

# St. Mark's Lutheran Church

September 17, 2024

## Council Meeting Minutes

**Devotions with Holy Communion:** held in the sanctuary, led by James Nester

**The meeting was called to order:** by Craig McKibben

**Opening Prayer:** Pastor Robin Small

**Attending:** Pastor Robin Small, Bob Ashenfelter, Josh Billnitzer, Christy Brewster, Leah Budke, Kathryn Budke, Brian Bushong, Wes Kellermeier, Carol Lenox, Craig McKibben, Sarah Neal, Doug Niekamp, James Nester, Mike Schroeder

**Introduction of Guests:** None

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

**Consent Agenda:** Sarah moved; Carol seconded. Motion approved.

**Approval of Council and Academy Board minutes**

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

### Pastor Robin's Report - Highlights

#### 1. Worship

- a. Weekend Worship: We have returned to the Narrative Lectionary which means that our scripture readings for the academic year reveal God's Story (Creation, Fall, Redemption, New Creation) one story at a time, beginning in Genesis, traveling through the Gospel of Luke and ending in May with Pentecost.
  - i. The theme for September and October is "Promises"
- b. Other Worship: Tuesday – JRC, JDC (J Worship); Wednesday – Noon, Long-Term Care Worship (Pastor Jim plans to retire from leading this worship at the end of the year); Devotions at Wednesday Night Community Meals
- c. Thursday, September 19, 2:00 pm – I am meeting with a group of members to learn about the proper placement of American flags and other symbols in the worship space.

#### 2. Pastoral Care/Milestones

- a. One cemetery service since last month's council meeting (Margaret Neifer)
- b. Baptisms: Meyer baptism - September 29; VanAllsburg Family (3) - October
- c. One Wedding: Stella (DeWitt) and Weston Miller – September 14, 2024
- d. Milestone Ministry: Gift Bibles for 3<sup>rd</sup> Graders – September 22; Entry into Catechism – September 22
- e. Pastoral Care Team: Will meet on the fourth Monday of each month, and for those who are able, weekly at 10:30 am via ZOOM to assign prayer and visits as follow ups from the weekly Sunday Connection Cards

#### 3. Continuing Education/Conference/Community Participation

- a. I continue to serve on BG City Human Relations Commission, BGMA, and WAM
- b. Wood County Area Ministries will be adding a Northwood Office at the beginning of 2025. Current WAM volunteers are training two members of Calvary Lutheran, Northwood.

## Parish Administrator's Report - Highlights

### New Business

1. August Attendance: August worship attendance was down 12.5% over the 5yr. average.
2. August Giving: August contributions were \*\$36,617 below expenses. YTD (34,276)  
\*3-payroll month
3. Budgeted Giving/Expenses: Through August – Actual expenses are 3% below budget, while projected giving is 11.5% under budget.
4. A/C Rooftop Unit: The a/c rooftop unit above the kitchen will need to be replaced before long. The a/c unit is working, but slowly failing. We should be able to get through the remainder of this year, but will likely have to look at replacing next Spring.
5. Financial Review/Audit: We have begun the audit process with S&S CPA firm in Bowling Green. This process will span over several weeks/months. The estimated cost of the project will be approx. \$1,500 with a 10% non-profit discount factored in. **Update**: We have met with the accountant several times, and all is going well. The audit should be wrapped up by late October.
6. Planned Giving Workshop: Attended a “Building Lasting Legacies” workshop on September 12 at the University of Findlay with Brian Bushong.
7. Workers Comp Audit: We were randomly selected to be audited by the Ohio Bureau of Worker’s Comp. **Update**: The audit took place on September 11. The only finding involved reclassification of a few employees to another category. Paychex, our payroll provider, will make this change. This will not affect our rates.
8. Ministry Plan: The 2024 Ministry Plan is in process.

## Academy Director's Report - Highlights

1. Preschool Program Overview:
  - a. Registered Students
    - i. Academic Year 2024-2025: 14 students so far, 2 prospects
  - b. Current Study Areas: Days of the Week, Months of the Year, Living/Non-living, Plant/Animal, Left/Right, Calendar, Apples, Trees, Personal Timelines, Past/Present/Future, My Place in the World, Grandparents Day, Artist Matisse, Musician Vivaldi, God’s Alphabet, Letter of the Week, Numeration, Object Counting, Practical Life Lessons, Sensorial Activities, Peace Corner Lessons, Faith Activities, Language and Math Skills, Care of a Pet, Care of School Environment, lots of classroom songs, art projects, and more!
2. Marketing:
  - a. Library Event – we will host an event at the library in the next month or so. Details to come.
  - b. Marketing Plan Focus for September – Social Media, Car Magnets, Parent Incentive referral.
  - c. Friday Flyer Day
  - d. More videos of school events on websites and social media.
3. Staff:
  - a. Full-time: Christy Brewster and Gretchen Germann
  - b. Summer Teacher and After-Care: Bridget Quinlan
  - c. Part-time: Jami Deering
4. Playground:
  - a. Our students are LOVING the playground. We had an offer of financial donation from a grandparent of a current student.
5. Recap of Projects and Events:
  - a. Open House/Back to School Night

