,000. We will honor our current year budget of giving \$13,500.

Ann M. moved to approve the treasurer's report which was seconded by Jane. All were in favor. Report approved.

Moderator's Report:

Alex sent his report to council. Highlights of that report are as follows:

On November 2, I had my belated October monthly meeting with Pastor David. We discussed a range of issues and topics as usual. Among them was a book, "Real Good Church" that David encouraged me to read. It would be a "real good read" for those of us who actively serve our congregation as lay leaders. Although written by a UCC pastor and aimed at other pastoral leaders, it is eminently applicable to lay leadership as well.

We also discussed the progress of the search and call team, possible next steps with our Muslim inter-faith efforts, new members, and how we and the UCC view the relationship of baptism, confirmation and church membership.

Last month it was noted that we received a letter from UCC Illinois Conference concerning "Our Church's Wider Mission" account (i.e. our contribution to UCC's wider efforts). We have given \$3,500 to date, and our "Recommended Fair Share Goal" is \$17,390 according to their letter. Pastor David has dug into the formula a bit further, and may comment on it in his report.

With the holidays rapidly descending upon us, we all need to get our By The Way materials in to Lori much earlier in the month than usual: 11/17 for November and 12/14 for January.

At council, Alex distributed paperback books entitled, *Real Good Church - How Our Church Came Back from the Dead and Yours Can Too*, By Rev. Molly Phinney Baskette. Pastor David would like the council members to read the book so that we can discuss the book at the December council meeting.

Moderator Elect: No report for this month. Kathleen gave a communication report which is mentioned later.

MINISTRY REPORTS

Christian Education: No report

Congregational Life: Barb Braulick submitted the following update to council. Plans are underway for the Women's Advent Tea. Jane Shelton has arranged for the speaker. Susannah Lesswing will help me the week prior to set the parish hall up if possible. Our schedules do not allow for either of us to be there the day before event to set up.

Next event will be the Chili Cook off and we would like to have a new dinner night....
"Stew and Brew" - perhaps in February with assorted stews made by participants with craft style beer available.

Would like to get ideas for lecture / dinner perhaps in March?

Evangelism: There will be four new members that will be joining the church on Sunday. David also spoke of the Smith family, who also plans to join in the future.

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

Completed:

- Attended Historic Sites Commission meeting and received approval for power assist door
- Temporary repair of railing on the Guild House front steps
- Tree branch removed from power line
- Dead tree removed on west property line by "Dixon" house
- Assessment and repair of water softeners
- Dishwasher repaired

Working on:

- Finalization of proposal and deposit for power assist door and power equipment
- Scheduled removal of dying tree in front of GH and dead tree on northern lot line near office parking lot
- Repair of exterior wall, soffit, fascia between nursery and bathroom in GH addition
- Gutter cleaning
- Salt delivery contract for water softeners
- Maintenance contract for HVAC systems (previous contractor has retired)
- Service for generators
- 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
- Rehang the blinds in the nursery (?? -- might be done)
- Install air conditioner in Bride's Room in Guild House (next spring)
- Anne also added Gutter Cleaning to the list.

Abbott has been hired to do tree maintenance. A new tree, which has been donated, will be planted.

Outreach: Valeri Baldwin forwarded council her report for the past month. She was unable to attend the council meeting.

- Community Crisis Center - Happily accepting our donated toiletries. Thank you everyone who lugs their soaps and shampoos back from your trips.
- Feeding Northwest DuPage - The effort, promotion, and people signing up for Thanksgiving food baskets is well underway. The drop off is Saturday, 11/21, 7:30-9:00.

For those unable to drop off on Saturday, there are options. The food pantry is open Mon & Thurs 10-1, Tues 1-4:30, Fri 4-5:30 and food baskets can be dropped during these hours as well.

- Fox Valley Volunteer Hospice - No new activity to report.
- Midwest Shelter for Homeless Veterans: I attended Tammie Trace's Open House on October 24th. The house was packed with MSHV friends and family including Tammie's dad. He performed the ribbon cutting with a tear in his eye. In October, their first female vet moved in and her name is Valerie. How's about that?! :)
- Renz Addiction Counseling Center - No new activity to report.
- Transitional Housing - No new activity to report.
- NEW MISSION ***Playdate***- Nancy Alex has had a busy month with the kids at Playdate. There were two guests including Officer Lance from the Wayne Police and the fire department. The kids were delighted. Lori has posted pictures on LHC's Facebook page. And, of course, there was Halloween to be celebrated and the kids had a ball.
- Blood Drive - LHC's annual Blood Drive is November 16th. Donors can sign up by calling the church office, by going online, or by adding their name to the sign-up sheet in fellowship hall.

