

COMMUNITY OF GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Council Minutes

May 13, 2021

Call to Order & Roll Call

Present: Sandy Anderson, Ken Colberg, Dennis Engman, Wendy Fitzsimmons, Mike Hamernick, Maia Hendrickson, Jeff Hovis, Mike Mathisen, Dan McMahon, Jeff Montgomery, Tim Orf, Mark Schuneman, Darrin Vick, Angie Way

Excused: Michelle Sherman

Meeting called to order at 7:31 p.m.

Mike Hamernick opened our meeting with prayer.

The minutes from the April 2021 meeting were approved.

Pastor Darrin's Report:

COVID-19 restrictions changed from the Governor's office today, so we are making adjustments. Darrin appreciates the fact that we do not have division within the church Council. He feels a tremendous amount of support from this group who stand unified together with the church staff. His present proposal: this coming Sunday, Darrin will ask leadership and staff to continue with current protocols. Our policy has been to follow the CDC guidelines and the requirements from both the Governor and the City of White Bear Lake. After this Sunday, we will see what decisions occur at the government level and reassess. The north end of the Fellowship Hall will provide some opportunity for distancing and the Chapel in the sanctuary will do the same. Online services will continue for those who may have COVID-19 concerns.

Pastor Angie's Report:

We hired Mary Ellen Steinkraus as our new Visitation Pastor. She has been working with Pastor Al and Carol Watnemo, our Parish Nurse. Mary comes with strong organizational skills and computer skills to our advantage. She will reconnect with Care Team volunteers. Last year, we lost 40 members from our congregation. We are looking for time to have a grief and memory service for those who have had losses in 2020. Mary Ellen plans to greet members in the Commons.

Our "Grace in Every Corner" series continues. This weekend, we will celebrate Volunteer Appreciation Sunday, and Teen Challenge Sunday occurs on May 30. For the summer and starting the first Sunday in June, simultaneous traditional and contemporary services begin at 9 am and an outdoor contemporary service starts at 10:30 a.m. We will focus on the gospel of Matthew.

The new Student Ministry and Missions position was posted today. Council members will participate in interviews.

Core Team Reports

Children's Ministries: Mark Schuneman for Wendy Fitzsimmons

This is the last Sunday for HISKids before summer. The staff enjoyed developing a wonderful connection with students this year. Vacation Bible School begins in 7 weeks. Enrollment is high with only 10 spots open for kids, and more volunteers are needed. The dates are June 28-July 1 9:30 a.m.-12 noon. We need help with the craft tent and small groups of kids. Britta and her family are still looking for a new home, so please continue to pray.

Student Ministries: Dan McMahon

The students have one more week of Refuge.

Adult Ministries: Mike Hamernick

Connection Groups will resume soon. This will roll into the "Say Yes" campaign. This fall, we will encourage more Growth Groups.

Seniors: Ken Colberg

Our fabulous quilters are meeting on Monday mornings. The Women of Grace finished their Zoom meetings on May 19. R.O.M.E.O. are back meeting at Denny's every first Thursday. J.U.L.I.E.T. will resume in June. Activities are resuming for the seniors.

Worship: Tim Orf

Tim's theme: "In Spirit, in Truth, and in Person." New audio equipment was ordered. We hope to have everything installed by fall to enhance our audio presentation. MN Adult and Teen Challenge representatives come on Sunday, May 30 with onsite testimonials. For confidentiality reasons, we cannot livestream the testimonies. Christi Torgusson and Michelle Sherman will host those who come.

Dan and Melinda are exploring some worship and tech minicamps for students interested in learning these skills.

As previously described, our outdoor contemporary service airs at 10:30 a.m. this summer.

Pray for a vision for worship.

Welcome/Hospitality: Dennis Engman

We see an increase in volunteers and hospitality, but we need to pray for more volunteers.

Nametag Sunday will resume on the first Sunday of every month.

Missions: Michelle Sherman

Mission of Hope donations were just shy of \$30,000 surpassing the goal. Over 25 more kids have sponsors.

Infrastructure Reports

Treasurer and Stewardship Report: Mike Mathisen & Jeff Montgomery

Last year at this time, we were ahead of normal. This year is more typical. We are trailing by \$59,000. We are also under with our expenses. So far, we are behind our budgeted savings by about \$10,000.

Missions is behind \$6,500. The motion was made to pull \$7,500 from our general reserve fund into missions. This motion was approved.

Mission partners will be highlighted during the upcoming sermon series. The council asked Jeff to do a "deep dive" into the missions giving. We will let the congregation know that we have other missions we support regularly.

From Jeff's "deep dive" into our congregational giving: we have 100 fewer giving units than last year. However, the average gift per giving unit is higher this year. We have an opportunity to remind everyone that giving is an act of worship.

Facilities: Jeff Montgomery

The next major facility project includes the restrooms off the Commons in July. Darrin brought up a concern that someone had been checking car doors in our parking lot during services. The White Bear police plan to drive through. One couple came in and indicated their car had been stolen. They had not filled a police report, and it appears they were assessing for possible camera footage. For safety, Paul is looking into the possibility of adding cameras to our parking lot.

Secretary's Report: Maia Hendrickson

The Annual Meeting minutes will come to the Council for review.

Vice President's Report: Sandy Anderson

No report.

President's Report: Mark Schuneman

Mark handed out the Church Council Team Covenant for all Council members to sign. We also discussed resuming a schedule for our council support with offerings.

Other new business:

Nathan Ackerman, a man who works for the Jesus Film project, requested office space for making phone calls. As long as an office is available, we will let him use it.

Wendy asked us to pray that groups do not become "clicky," and that outsiders will feel comfortable joining any of our groups. Any new Bible Study should be open to anyone.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Our next meeting is scheduled for June 17.

The meeting closed with The Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by Maia Hendrickson