

**Minutes of the Annual Congregational Meeting of the Congregation of
Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church of Westminster, Maryland
Sunday, December 4, 2011, at 11:25 a.m.**

Opening of Meeting

Charles Beckhardt, president of the Council, called the meeting to order at 11:25 a.m. and declared a quorum. Pastor Kevin opened the meeting with devotions and prayer.

Approval of Prior Minutes

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the annual meeting held on December 5, 2010 be approved as printed and distributed in the 2011 Annual Report. The motion was adopted.

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the Annual Informational Meeting of the congregation held on May 1, 2011 be approved as printed and distributed in the 2011 Annual Report. The motion was adopted.

Election of Congregation Council Members

The slate of nominees was read and individuals were asked to stand to be recognized: Deborah Brennan, Joette Campanello, Ron Fairchild, Michele Krichinsky, Johanna Monka, Steve Sabol, Jr., Mike Shipley, and Linwood Van Horn. Nominations were called for from the floor. No nominations were made. Members of the congregation were instructed to vote for no more than 6 of the nominees. The 5 nominees with the greatest number of votes would serve for the next 3 years. The sixth nominee will serve for one year to complete the Council term of Bill Glazier who died before his term ended. The following persons were elected to serve on Council for 3 years: Deborah Brennan, Ron Fairchild, Johanna Monka, Mike Shipley and Linwood Van Horn. Michele Krichinsky will fill the one year vacancy.

President's Report

Charles Beckhardt presented his report as written in the 2011 Annual Report. Charlie began by expressing his gratitude for the congregation's participation in, response to and support of our new mission and vision statements. As we moved from the dreaming stage of mission planning to the doing stage, we continue to give thanks to God who empowers us and loves us to use the gifts that we have been given in His service.

Charlie reflected that the year began and ended with very visible enhancements to our facility; namely, the replacement of the cloister doors, the creation of a new hospitality and information center, and the redesign of an upper gathering area. All of these projects had, as one of their benefits, openness and a sense of welcome.

Charlie stated that the number one priority of the Council is to see that we remain fully engaged in worship and mission. At the same time, the condition of the sanctuary ceiling and our mortgage debt will continue to be an area of focus for the Council. As the congregation is asked to vote on the proposed budget that the Council is putting forth, Charlie asked that members keep two questions in mind: "Can we do it?" and "Is it worth doing?"

Charlie concluded his report by stating to the congregation, "Thank you for bearing witness to the Good News."

Election of the Voting Members to the 2012 Synod Assembly

The nominees were read and asked to stand to be recognized: Sharon Glass, Laura Heller, Arthur Pease, Viera Sabol and Rich Schuster. Nominations were called for from the floor. No nominations were made. Given that we needed 5 nominees and had the exact number needed, a motion was made to accept the entire slate with a voice vote. There was no discussion. The 5 nominees were elected unanimously. If needed, Al Doermann will serve as the alternate.

Pastors' Report

Pastor Martha presented the Pastors' Report as written in the Annual Report. She began with highlights of our mutual ministry. We celebrate that God continues to call people to Grace to be part of our fellowship as we recently welcomed 30 new people with their sponsors. Over the last four years, our gains in membership have outweighed our losses. Pastor recognized that the redesign of the upper gathering space provides a place to realize our mission goals by building relationships with God and community. Pastor Martha acknowledged Arthur Pease and Ron Wentz for their many good works to make this space a reality. In addition, Pastor Martha highlighted our outreach ministries including Ardent Folk, Table of Grace and Fair Trade. Grace continues to serve in many ways and in strong ways because "that's who we are."

Pastor Martha drew our attention to a packet that was distributed to the congregation entitled *Gifts Received... Gifts Shared*. Distributed at the meeting and, included in the packet, was some information to help members think about their personal talents and interests and a volunteer form. Pastor Martha acknowledged that the congregation is only as strong as its members. She asked the congregation to think about their gifts and talents and to identify what they would be willing to do and in what ways they could help. On behalf of Pastor Kevin and herself, Pastor Martha expressed their gratitude to all for our partnership in ministry with them.

Treasurer's Report

Donald Ludwig, Council treasurer, directed the congregation's attention to the Financial Report as recorded in the 2011 Annual Report. On behalf of our Pastors and Congregational Council, Don expressed his thanks to everyone for their continued financial support for the ministries of Grace, especially during this difficult financial period. He reported that even though we have not met our giving budget for 2011, we have been able to pay all bills on time without taking any cash out of investments. As of November 30, 2011, our operating budget has a balance of \$88,596. In the first quarter of 2011, \$60,000 was transferred from operations to investments. Due to erratic ups and downs in the stock market, our investments show a loss of \$16,933 as of November 30th. Our expenditures have been below budget by \$79,067. We are grateful to our committee chairs and their members for keeping expenditures within or below their budgeted amounts.

Don Ludwig emphasized that the Finance Committee and Congregational Council continue to keep a close watch on the finances of Grace. We are grateful for all that we have and all that we can do. Our continued giving and special financial gifts that are received are very important as we carry out our mission at Grace. Don Ludwig introduced Don Meyers, the chair of the Finance Committee, to present the 2012 Budget.

Approval of the 2012 Annual Budget

Don Meyers presented the proposed budget as distributed and written in the Annual Report. Don Meyers expressed his sincere appreciation for the work of the finance committee and staff for being excellent stewards of the resources provided to them. Don reviewed the treasurer's report by explaining and highlighting the statement of revenues, expenses and changes over time. Responding to property issues/emergencies continue to be a challenge. Don answered one question regarding the budget before a motion was made to accept the proposed operating and capital budgets of \$1,323,134. for 2012. The motion was approved and the budget, as printed, was adopted.

Charlie Beckhardt, Council president thanked Don Ludwig, Don Meyers and the Finance Committee for a job well done.

New Business

There was no new business.

Adjournment

Before ending the meeting, on behalf of the Pastors and the Council, Charlie thanked the congregation for their support. The congregation, in turn, applauded the Pastors and Council for their leadership. The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 p.m. by praying the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully,
Karen Ganjon, Council Secretary