Stewardship: This coming Sunday is Stewardship Sunday. Kaskas are providing a Portillo's Beef Luncheon to celebrate the day. Carol expressed thanks to Bob for all of his efforts. There was discussion regarding how to continue the excitement towards the matching challenge donations.

Worship and Spiritual Growth: Jane commented that Ushers/Pulpit associates are needed, a speaker has been confirmed for the Advent Tea, and we still need a baby for the Christmas Pageant.

Members at Large: Carol Berger reported that Richard Abramson, who helped us with the redecorating of Parish Hall about 8 years ago, has once again offered to assist the church with the selection of our new benches for the courtyard, which the Berger family is donating. We hope to have a selection made before Christmas, purchased and ordered, and installed in the Spring.

Communications: Kathleen submitted her Communications report
Completed...

- **November BTW Newsletter** Sent October 29, 2015 — (182 sent; 97 opened; 54% open rate)
- **Web site**—Monthly updates on homepage; Sunday schedule; Flowers & fellowship; Events; and Book Club pages
- **Email messaging:**
 - Nov. BTW News Reminder — Sent Oct. 15 (20 sent; 10 opened; 50% open rate)
 - Christian Muslim Dialogue Invite — Sent Oct. 20 (201 sent; 107 opened; 54% open rate)
 - Syrian Refugee Health Kits — Sent Oct. 21 (183 sent; 103 opened; 57% open rate)
 - Outreach Opportunities — Sent Nov. 6 (200 sent; 93 opened; 45% open rate)
- **Twitter** —@LHChurchUCC — 5 'Followers', 1 'Following', 4 'Tweets'

- **Facebook page** — Up to 141 ‘Likes’— 12+ posts — Challenge Pledge poster display — Posted in Parish Hall to mark the match progress
- **Stewardship Sunday poster** — Posted in Parish Hall
- **Women’s Advent Tea** — Updated graphics and communication pieces
- **QR code** — Quick Response Code art added to Sunday bulletin links to LHC web site

To Be Completed...

- **Email blasts** — Stewardship Sunday promotion; Women’s Advent Tea invite
- **Wedding brochure/package** — In writing/layout design stage
- **Endowment Fund brochure/presentation materials** — Work w/Janet Figge to create content; layout design for review
- **Annual Appeal** — Dropping this effort for 2015

At council, Kathleen reported that she has ordered a couple banners to advertise the advent tea. She also suggested distributing flyers to the neighbors. She also suggested that a new computer be purchased for the office which would be updated with windows 10.

The annual appeal letter was discussed. Because of timing, the appeal letter had been not done. Anne B. offered to help with the letter. It was discussed to combine the letter and a Christmas event promotion flyer. Anne and Kathleen will work together to prepare something.

Search & Call:

We are still interviewing and receiving applications from around the country. Two people have been interviewed twice.

New Beginnings: Susi Winquist submitted the following Report.

New Beginnings (NB) Re-Visioning Report for November.

Pastor David and I met on October 19th for a brainstorming meeting to establish next steps for the re-visioning process. The current team members include:

Kathy Haben; Karen Kaluza; Bob Kaska; Kathleen Sullivan Kaska; Alex Kentfield; Susannah Lesswing; Jim Winquist; Susi Winquist (Chair). I am waiting for a decision if Peg Schramuk will continue to serve on this committee.

Our initial Team meeting is scheduled for December 6th at 11:00am. The NB Assessment and Gathering Meetings summary will be reviewed; an outline of next steps will be discussed and follow up work assigned.

OLD BUSINESS: none

NEW BUSINESS: none

Next Meeting: Tuesday, December 8, 7:00 p.m.
Move to adjourn by Susi and seconded by Jane.
Pastor David gave the closing prayer at 9:31 p.m.:

Respectfully submitted,
Kristen Thornton
Church Clerk