

Grace Lutheran Church Council Minutes

February 15, 2024

Grace Lutheran Church Council met on February 15, 2024. Members present were: Mary Schlievert, Mike Schlievert, Karen Hammel, Joan Eckermann, Gordon Hille, Steve Blausey, John Heminger, and Pastor Jaci via phone. Mary Schlievert opened the meeting and offered the opening prayer.

The Secretary's Report - A motion was made by Mike, second Joan, to approve the Secretary's Report from January 11, 2024. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report - Reported by Mike Schlievert

The January Treasurer's Report was presented to the council. We had strong income for the month of January, setting us up for a surplus to start the year. Two additional CD's were opened. We are also looking at Mission Investments through the ELCA. A motion was made by Steve, second Joan to approve the Treasurer's Report. Motion carried.

Pastor's Report - Pastor Jaci

Please pray for the family of my cousin, Bethany Collier. She recently passed away and this has been a long and difficult journey for her and our family.

Board Reports:

Board of Congregational Life - Reported by Mary Schlievert

The Board met on February 6, 2024. Those in attendance were: Mary, Joan E. Linda S, Nancy B. and Karen H.

Old Business: We noted that no one had signed up for Family Fun Nights. Names were drawn for prayer partners at the Annual Meeting in January. There are a few names left in the can. We need to remind people to draw a name. We did a church clean-up on Jan. 27th with 4 people. We worked in the sanctuary dusting, vacuuming, and spot cleaning pews. There is still wax to be removed from pews, and the fellowship hall tables and chairs to clean. The annual meeting potluck in January was attended by 28 members. We will be bringing supplies (stickers, colored pencils, candy) to make Valentine cards on Feb 4 and 11th; Mary will provide the cards to decorate. Candy will be offered as a treat. There were already many cards completed in the "done" basket! We will set up for Soup Suppers during Lent starting Feb. 21st. Supper is at 6:30 this year so we need to set up at 6 pm.

New Business: We welcomed Karen Hammel, who led a discussion about providing food and set-up for a concert to be given by The Avenue Trio, a Christian music trio from Nashville. The concert will start in the Grace Sanctuary on Sunday, April 7, at 4 p.m. Following the concert, we will offer light refreshments to everyone in attendance in the fellowship hall. Food will include cold cuts and cheese to make sandwiches, a veggie tray, chips, and cookies. Karen will handle publicity for the event. This board will help with set-up and clean-up on April 7th, following worship.

Easter is March 31 and we will offer a punch and cookie reception. Each of us will bring a couple dozen cookies. Mary will make the punch. We will set up at 9 am. We briefly discussed possible activities for Mother's Day and Father's Day. We will also discuss the possibility of a Pentecost picnic on May 19th at our next meeting. A board chair is still needed. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 16 at 7 p.m.

Board of Education - Reported by Gordon Hille

Jayne Klett and I had frequent discussions during our first month.

Soon we will have regularly scheduled meetings and will cordially welcome others to attend.

+ Board met weekly during January for planning, class preparations, and brainstorming. Our gratitude is extended to Steve Blausey and Steve Avers for their help in preparing classrooms.

+ A new class on Luther started February 4th. The class has been well attended. Future media-based topics include Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Jesus Christ Superstar.

+ Our two 7th grade students attended confirmation retreat Feb 9-11 They were chaperoned by Amy Simkus.

+ Teachers for the K-6 class in February are Jeff and Deb Boos. The Weitekmans will teach in March.

+ The planning process has begun for starting a Preschool class in September. There are 4 young members in that age group this year.

Board of Property - Reported by Steve Blausey

The Board of Property met on February 4th at 9:30 am in the meeting room with 5 members in attendance. For devotions, a reading about Merlyn Weng was shared with everyone acknowledging what a loss this board has suffered and what a privilege it has been to serve alongside of him. Heaven must have needed him more though. Till we meet again!

January's report to Council was read by Steve Blausey along with the reading of 2023's Annual Report.

Old Business: Zak Avers is still working on the elevator phone issue, water testing is going well, and no progress on the bell microphone yet. We also are going to hold off purchasing the programmable thermostats for a bit.

Miscellaneous: The boilers were inspected on Jan. 16th and passed. They did mention that our fire extinguishers needed the yearly inspection done. Steve read a letter from Ottawa County explaining a ditch cleaning project that will affect us. We also have a request to replace 2 receptacles in the front of the Sanctuary.

New Business: Steve read a letter from our renter stating that they would be out by Feb. 16th. Steve then read a letter written back to them and delivered on January 27th explaining how much they owed for February's rent plus all late fees. No response. Some discussion was then held about the future of the parsonage. We will need to have someone take the trash containers out to the curb now and the Avers' have graciously volunteered. Steve Also informed the Board that a new custodian has been hired. We ended the meeting saying the Lord's Prayer.

Board of Witness and Mission- Reported by John Heminger (Two reports)

Date of Board Meeting: 14 February 2024

Board members John Heminger and Nancy Pries were in attendance.

*Temple Talk given by Kathy Mull, director of The Cocoon in Bowling Green.

\$760, Council funds donated to WAM Board, sent to Christy's Corner in Elmore.

Temple Talk scheduled for March third by James Vernot, Mission Cry representatives.

