

Minutes for Church Council Meeting

7:00 p.m. on January 14, 2020

CALL TO ORDER: Scott Fierle

PRESENT: Pastor Steve Biegner, Janell Andersen, Scott Fierle, Nicholas Hazlett, Debbie Howe, Bill Niblock, Sue Renken-Mintzer, David Schunak, Vern Stein, Barb Walter

ABSENT: Cheryl Gillen

VISITOR: Katie Nagel-Santillo

DEVOTIONS: We named people we are thankful for and thanked God for our blessings.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: The minutes were updated to reflect information about the Missions Fair on January 17 learned after the meeting. Barb motioned to approve the minutes, Nick seconded, and the council unanimously approved them.

NEW BUSINESS:

St. Paul's has had a key fob system that is out-of-date. We are no longer able to make new keys or cancel old keys that are missing. We also have no way to unlock the church remotely. This issue has been on hold since March because of all other work with WiFi and wiring. Katie explained the benefits of key fobs (you have a record of who opened the door at given times) and key pads (you can give a one-time use PIN number without worrying about the loss of a key fob \$6.75 but purchased in cases of 50.) Katie had an estimate from Suburban Lock and Key. A new license and a keypad alone would cost \$1163. A new license and key fob system would cost \$2925 and we could pay an additional \$825 to add the key pad. Last year the congregation approved up to \$30,000 for the security and wiring work. After David calculates the final purchases for that project, we should have \$2-3000 to cover this. Bill Niblock recommended that we get a second quote. Nick will investigate on his own. David will check with someone he knows and Scott will check with Lonnie. This is a security issue that needs to be resolved promptly, so we will make a decision next month based on the quotes we have.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Bill presented the year-end income and expenses, a comparison of 2018 and 2019 receipts, and the attendance report. Although attendance is smaller, offerings are increasing partly because of Simply Giving. Adjustments will need to be made to the December report because Christmas offering was included in the weekly numbers. Long term investments good. Financially we are fortunate.

We now have access to our PayPal account again.

The council had a general conversation about how we measure attendance. Our two new members tend to be families who want a baptism or newly empty nesters who want to make church part of their lives. How do we measure the number of people "in church"? Adam had 19 kids at Burrito Project on Saturday night. Pastor has couples committing to wedding vows and baptisms at Fire Church. We have people who regularly volunteer for Daily Bread Food Truck but don't come to service. Pastor Steve emphasized that we have to be consistent in who is counted in attendance. We currently count those in the sanctuary plus Sunday School (plus the LCLC retreat this past weekend.) We need to count the same groups every year to measure growth.

PASTOR'S REPORT:

The Amherst Central School community is grateful for the work done to open the Family Support Center. A dedication ceremony will happen soon. A licensed counselor-social worker has been hired. It will start at being open one day noon – 7:00.

Fire Church is launching with a marriage vow ceremony on February 15 at East Amherst and a baptism ceremony on May at Harris Hill. People renewing their marriage vows will receive a painted portrait on slate from our old room and a wooden carving. Baptized children will receive prayer shawls. This will connect Fire Church to St. Paul's. Paul has talked to the Erie County Commissioner and has his support.

Pastor Steve got a grant which will allow him to go to a conference of the Anchor Church Group Movement; this will be an opportunity to have a coaching group of pastors trying these models within the ELCA.

Pastor is talking to Adam Weber about ways we can extend his value as a lay wedding officiant.

We discussed the structure of our partnership with Crossroads.

NEW BUSINESS:

We have decided that it would be good to have a 2020 Building Rehab Planning Committee. It will pool together people of various talents (vision, architecture, etc.) to create a plan for our facilities. We briefly mentioned the renovation of the choir room, the need for a kitchen that can be used by any group (our current kitchen needs to be used by a Certified person and is inspected by the Health Department), the idea of a café in the Olin House, and the growing demands for space from Tiger's Den.

OLD BUSINESS:

David has purchased the camera and other equipment for filming the services to be streamed on Facebook; installation will be completed in the next couple of months.

Energy Smart Progress is done; it's made a huge difference in Katie's and Pastor Steve's office space.

MOTION TO ADJOURN: David motioned to adjourn. Barb seconded.

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING: (second) Tuesday, February 11, 2020

Respectfully submitted, Deborah Regan Howe