

# **St. Mark's Lutheran Church**

**July 18, 2023**

## **Council Meeting Minutes**

Devotions with Holy Communion were held in the sanctuary, led by Craig McKibben.

The meeting was called to order by Craig McKibben.

Pastor Robin opened with prayer.

Attending: Pastor Robin, Mike Schroeder, Christy Brewster, Craig McKibben, Brent Boston, Jeanne Bock, Ben Forman, Brian Bushong, Michael Dahl, Sarah Neal, James Nester, Doug Niekamp, Cassie Mugler, Josh Billnitzer

**Introduction of Guests**            none

### **Review of Mission, Vision, and Core Values**

**Consent Agenda:** Ben moved, Jeanne seconded, approved.

**Approval of Council and Academy Board minutes**

**Approval of reports (Committee, Task Force, Treasurer, etc.)**

### **Pastor Robin's Report - Highlights**

Council Book Reading/Study opportunity: A Field Guide for the Missional Congregation: Embarking on a Journey of Transformation

#### **1. Church Staff:**

- a. Staff Retreat - On July 6, nine of the church staff members traveled to Fremont for retreat. While there, we received training on effective communication and relationship building. The staff will use the training as ongoing staff development over the coming months.
- b. July/August is the time for staff performance evaluations. Supervisors will be conducting those meetings in the coming weeks.
- c. Josh Billnitzer moved into his full time position as Director of Music and Communications in June. It has been great to have a complete full time staff so that all ministries are fully supported and plans for the future of ministries can be developed.

#### **2. Worship**

- a. Saturday Worship: Saturday night worship is not offering Holy Communion every week. The attenders of this worship service expressed interest in experiencing worship in a variety of styles, contemporary, blended, traditional. I will be working with Josh, Pastor Ken and Cassie to explore how we might design worship to align with our Lutheran traditions yet incorporate new ways to worship God and make Christ's presence known.
- b. Sunday Worship:
  - i. Josh and I have changed the liturgy music for the summer months to provide some variety. We are working on fall planning.
  - ii. After much prayerful discussion and discernment we will be returning to the Narrative Lectionary cycle of readings. This lectionary starts with Genesis in September and flows through God's story (OT and NT) throughout the academic year. We used the NL from 2017 - 2022 and found that it is better than the Revised Common Lectionary for teaching Biblical literacy.
- c. Academy Chapel Service: Children are included in worship leadership and it has been a pleasure to watch them begin to understand the order of worship. Each week, they receive a personal blessing during Holy Communion.

3. Pastoral Care
  - a. Phone calls, texts, home visits, hospital visits and monthly worship services at senior living communities continue.
  - b. I will be taking Pastor Ken to meet some of our homebound members and friends so that he is able to help with pastoral care.
4. Christian Education
  - a. A job description for a PT Director of Christian Education will be presented to council for approval.
  - b. Planning is taking place for fall Sunday School and bible studies for all ages.
5. Wednesday Night Meal
  - a. Will resume on September 13.
6. Continuing Education/Conference Participation
  - a. Weekly conference pastors' meeting
7. Fellowship/Service Time and Talents
  - a. New Church Directory: Debbie and Josh have made corrections and it has been returned to Universal Church Directories. We will receive one more proof (digital), then directories will be printed.
  - b. Furniture Pantry: Will be coordinating with H2O and other area churches for a furniture give away for BGSU International students on August 19.
  - c. Mission Team - The team is reporting to the congregation over the summer months during worship. Individual team members are sharing faith stories as part of the summer theme of "Story".
  - d. Other ministries meeting regularly: quilters, Mary-Martha Circle, Young at Heart, Griefshare, Stephen Ministry, Dartball, Next Gen...
8. Deacon Ministry
  - a. The Deacon ministry met on July 13 for Transition Team work
9. Conference/Synod
  - a. Bishop Daniel is on a three month sabbatical.
10. Other
  - a. BGMA - Cassie and I met with Zeb Kellough, Principal at Crim, to discuss the Young Neighbor
11. program. He was very supportive. BGMA is planning a Choral Evensong for late August or early September at the City Park.