\$400 benevolence payment made to Salem Lutheran – Toledo.

\$413.71, benevolence fund surplus, sent to Luther Home burial assistance fund.

The congregational survey regarding benevolence giving results reviewed.

The top areas of interest include:

1. Hunger and Nutrition
2. Children and family services
3. Veterans support
4. Affordable housing, homelessness and shelters

The current benevolence distribution supports these topics.

Key Upcoming Dates:

Feb 14 – ELCA Good Gifts hygiene kit purchase Lenten project begins.

Mar 03 – Temple talk by James Vernot, representative from Mission Cry

Mar 13 – Next WAM board meeting

Date of Board Meeting: 14 January 2024

Board members John Heminger and Nancy Pries were in attendance. Visitor – Gordon Hille

Relevant Discussion:

Advent project report- \$650 collected in Advent offerings purchased 6 stoves.

Lenten offering project – Decision was made to purchase ELCA Good Gifts hygiene kits with Lenten offerings received.

2023 Benevolence funds balance, \$339.39 First Fruits and \$74.32 Directed, to be sent to Luther Home of Mercy burial fund.

Funds donated by Church Council to WAM benevolence fund to be sent to Christy's Corner.

Potential temple talk by representative from Mission Cry, This organization, based in Fowlerville, MI., distributes Bibles and other Christian education materials, donated and purchased, worldwide.

Key Upcoming Dates:

Feb 11 – temple talk by Cocoon representatives.

Feb 18 – Next WAM board meeting

Feb 14 – Lenten project begins.

Board of Worship - Reported by Joan Eckermann

The Board of Worship met on January 16 at 7:00 p.m. with five members and four guests attending. The meeting began with prayer.

Old Business :

We reviewed worship during the Advent and Christmas seasons.

Lori Damschroder was hired as our Parish Musician in November. She will begin her duties on January 1, 2024 and her first day of playing for worship was January 7.

New Business:

We reviewed our worship plans for the Lent and Easter seasons.

Ash Wednesday worship is February 14. A noon service will be held for people that aren't comfortable being out after dark in addition to the 7:30 p.m. service. Both services will include communion and the imposition of ashes. Wednesday midweek worship will take place on February 21, 28, March 6, 13 and 21 at 6:30 p.m. The format will be Dinner Church led by a different North Central Conference pastor each week in the Fellowship Hall. The theme is "Hungry No More." Holy Week worship includes Palm Sunday/Sunday of the Passion on March 24. There will be a procession with palms and Pastor Jaci will ask members to read portions of the Gospel. Lori

will be out of town that day, so we'll ask Ryan Erard to play for worship that day. Maundy Thursday worship is March 28 at 7:30 p.m. with communion and the stripping of the chancel.

Good Friday worship will be a Tenebrae service on March 29 at 7:30 p.m.

An Easter Prayer Vigil will be held on Saturday, March 30 from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. Joan will set out a sign-up sheet for people that want to come and pray in set time slots.

Easter Sunday is March 31. Although it's the fifth Sunday of the month, we decided not to have youth-led worship that day. However, we'll ask a youth member to be the crucifer.

Other Items: Summer Worship will begin on June 2. We'll continue setting out sign-up sheets for lectors and deacons. The choir start-up date is yet to be determined. The weekly rehearsal night may change. There was discussion about going back to serving communal bread and wine

for communion. The board decided to go back to this format beginning on February 4. Members still have the options of using the prepackaged communion kits or supplying their own communion elements. An article will be placed in the bulletins and February Parish Reporter, and Joan will make announcements at Sunday worship and the January 28 congregational meeting.

Our next meeting is scheduled for a Tuesday in April on a date to be determined. We closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Old Business:

1. The vacant council positions are: Vice President, Financial Secretary, and Board of Congregational Life.
2. The Constitution was briefly discussed. Suggestions for updates were made.
3. Goals for our Church Council were set:
 - A. Maintain financial solvency.
 - B. Restructure how we operate as a congregation as a council
 - C. Evangelism and expanding membership.

New Business:

1. Audit Committee - A motion was made by Steve, second Gordon, to appoint Jen Haar and Linda Jacobs to the Audit Committee. Motion carried.
2. Congregation Report of the ELCA - To be filled out by Mary Schlievert for the synod.
3. Gordon brought up that our website should be current. He will look into obtaining assistance with this.
4. Mike made a motion, Steve second, to spend \$250 for a recognition event. Motion carried.
5. A Task Force will be formed, led by Steve Blausey, to determine how to proceed with the parsonage. A final decision will need to be made by the congregation whether we should sell or rent the parsonage.

Good News:

*Noon Ash Wednesday service was a success.

*The new Communion structure is underway and is going well.

*Valentine cards were delivered to Genoa Care Center and Luther Home of Mercy.

Announcements:

*Soup Suppers during Lent will begin on February 21st at 6:30.

*We will host a concert April 7th at 4 p.m. - The Avenue Trio from Nashville. There will be a freewill donation during the concert to support the trio, and a light dinner will be served following the concert.

*The next council meeting will be held on March 21, 2024

A motion was made by Steve, second Gordon, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

The meeting concluded with The Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Hammel
Church Council Secretary