- b. Grandparents Day
- c. Rally Day
- 6. Current Projects and Events:
  - a. First Class Outside Day – September 25
  - b. Class Apple Party – September 27
  - c. Staff Evaluations
  - d. SMART Goals for this year:
    - i. Attend Chamber events, 2 articles in the news, 2 press releases.
    - ii. Create Grandparent Newsletter (quarterly)
    - iii. Maintain Volunteers – documentation and tracking
    - iv. Host an event with the Wood County Library

## **DYCE (Director of Youth and Christian Education) Report - Highlights**

1. Youth
  - a. There is a youth schedule for the fall. We will be having youth group twice a month. One will be via ZOOM to hopefully bring in more people. The other will be in person at the church for fellowship, devotions, and games.
  - b. Working on a millennial Sunday school that will meet between services.
  - c. Rally Day was a success as we kicked off the new academic year for Sunday School.
  - d. Looking ahead to the Chicken BBQ that will benefit outreach.
2. Campus Ministry
  - a. Small group will start on Sunday, September 22 between services.
3. Nursery
  - a. We will have more nursery workers available when they start school again. The goal is to have two nursery workers every Sunday.

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

1. Music in Service
  - a. Month in review
    - i. September 16 – First Academy music class of the year.
    - ii. September 15 – First bell choir of Fall. Sunday School began.
    - iii. September 8 – The return of the choir.
    - iv. September 1 – New liturgy introduced (mix of different settings/hymns influenced by Luther’s Mass).
    - v. August 25 – New sanctuary reveal. Choir, Bells and Flute at both services.
  - b. Coming up/Ongoing:
    - i. Sunday School Music beginning. We will be learning new music throughout the year, as well as, learning some Christian classics. This year, we will be using the handbells more often.
    - ii. Academy music updates – I plan on trying out some new curriculums/teaching strategies from some professional development conferences. New material to learn through the year and including more handbells as well.
    - iii. Section Leaders – Hiring one position. We currently have two returning section leaders, and two new leaders.
2. Past Professional Development
  - a. September 3-6 – SING! Virtual Conference
    - i. A lot of materials for hymn selection. New interesting ideas with MANY digital workshops.

ii. Leadership BG

1. I am one of eighteen in this year's Leadership BG class. Our first day is September 18. I am looking forward to making connections within the community and seeing what resources we can use here at St. Mark's.

3. Social Media

- a. Even higher engagement this past month!
  - i. Virtual Worship (up to 45 households each week)
  - ii. Facebook Posts (event posts up by about 25%)

## Committee Overview Discussion

1. Please submit your SMART goals

## Ministry Reports:

1. Education/Youth Plus (Christy Brewster, Kathryn Budke, Brian Bushong, Michael Dahl, Stella Miller)
  - a. SMART Goals
    - i. Establish a millennial class
    - ii. Youth group this month to include 5-12 graders (gage interest)
    - iii. Maintain campus ministry on Sunday
    - iv. SMLA goals for this year (quarterly newsletter for grandparents, hosting an event at the Wood County Library)
2. Outreach (Sarah Neal, Doug Niekamp)
  - a. SMART Goals
    - i. Monthly, increase awareness about outreach activities and initiatives through education and storytelling. These messages will always include an "ask" to invite more people to connect through service (i.e. temple talks (noisy offering), videos (Friday Email and Facebook), announcements, press releases)
    - ii. Fundraise 110% of the amount needed for each outreach activity/initiative with the expectation that participants take an active role in fundraising projects
    - iii. In 2025, St. Mark's will sponsor outreach activities in each of the geographic regions: Local (3+), Domestic U.S. (1), Global (1)
3. Safety (Bob Ashenfelter)
  - a. Met Saturday, September 14
    - i. Security cameras (SMLA playground area, etc.)
    - ii. AED purchases (new pads)
    - iii. AED training (staff and other members)
    - iv. Resurrection of Safety Team volunteers
4. Stewardship (Brian Bushong & James Nester)
  - a. Fundraising and Education goals
  - b. Estate Planning – event on Thursday, October 31
5. Worship (Leah Budke, Carol Lenox)
  - a. SMART Goals
    - i. Collaborate with youth ministries to hold an informal worship service by March 2025.

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