## **Parish Administrator's Report - Highlights**

### **New Business:**

1. June Attendance: June worship attendance was down 15.6% over the 5yr. average.
2. June Gifts: June contributions were \$2,745 above expenses. [YTD \$19,452]
3. Budgeted Gifts/Expenses: YTD contributions through June are \$38,157 under budget (-4%) and expenses are \$70,998 less than budgeted.
4. 50/50 Campaign: 50/50 Campaign giving for June totaled \$1,931.
5. Scholarship Fund: Bill and Sue Rock have left investments to St. Mark's in their Trust. The funds were left undesignated, however, after consulting with the family, they have decided to best honor their parents, they would like to split the monies between the Capital Improvement Fund, Endowment Fund and establish a new scholarship fund for graduating high school seniors. Details and parameters on the scholarship application and awarding process are TBD.
  - a. Update: All beneficiaries have now signed off on all documents and Wells Fargo is processing the check.
6. Parking Lot: The Shelly Co. finished repaving the parking lot the last week of June. The final cost of this project totaled \$106,700. This project was funded by a generous donation from the estate of Joe White.
7. Fencing: The split rail fence surrounding the NE corner of the church property is now complete. This project was funded by an anonymous donor. We are now compliant with state regulations for a safe outdoor play space for the preschool.

8. Sanctuary Roof: We lost a few shingles off the sanctuary in a recent storm. J. Alexander Roofing has made the necessary repairs at no cost (covered under warranty)
9. Staff CPR Training: I'm working on scheduling a CPR training class for church staff. Ideally, this will happen before Fall.
10. In mid-September Mike will start working on the Ministry plan for 2024. Committees should get any funding needs/requests to him.
11. Also on the radar is what to do with the trailer-full of Boy Scout supplies.

## **Academy Director's Report - Highlights**

1. Preschool Program Overview:
  - a. Summer Students-19 Active
  - b. Academic Year Students- 14
    - i. Prospective Students: 5
    - ii. Study Areas: (Each week over the summer has a different theme.) In addition to the theme of the week students have peace corner activities, faith shelf activities and Wednesday church, art projects, music, language and math materials.
    - iii. Marketing: Yard Signs, social media, BG Local Small Business Mondays Advertising
      1. BGSU, Library Publication, Buzz Book, Referral Sources, Pediatrician Offices, Churches without Preschool, MOPS, Sponsor an event at the Wood County Library, postings in hardware store, shops, and library boards.
      2. All current families will have a chance to get a free week's tuition if they refer a new family that enrolls at SMLA!
    - iv. Staff: Full-time: Christy, Gretchen, and Angel  
Part-time: Madi Schroeder (Tue/Thur)  
After-care: Reagan Roehm (Mon-Fri)
2. State License Update:
  - a. June Inspection- all corrections were submitted June 30.
  - b. October Inspection
3. Coming Up Next:
  - a. Fundraising Ideas for next year - Board is brainstorming before August meeting.
  - b. August 14 &15, Gretchen and Christy will attend training at Adrian Montessori Teacher Education Institute
  - c. Beginning in September Gretchen will work on a "Pre-Certification" training program under Christy Brewster. (To gain terms, and comfort level prior to enrolling in Montessori Teacher Education Program in August of 2024.
4. Any additional Business:
  - a. School Calendar 2023-2024 School Year
  - b. Late fee for pickups after 5:30...
    - i. Three Verbal Warnings with a sign page to record warning.
    - ii. Late up to 15 min= \$25 fee (another \$25 for each additional 15 min.)
    - iii. Four late fees allowed during Academic Year before dismissal, and two late fees allowed during Summer Program before dismissal.
  - c. The tuition rate increase for 2024, Advisory Board is proposing \$225. for full time, and \$150. For part-time.
  - d. Possibility of adding before/after care for Crim School. This could provide extra income for the Academy. We will assess this by January 2024.

