

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

Rm 108, 21 Carroll St., Westminster, MD 21157

www.gracelc.org

Meeting held on Monday, December 19, 2016 at 7 p.m.



Grace
Lutheran

Members Present

Rev. Martha Clementson, Co-Senior Pastor, Rev. Kevin Clementson, Co-Senior Pastor, Bill Comegna, Bob Lichtfuss, Ron Fairchild, Linwood Van Horn, Kevin Dayhoff, Brian Sherfey, Arthur Pease, Don Meyers, Johanna Monka, Jan Mickey, Robin Hoff Skrtic and Ginger Myers.

Members Absent: Kari Ebeling, Patt Patterson Jones, and Rich Chaney.

Opening of Meeting: President Ron Fairchild called the meeting to order at 7 pm. This is the first meeting for new members Robin Hoff Skrtic and Ginger Myers. Introductions were made around the table.

Devotions: Fairchild shared a lesson on Mary from Luke 1: 26 et sequentia. He recalled that the sermon yesterday, December 18, was on Joseph. For devotions, Fairchild focused more upon Mary. "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.' But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be," Luke 1:28-29. Mary was perplexed and surprised by the news that was going to give birth. "How can this be?" Fairchild asked the council to reflect upon, "What in this Christmas season seems to defy logic?" Discussion was held as to what it is in present times that is so confusing.

Adoption of Agenda, and Approval of Minutes: A motion was made by Linwood Van Horn to approve the minutes for the November 21, 2016 meeting. The motion was seconded by Bill Comegna. The motion carried.

A motion was made to adopt the agenda for this evening's meeting by Linwood Van Horn and seconded by Arthur Pease. The motion carried.

Council President's Report: Fairchild led a brief discussion about having council members serve as greeters for the 4 p.m., 6 p.m., and 8 p.m. Christmas Eve services. Greeters were asked to arrive 20 minutes before the services.

Pastors' Report: Pastor Martha discussed the organization of the monthly pastor's report. It was discussed that the installation of the 2017 Grace church council would take place on January 8th, 2017 9 a.m. and 11:15 a.m. services. A copy of the Carroll Lutheran School annual report was distributed, followed by a brief review.

Pastor Martha led a discussion and review of the roles and responsibilities of Council. A copy of the current Grace Lutheran Church constitution will be emailed to the Council in the near future. Pastor Martha called attention to Chapter 12, beginning on page 20, on the duties and responsibilities of the church council. It was noted that Chapter 21, beginning on page 35, pertains more to the local church.

She also noted the preamble: *“We, baptized members of the Church of Christ, responding in faith to the call of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel, desiring to unite together to preach the Word, administer the sacraments, and carry out God’s mission, do hereby adopt this constitution and solemnly pledge ourselves to be governed by its provisions. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”*

Pastor Martha then led the council in a brief discussion on the roles, duties, and importance of the church committees. She reported that there are two classes of committees specifically enabled in the constitution: ‘Oversight Committees,’ Chapter 12 – Congregational Council; and ‘Congregational Committees,’ Chapter 13.

‘Congregational Life Committees,’ are enabled in Chapter 13.08: *“Other committees of this congregation, including Congregational Life Committees, may be formed, revised, or dissolved from time to time by the Congregation Council by the enactment of continuing resolutions. In consultation with each committee, the Congregation Council shall elect the chair of each committee created under C13.08.”*

Pastor Martha emphasized the importance of the church committees with a discussion of, “Why are we here? Who are we as council members?”

Treasurer's Report

Bill Comegna presented the treasurer’s report. He predicted that our deficit would be between \$70,000 and \$75,000 by the end of the year. He noted that the congregation’s general giving has increased and that the investment account is doing well.

Comegna reported that Cincinnati, our insurance carrier for our fire, liability, and worker’s compensation insurance, had recently notified the church that it intended to raise our 2017 premium for the fire, liability, and worker’s compensation insurance by \$9,975 because of our plumbing incident this past year.

He reported that Dave Bollinger was very helpful in negotiating a favorable premium with another carrier, Selective Insurance. The actual cost for the 2016 policy with Cincinnati was \$22,475.00. Cincinnati proposed to raise our premium to \$32,450.00 in 2017. The church has budgeted \$26,340.00 for 2017.

Selective Insurance quoted us a premium of \$21,750.00 for the 2017 fire, liability, and worker’s compensation insurance policy. This is \$10,700.00 less than Cincinnati’s quote and \$725.00 less than the amount Cincinnati charged us for the 2016 policy.

Comegna made a motion to change insurance carriers for our fire, liability, and worker’s compensation insurance to Selective Insurance. Don Meyers seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Comegna then called the council’s attention to an idea by Caroline Babylon of the church finance committee to reduce the mortgage principle using excess mortgage payments received in 2016 and to discuss re-amortizing our mortgage with New Windsor State Bank. It was the consensus of the council to pursue the discussions and report back.

Prayers of the Church: Arthur Pease, Linwood Van Horn, and Pastor Kevin led us in prayer.

New Business

Elect council officers: Fairchild recommended a slate of officers for the 2017 church council of Bob Lichtfuss, president; Patt Paterson, vice-president; Bill Comegna, treasurer; and Kevin Dayhoff, secretary. A motion was made and seconded to close nominations of the 2017 slate of officers. A motion was made and seconded to approve the slate of officers. The motion carried.

After the gavel was passed to the incoming president of the council, Lichtfuss shared a few acceptance remarks with the council and a brief discussion about the 2017 schedule of devotions and prayers of the church, and that we prayerfully give some consideration of the 2017 church committee assignments.

Announcements: The council briefly discussed the facility needs of Shepherd's Staff.

Pastor Martha shared that the Delaware-Maryland Synod Bishop Bill Gohl would attend services at Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church on Sept. 24, 2017 in a celebration of the 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Protestant Reformation, and the 150th anniversary of Grace.

The Protestant Reformation began on Oct. 31, 1517, in Wittenberg, Saxony, when Martin Luther sent his "Ninety-Five Theses on the Power and Efficacy of Indulgences" to the Archbishop of Mainz. The reformation continued until 1648 when the Treaty of Westphalia ended the Thirty Years War.

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church was chartered September 20-23, 1867.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: Kevin E. Dayhoff, Grace Lutheran Church secretary.

Rev. Martha Clementson, Co-Senior Pastor
Rev. Kevin Clementson, Co-Senior Pastor
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)
Brian Sherfey (2nd term expires Dec 2018)

Kari Ebeling (1st term expires Dec 2018)
Arthur Pease (1st term expires Dec 2018)
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Patt Patterson Jones (2nd term expires Dec 2019)
Jan Mickey 2nd term expires Dec 2019)

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.