

Minutes
Little Home Church Council Meeting
September 9, 2014

In Attendance: Anne Bouchard, Kathleen Sullivan Kaska, Bob Kaska, Susi Winqvist, David Russell, Carol Berger, Art Zwemke, Alex Kentfield, Kristen Thornton, Lori Hazeltine (substituting for Maureen O'Donnell), Kathi Abell (substituting for Sandy Antonelli), Guests: Kathy Haben

Absent: Valeri Baldwin, Sandy Antonelli, Jan Marchese, Susannah Lesswing, Jane Shelton, Maureen O'Donnell

Moderator Susi Winqvist began the meeting at 7:10 p.m. Joys and concerns were shared. Pastor David Russell then gave the opening prayer and scripture reading.

Approval of Minutes: Corrections were made to the August 12, 2014 minutes. Anne Bouchard moved to approve the minutes with corrections, seconded by Kathleen. Minutes approved.

Treasurer's Report:

The month of August was a good financial month. The total YTD operating receipts of \$152,874 is 65.05% of the Total Receipts Budgeted for 2014, which is more than the three year average of 63.77%. The total pledges received of \$116,183 are 70.41% of Total Pledges Budget of \$165,000 versus 69.18% of the three year average. However, the net YTD income (loss) of (\$42,245) is behind last year's loss of (\$27,187) and the budgeted amount of (\$34,618). This shortfall in income (identified contributors) is offset by slight under spending of budgeted expenses. The overall financial position of \$268,478 at 8/31/2014 compared to \$72,768 at 12/31/2013 and compared to \$83,209 at 8/31/2013 has increased due to the Peterson and Dixon house closings. The forecasted real estate proceeds and operating deficits were presented at the 2014 Janual meeting were estimated at \$222,250. The actual amount after property closings resulted at \$232,233. Consideration needs to be given to where to allocate these funds. The operating fund has a deficit of (\$110,212) as of 8/31/2014 and is expected to continue as shown on the Treasurer's submitted report and spreadsheet.

Alex Kentfield moved to approve the treasurer's report. Seconded by Bob Kaska. Motion passed.

Pastor's Report:

Pastor David provided the council with a written report stating his actions for the past month. In his written report, he notes on the formation of a confirmation class this year, the Christian Ed intergenerational Outdoor Sunday on Sept. 7th, and the improved decoration of the office. David also met the local UCC clergy and saw the local food pantry. He attended the meeting of the area UCC pastor's cluster where the VP from the Chicago Theological Seminary spoke on the changes and challenges in seminary education. He received training to facilitate a Pastors' Peer Learning Support group and will begin that group this fall with newly ordained clergy. He met with the Interim Pastor Transition Team which will continue meeting about every two months to evaluate how things are going during the interim period and with his role. David met with Bob Kaska to plan a dynamite stewardship campaign.

David announced that the UCC Association Meeting will be held in Chicago on Saturday, October 18. It will include workshops and energizing Keynote speakers and encouraged all to attend.

Moderator's Report: Susi Winqvist submitted a written report to council which she reviewed during the meeting.

The Interim Transition Team has met with David. The team's task is to support him as Pastor, keep open lines of communication, and monitor the progression of the developmental tasks of an interim period.

The Nominating Committee (NC) has received the names of six candidates for the Search and Call Committee. The committee will consist of seven folks with the moderator as a non-voting member. We have met to review that list of persons and create a potential candidates list. We have received input from David for consideration as well. At this time, the NC is in the process of inviting individuals to be a part of that group. When a full slate has been established the names will be made public.

The Council has attended presentations on the New Beginnings (NB) and Center for Parish Development (CPD) programs. Carol Berger has researched programs by Center for Progressive Renewal (CPR).

After the NB program a special Council meeting was held on August 26 to discuss and decide whether the church should participate in NB. Marilyn Poole brought forward negative feedback from some Michigan churches who had used NB. Much discussion was held and no vote was taken. Susi was asked to do additional research on NB. Other religious consultant programs will be reviewed as well.

As follow up research on New Beginnings, Susi contacted Cheryl Burke from Michigan regarding the negative feedback that was heard from the Michigan churches. She gave various reasons for the complaint and felt that NB did their part fine.

Dave Schoen of NB provided Susi with several contacts that would be able to comment about their experience with NB. Susi made sixteen (16) contacts with a response from six. One person stated they would be available for a phone conversation next week. The feedback was favorable towards NB. Copies of the responses were shared with her report.

Center for Parish Development (CPD) was presented on September 7, 2014 by Ray Schulte. Ray outlined what CPD has to offer and thought perhaps their "Interim" package would serve us for a basic fee of \$750. Other ancillary programs are available to augment the basis program at additional costs. Susi provided the following notes regarding the program.

- 1) The program provides us with tools and resources.
- 2) A leadership team would spearhead the efforts after a review of the materials and phone consultations with the CPD representative to tailor the program to fit our needs.
- 3) If we want a hands-on consultant, the fees would be additional. He quoted \$180 per hour but thought a "deal" could be worked out.

4) Like New Beginnings, the leadership team is “trained” and they in turn lead the discussions, meetings, and group work with the congregation. The entire LHC congregation would be involved in the decision making.

5) A major difference from NB is that there is no outsider view and subsequent comprehensive report.

Moderator Elect Report: No Report.

