

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CONGREGATION COUNCIL OF GRACE EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN CHURCH



Grace
Lutheran

Rm 108, 21 Carroll St., Westminster, MD 21157 www.gracelc.org
Meeting held on Monday, November 21, 2016 at 7 p.m.

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, Kari Ebeling Jan Mickey, and Carrie Oddis

Members Absent:

Donna Kent and Jo Monka.

Opening of Meeting:

President Ron Fairchild called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Adoption of Agenda, and Approval of Minutes. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes. The motion carried. A motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda. The motion carried.

Devotions – Arthur Pease discussed the importance of finding a moment to thank God for all our blessings. He shared a message about Thanksgiving - “A Thanksgiving Prayer” by Cindi McMenamin, on Crosswalk.com: “While we tend to look forward to Thanksgiving because it usually means a four-day holiday, getting together with family, and eating more food than we have all year, it is my sincere desire that it be more meaningful this year. What if Thanksgiving were the one day in which we over-emphasized what should be on our hearts every day of the year: a heart of gratitude in everything? What if our Thanksgiving prayer really thanked God for everything that has happened in the past year?” In I Thessalonians 5:18, the Apostle Paul wrote, “In everything give thanks, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.”

Council President’s Report. Ron Fairchild shared a thank you note from Don Myers for the support he received from the church and council in his diaconal ministry studies.

Ron Fairchild mentioned that he is in the process of preparing the council president’s letter for the annual report and asked the council for highlights from the life of the church in 2016 that he should consider including in his report to the congregation.

Rich Chaney mentioned the response to the recent plumbing challenges. It was pointed-out that the diligence of Ron Wentz and Marian Shipley in monitoring the project saved money for Grace Church and kept the disruption to the church’s activities to a minimum.

Pastor Martha mentioned the mission trip to West Baltimore where our congregation helped clean up a piece of property and built a hoop house where the local people can then grow a community garden. We collaborated with Bon Secours Hospital to support

the people in this area of Baltimore. The Mission Trip took place June 22-25, 2016. A discussion followed about the number of mission trips in which the church participated in 2016.

Ron also mentioned the transitions in staff. Changes in staff structure have required folks to take on additional responsibilities and they have done it well. Ronnie Wentz has taken on additional responsibilities as the church sexton. Sheilah Keefer left Grace because her family relocated to Indiana and Marian Shipley began serving the church on September 19, 2016, as the financial and membership associate.

A subsequent discussion followed concerning the findings of the council nominating committee for the December annual congregational meeting church council elections. Carrie Oddis and Donna Kent will be dropping off the council at the end of the current term. Don Meyers, Rich Chaney, Jan Mickey, are up for re-election.

Ginger Myers and Robin Hoff Skrtic have been recruited from the congregation to stand for election in the December meeting to serve as new members of church council.

The nominating committee has recommended an executive council slate for 2017 of Bob Lichtfuss - president, Patt Patterson Jones - vice president, Bill Comegna - treasurer, and Kevin Dayhoff - secretary.

Pastors' Report

Vote to approve non-stipendiary parish nurse position - Pastor Martha mentioned the initiative that was begun in earnest and announced in the June-July Grace Notes to develop the position of a parish nurse and create an active health care ministry at Grace. She recommended that we enter into an agreement with Marilyn Hanchett Brown to serve as non-stipendiary parish nurse during 2017. Pastor Martha mentioned a recent meeting with a number of nurses and medical healthcare providers to discuss and refine the idea of bringing a parish nurse to Grace.

It was noted that Brown has completed a recognized Parish Nurse Certification Program. Pastor Martha called to our attention that the Parish Nurse is not a provider of home healthcare. She will not be doing in-home nursing either in place of family or of a paid home nurse.

A motion was made and seconded for Grace to enter into an agreement with Marilyn Hanchett Brown to serve as non-stipendiary Parish Nurse during 2017.

It was discussed that there is no compensation for this position. However, she will be called non-stipendiary staff so that she is understood as representing the pastoral office and congregation of Grace Lutheran Church.

Kari Ebeling asked to have potential liability clarified. Pastor Kevin replied that the non-stipendiary status is covered by insurance. A discussion followed about the latest developments with LifeBridge - Carroll Hospital's outreach to the faith community.

The council approved the parish nurse motion unanimously

Approval of new members

Pastor Kevin recommended that the council approve the following new members to be accepted into the church on December 4, 2016: Michaelene (Mike) Makoutz and son, Carrick Makoutz, Janet and Richard Nickels, William Niemeyer, and Kathy Lee and Richard Sutphin. A motion was made and seconded. The motion carried.