## **Next Gen Ministry Report - Highlights**

### **June Month in Review:**

1. Youth
  - a. This summer our St. Mark's Youth have had several service and adventure opportunities. In June, we built garden beds at Salem Lutheran Church, helped landscape and mulch around the church grounds/rental property, helped with VBS, and went kayaking on the Mohican River.
  - b. In June, we focused our devotions on learning about people living in poverty, learning about food insecurity and food deserts, and about fair and equal housing. Our devotions have focused on the ways in which God calls us to serve our neighbors.
  - c. So far in July, we have served at the Seagate Food Bank and together we packed 128 food boxes for senior citizens.
2. Campus Ministry
  - a. No new update.
  - b. Cassie is connecting with those young adults who are back in town for the summer.
  - c. Cassie has ordered new campus ministry swag. We have also sent the first round of scholarship money to Raegan and Molly.
3. Young Adult Ministries
  - a. No new update.
4. Service
  - a. We have begun to recruit new restaurants and musicians for the community meal for the fall. The meal will launch on September 13.

### **Looking Ahead:**

1. The NextGen Advisory Board has been created. On the team are Ben Forman, Michael Dahl, Angie Blake, Elizabeth Gerken, and Jody and Tricia Germann. The team will meet monthly.
2. Cassie is exploring the idea of putting together a student leadership team to drive youth group engagement.
3. Cassie and a couple of youth have secured a Thrivent card to put together a "Build Your Own" Worship Bag. The shelf that will hold all materials for youth to choose will be located in the coat room.
4. We are recruiting teams for the 13th Annual Golf Outing at Stone Ridge. The event is scheduled for August 27, 2023. Proceeds go towards our trip to the ELCA Youth Gathering in July 2024.
5. There will be an informational meeting for the ELCA Youth and Young Adult Gathering in New Orleans on August 6 from 9:15-10:15 AM.

## **Music/Communications Report - Highlights**

### **New Business:**

1. New Liturgy – The liturgy setting has been changed! We had a chamber choir introduce part of this on July 2nd. Carol Lenox introduced the non-communion Kyrie setting on July 9<sup>th</sup>.
2. Instrumental Music – Congregation members have the opportunity to serve during worship as music leaders. We have had a few step up so far! Here is our schedule so far:
  - a. July 16th – Bell Choir Ensemble
  - b. July 23rd – Katherine Tyson – Violin Soloist
  - c. August 13th(?) – Choir
3. Another summer choir! – Our first summer choir last month was a HUGE SUCCESS. We had seven new singers try out choir. We are going to have one more and see if anybody else would like to give it a try (possibly including YOU)!
4. Augsburg Music Conference – I will be in Columbus on August 7/8 to attend a choir/music conference to further my abilities. I can't wait to learn some new tricks to try out this fall!
5. Social media – I have been adding a little bit of humor to the social media accounts.
6. Coming up, I would like to be more interactive with these. I attempted an interactive post on July 4th and got zero response....however I have some ideas stirring up to get some more interaction on our pages. I'm also always open for ideas!

## Old Business:

1. Wednesday Services (still happening) – The Academy students are also singing at all Wednesday midweek services.

## Ministry Reports:

1. Education (Brian Bushong):
2. Safety (Bob Ashenfelter)
3. Outreach (Doug Neikamp & Jeanne Bock):
4. Stewardship (Brian Bushong & James Nester)
5. Worship (Carol Lenox & Sarah Neal):
6. Next Gen (Mike Dahl & Ben Forman):

## Old Business:

1. SMLA policy on late pickup of students

**Brian moved, Jeanne seconded for the following Late Pick-Up Policy. Approved.**

### **Academy Late Pick-Up Policy**

- Each family will be given three verbal warnings, accompanied by a sign sheet where they will sign to acknowledge they have received a warning. These sheets will go in the student's file.
- Following the third warning the family will be charged a \$25 fee for a late pick-up, anytime after 5:30 pm. An additional \$25 / 15 min will be charged until the student is picked up.
- The families may receive four fees during the Academic School Year, or two fees during the Summer Program before dismissal from the program.
- This policy will be added to the Parent handbook and distributed prior to the start of the Academic year 2023-2024.

## New Business

1. Personnel Committee policy approvals (misc. items from sections 2, 5, 7, 8, and E)

**Michael moved, Ben seconded, approved.**

2. Job description approvals:

- a. Director of Christian Education(part-time)

- b. Saturday Night organist/pianist

- i. Pablo is here through the end of August. He has finished his doctoral work and is moving to NY.

**Ben moved, Michael seconded to accept both job descriptions. Approved.**

## Other Business

Adjournment and Prayers

Upcoming important dates:

- Council Meeting August 15, 2023

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Klotz