

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION
COUNCIL OF GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
Room 108, 21 Carroll Street, Westminster, MD 21157 www.gracelc.org
Meeting held on Monday, May 16, 2016 at 7 p.m., the day after Pentecost



Members Present: Council President Ron Fairchild, Rev. Martha Clementson, Rev. Kevin Clementson, Don Meyers, Linwood Van Horn, Rich Chaney, Treasurer Bill Comegna, Brian Sherfey, Bob Lichtfuss, Arthur Pease, Kevin Dayhoff, Patt Patterson Jones, and Kari Ebeling and Carrie Oddis

Members Absent: Jan Mickey, Jo Monka, and Donna Kent.

Opening of Meeting: After Brian Sherfey shared a plateful of homemade cookies, Council President Ron Fairchild opened the meeting promptly at 7:00 p.m.

President Fairchild led us in devotions with a brief discussion and prayer inspired by a poem entitled, "Compassion," by Miller Williams – *"Have compassion for everyone you meet, even if they don't want it. What seems conceit, bad manners, or cynicism is always a sign of things no ears have heard, no eyes have seen. You do not know what wars are going on down there where the spirit meets the bone."*ⁱ

Meeting Agenda and Approval of Minutes: The May 16, 2016 meeting agenda was adopted.

The minutes from the prior meeting on April 18, 2016 were approved as amended to reflect that the date under announcements in the Christian education committee report is to be corrected to read: "Carrie Oddis briefly discussed that the last day of Sunday school is May 15, 2016."

President's Report: President Fairchild led his report with a brief discussion of how much he appreciated the worship service the previous day for Pentecost, celebrated as "Equipping Sunday." Everyone who attended the services received a "Tool Bag," filled with items intended to help us spread the good news of God's love in Jesus and strengthen our participation in the body of Christ. Children received a "Tool Box."

This was followed by a discussion the Grace annual informational meeting held yesterday, Sunday, May 15, 2016 at 10:15 a.m., in the Fellowship Hall. The president thanked all the members of council who took the opportunity to attend the meeting. Approximately 47 members of Grace attended the meeting.

There was a discussion about the presentation of the '2016 Goals Update & Review' and the financial deficit. Some ideas for fundraising and outreach were mentioned and briefly discussed.

President Fairchild also mentioned some plans and procedures in the works for an upcoming Co-Senior Pastors review.

Pastors' Report: The pastors' report began with a discussion of new members who have been recommended for approval: Dana Martin, Amy Bankard and her two

children Jackson Bankard and Lily Bankard, Susan Riley, and her child Emma Riley, John Myers, Ginger Myers, and Kathleen Martin.

It was moved, seconded, and approved to accept the new members. A celebration of confirmation will take place at the all-Grace Trinity Sunday service scheduled for Sunday, May 22, 2016; at which time the new members will be received.

A “noisy offering,” for world hunger will also be collected Trinity Sunday.

Pastor Martha led the council in a discussion of an “Exploring Contemporary Worship Practices,” initiative. The proposal is to have leaders of Grace, including the Director of Contemporary Worship and the people who participate in the Praise Band and Praise Singers, council members, Director of Christian Education and Youth and Family and pastors visit a variety of Lutheran congregations within reasonable driving distance in order to experience contemporary worship practices of other Lutheran congregations.

Services to visit between June 5 and July 31, 2016, include churches, such as: Trinity Lutheran Ch., Camp Hill, PA, Grace Lutheran Ch., Red Lion, PA, Joy Reigns Lutheran Ch., Edgewater, MD, St. Peter’s Lutheran Ch., Ocean City, MD, Calvary Lutheran Ch., Mt. Airy, MD, Zion Lutheran Ch., Middletown, MD, Lord of Life, Fairfax, VA or Lord of Life, Clifton, VA -10:30, Lutheran Ch. of the Redeemer, McLean, VA, and Good Shepherd Lutheran Ch., Gaithersburg, MD.

It was moved, and seconded to accept the proposal for the “Visiting and Learning from other Lutheran congregations with solid Contemporary Worship” initiative: That Erik Piisila be given two Sundays off to visit other congregations as outlined in the proposal. That each pastor be given one Sunday (on different weeks) to participate and that Leanne be given one Sunday to participate.

A discussion followed concerning examples, protocols, and measuring criteria for the proposed visits. We will be getting together at a later date to discuss our findings. The motion passed.

Treasurer’s Report: Treasurer Bill Comegna mentioned the prior discussion about the current operating budget deficit. After a presentation the church finances, our attention was directed to some bookkeeping details on the “Balance Sheet Previous Year Comparison,” in which non-substantial bookkeeping adjustments are in order that do not require restatement.

This led into a continuation of the previous meeting’s findings in which Pastor Martha suggested that we research the historic definition and original-intent of the various ‘restricted’ funds listed in the balance sheet for a future presentation. A discussion followed with a consensus to follow-up this matter at a later date...

A consensus developed which was subsequently made into a motion that council refer to the finance committee to address some bookkeeping issues that have been carried for several years and make a specific recommendations to close-out some entries, adjust and simplify various funds and levy appropriate amounts. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

A motion to approve the treasurer's report was made; seconded, and passed unanimously.

Committee Reports: Carrie Oddis mentioned that the next focus of the Christian education committee is vacation bible school.

Patt Patterson Jones mentioned that the evangelism committee is looking into recruiting greeters.

Arthur Pease shared that the fellowship committee will meet soon about upcoming events and a list of congregation functions and activities will be made available soon after the meeting.

We were reminded that at the previous meeting, gifts for the graduating seminarians were discussed. The worship committee had recommended that we purchase a stole for seminary graduate Beth Clementson, and diaconal minister graduate Don Myers. In the April 18, 2016 meeting a motion was made and approved to provide a council gift for the Grace Seminary graduates.

Prayers of the Church: Prayers of the church were given by – Kevin, Linwood, and Pastor Kevin

Prayer Partners: Prayer partners met for personal reflection and sharing.

New Business: Rich Chaney asked about networking opportunities for our contemporary service.

Announcements: Kevin Dayhoff made a brief mention of attending a recent conference sponsored by the Carroll Citizens for Racial Equality on “Poverty in Carroll County,” held in conjunctions with Carroll County Public Schools. The event took place in Carroll County Board of Education conference room.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned with the Lord's Prayer at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: Kevin E. Dayhoff, substitute council secretary for Donna Kent

Our Mission: Gifted with God's grace, redeemed by God's Son, and filled with the Holy Spirit, we grow in our relationship with God, one another, and community. Through word and sacrament, we gather to worship, learn, and go into the world empowered to serve.

ⁱ Williams is best known as Pres. Bill Clinton's poet at his 1997 second inauguration. He was a professor at Loyola Univ., where he started the New Orleans Review, and later, after moving to the Univ. of Arkansas (where he taught until his retirement in 2003,) he founded and directed the Univ. of Arkansas Press. He died 1Jan2015 at the age of 84. 5Jan2015 LA Times. www.latimes.com/books/jacketcopy/la-et-jc-poet-miller-williams-dies-at-84-20150105-story.html