Ron Fairchild mentioned the Wednesday, November 23, 2016 Thanksgiving Eve worship service with prayer for peace and unity. At that service, the Westminster United Methodist Church and St. Benjamin's Lutheran Church will join Grace Church as we give thanks for God's many blessings.

Treasurer's Report

Bill Comegna presented the treasurer's report. The deficit currently stands at \$105,369.00. He mentioned that November's receipts have been higher than past averages and that perhaps the church will end the year with a deficit of approximately \$80,000.

Bob Lichtfuss asked for clarification about the offering for the Thanksgiving Eve service. Pastor Martha explained that a special offering would be taken for Shepherd's Staff but that contributions made in envelopes will be directed to the appropriate church.

A motion to approve the treasurer's report was made and seconded. The motion carried.

Prayers of the Church – by Kari, Ron, and Pastor Kevin

Kari Ebeling prayed, in part, that we thank God for things that we do not always think to thank God. Ron thanked God for our opportunity to serve. Our thoughts go out to Donna Kent for healing graces. That we welcome the two new members of council. Prayers for traveling mercies for the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday. Pastor Kevin prayed for our leaders, our young leaders, and for renewal for those leaders who have grown weary. Be with us a community of faith. Bless our new members.

Thank You Messages Ron Fairchild brought a stack of blank notes for us to take a moment to write a few thank you notes for various members of the congregation.

New Business

Vote to formalize five weeks of vacation for the pastors with 1-week rollover. Motion was made and seconded. The motion carried.

Discuss and approve 2017 budget for presentation at Annual Meeting

It was discussed that the proposed budget for 2017 has decreased by approximately \$77,000.00. That our budget decrease will almost match the 2016 deficit. The budget will include a 1% pay increase for all employees.

There followed some discussion that after an aggressive capital improvements program for the last five to seven years that tackled many tough projects and deferred maintenance, the capital budget for 2017 has greatly decreased. It is hoped that the capital expenditures for past several years will pay dividends in reduced operating expenses and save Grace Church money in the future.

It was specifically discussed that the work of Linwood Van Horn and Bill Comegna and the finance committee is especially appreciated.

A discussion continued about the improvements in the church budget, the physical plant improvements, and savings provided by restructuring the church's indebted obligations in the last several years

Don Meyers mentioned that we might want to have the current mortgage balance available for the business meeting during the upcoming annual congregational meeting.

Motion made and seconded to accept the proposed 2017 church budget and recommend its approval to the church membership at the upcoming annual congregational meeting. The motion passed.

Announcements

Carrie Oddis mentioned that on Sunday Dec. 11, 2016 the Sunday School classes will conduct a Christmas program.

The new members' brunch will take place on Dec. 4, 2016 at 9 o'clock sponsored by the Evangelism Committee. Council Members and families are invited to attend. At 10 a.m., we will have an All Grace Worship Service – with a reception of the new members.

At 11 a.m. on December 4, 2016, we will conduct the church's Annual Congregational Meeting.

Other special upcoming events include:

Sunday, December 4 at 10:00am – The Luther Choir will provide special music at the All Grace worship service in Grace Hall.

Wednesday, December 7 at 10:30am – Sixth Annual Ted Dix and Friends Christmas Organ Recital in the Sanctuary.

Sunday, December 18 at 11:15am – Christmas Cantata with narrators, vocal choirs and soloists, and instrumentalists at the worship service in the Sanctuary.

Saturday, December 24 at 4:00pm – The Luther Choir will provide special music at the Christmas Eve worship service in Grace Hall.

Saturday, December 24 at 8:00pm and 10:30pm – The Chancel and Agape Handbell Choirs and soloists will provide special music at the Christmas Eve worship services in

the Sanctuary.

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

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

Rev. Martha Clementson, Co-Senior Pastor
Rev. Kevin Clementson, Co-Senior Pastor
Rich Chaney (1st term expires Dec 2016)
Don Meyers (1st term expires Dec 2016)
Patt Patterson Jones (1st term expires Dec 2016)
Carrie Oddis (1st term expires Dec 2016)
Jan Mickey (1st term expires Dec 2016)
Bill Comegna (1st term expires Dec 2017)
Bob Lichtfuss (2nd term expires Dec 2017)

Ron Fairchild (2nd term expires Dec 2017)
Johanna Monka (2nd term expires Dec 2017)
Linwood Van Horn (2nd term expires Dec 2017)
Kevin Dayhoff (2nd term expires Dec 2018)
Donna Kent (2nd term expires Dec 2018)
Brian Sherfey (2nd term expires Dec 2018)
Kari Ebeling (1st term expires Dec 2018)
Arthur Pease (1st term expires Dec 2018)

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.