PROGRESSIVE RENEWAL PRESENTATION

Following the Moderator’s report, the Council had a skype presentation and meeting with Gregg Carlson for the Progressive Renewal, Atlanta. He explained his program. The program consists of a consultant’s visit for a weekend, followed by a detailed report with remote follow up training of the church pastor and leaders. The cost is \$4500 plus expenses, such as the travel expenses from Atlanta. Questions and discussion followed.

Bob Kaska moved that the council makes a decision by email vote on whether to participate in the New Beginnings program or not by Sunday evening, September 14th. It was seconded by Alex. All were in favor. Susi will send the email.

Addendum:

In response to the motion for an email vote to proceed with the New Beginnings program, on September 14, 2014 the motion passed with 7 ½ yes votes; 2 ½ no votes; and 1 abstention.

MINISTRY REPORTS

Christian Education: Maureen O’Donnell will not be able to participate in council for a while due to illness. Lori Hazeltine will be substituting until her return. Christian Ed is in the process of reviewing the survey that was sent to the congregation last month.

Congregational Life: Susannah Lesswing forwarded her report by email and was not able to attend the meeting. She reported that 50 people attended the fellowship which was held at the Lesswing home on August 23. This was an increase in attendance from last year which may indicate that social opportunities for fellowship are welcomed and vital to the success of the church. Congregational Life hopes to continue this event yearly.

Upcoming events include the reception following the “Blessing of the Hounds” on Sept 27.

Evangelism: Carol Burger reported that the sign is being made for the intersection of Army Trail and Route 59. Art will check with IDOT regarding a sign at Army Trail and Dunham Road.

Our Membership classes will begin in October and we plan to have enough for a class. All visitors throughout the summer have been contacted.

Facilities: Anne submitted and reviewed her written report.

David, Rik Alex, and Anne met with Tim Rhodes of Consecra, who operate housing for retired pastors. They discussed the possibility of converting the Guild house into residential space for one or more retired pastors.

A freelance reporter is interested in showing our church as part of a tour he presents looking at houses of worship. He will be taking small groups on tours in late September or early October. We may offer a LHC docent if we wish.

Rik Alex met with the person who handles Building Permits for the Village of Wayne. They discussed how we might most economically apply for our building permit.

We received three bids to start painting on the Parish Hall and Guild House. We contracted with Quality Painters of Illinois, referred by Susannah Lesswing.

Jeff Jenkins asked about using the Guild House for a men's prayer group.

Facilities ministry members reviewed and revised the Wedding fee schedule and the Facilities Use Agreement. Both were forwarded to council. A decision needs to be made about whether to offer printed programs or not, and if so, the fee for them. Anne will discuss with Lori.

Anne also spoke with Russ O'Toole (R & M Consulting) regarding the work his company does regarding sound systems. She is meeting with Larry this week to review and discuss the three bids that we have received.

Outreach: no report.

Stewardship: Bob reminded council that this year's stewardship campaign will also include a "ministry" pledge as well as a financial pledge. He is meeting with Ann McLaughlin regarding the history of pledging. It was discussed whether the young adult members of the church should be receiving a special letter or invitation to make a pledge this year.

David suggested that the ministries chairs talk about their ministries at church to familiarize people with their service before people are asked to make their pledge.

David is also considering a special Thanksgiving Service for the Sunday prior to Thanksgiving where the service is done in a historical fashion to interest new people to visit the church.

Bob also provided a handout stating the goals, printed materials list, schedule and plan for Pastor David and himself to visit members of the parish in October.

Worship & Spiritual Growth: Sandy Antonelli submitted her report to council electronically. Kathy Abel was her substitute at the meeting. She suggested that the pre-Thanksgiving service be canceled because of low attendance.

Members at Large/ Communications: Kathleen sent and reviewed her report to council.

On the Web site, a "what's happening" events list link was added to homepage. Also on the website will be a link to a LHC Youtube channel and Facebook page.

Emma Kaska created an edited video from a Sunday Service which was posted on the Youtube channel with a link from the website, BTW, and Facebook page.

Photos from the Summer Fellowship were posted on Facebook and on the website. Also, the Facebook page is up to 92 “likes.” The three Facebook administrators currently are Lori Prang, Kathy Haben and Kathleen Kaska. Additional administrators can be added. Volunteers welcomed.

A form was developed to help council submit news items for the *By the Way* Newsletter to Lori. Council members will be able to get the “News item” form from the “Newsletter” page on the LHC website.

The events list sheet was updated to include the remaining 2014 events; posted on the web site and bulletin board with copies available in the Parish Hall.

New signs were made for “office hours” and “Guild House Guests.” Kathleen is working with Lori to create a new wedding brochure.

Later at the NB meeting, it was discussed and suggested that we should send out post cards for the Blessing of the Hounds at church as we did last year. Kathleen will prepare postcards and posters for distribution.

OLD BUSINESS:

The following items were on the agenda but will be reviewed at a later date.

- New chairs in the parish hall
- Suggestion to create a Sexton position for sound system and onsite set up/troubleshooting during events
- After ONA
- Outreach in Living the Word

NEW BUSINESS: None

COMING EVENTS:

September 19-20 Rummage Sale
September 28, 2014 Blessing of the Hounds
Sept. 29 thru Oct.3 Pastor David on Retreat
October 3-4, 2014 Women’s retreat at Pilgrim Park
November 1, 2014 Women’s retreat in Wilmette

Next Meeting: Tuesday, October 14, 2014, 7:00 p.m.

Move to adjourn by Lori and seconded by Alex.

Pastor David gave the closing prayer at 10:20 p.m.:

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen Thornton
Church Clerk

Minutes approved October 14, 2014