



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
<http://gracelc.org/about-us/council/meeting-minutes/>
Meeting held on Monday, February 20, 2017 at 7 p.m.

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, Arthur Pease, Don Meyers, Jan Mickey, Robin Hoff Skrtic, Patt Patterson Jones, Rich Chaney, and Ginger Myers.

Members Absent: Kari Ebeling, Johanna Monka, and Brian Sherfey. Special Guests: Stacie Dowling and Dave Monka

Opening of Meeting: President Bob Lichtfuss called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. We began with a brief vignette from Jan Mickey about getting a card that said, "You are blessed," with a product she had purchased online from Kohl's.

Devotions: Patt Patterson Jones continued with a discussion that Pastor Kevin had begun in church in his Sunday message, about fighting anxieties: How to Fight Anxiety Devotional by John Piper – *Cast] all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. (1 Peter 5:7) Psalm 56:3 says, "When I am afraid, I put my trust in you." Notice: it does not say, "I never struggle with fear." Fear strikes, and the battle begins. So the Bible does not assume that true believers will have no anxieties. Instead the Bible tells us how to fight when they strike. For example, 1 Peter 5:7 says, "[Cast] all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you." It does not say, you will never feel any anxieties. It says, when you have them, cast them on God. When the mud splatters your windshield and you temporarily lose sight of the road and start to swerve in anxiety, turn on your wipers, and squirt your windshield washer. Read more here:* <http://www.desiringgod.org/articles/how-to-fight-anxiety>

Approve Minutes & Adopt Agenda: A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the January 16, 2017 meeting. The motion passed.

A motion was made to adopt the agenda as amended by Council President Bob Lichtfuss. Bob asked that the agenda item about a discussion about our church's anniversary plans later in the year, be moved to the Pastor's Report. The motion was seconded. The motion carried.

The council received an update: Shepherd's Staff Property – by special guests Stacie Dowling and Dave Monka who were present to update the council on the exploration being done by The Shepherd's Staff concerning the possibility of adding on to the current building at 30 Carroll Street. <http://www.shepstaff.org/index.asp>

Any change in the overall size and function of the current building would require action by the City of Westminster regarding a change in zoning, a number of options are being explored. Because Grace owns the property in which Shepherd's Staff is housed, papers would need to be filed by the church.

After some discussion, it was decided that the council will establish a small task force to put together questions that need to be addressed and to talk with Shepherd's Staff representatives as it becomes appropriate.

President's Report: Bob Lichtfuss passed around a sign-up sheet for council participation at the March 8th, 2017 'Lenten Soup Meal.' [6:00 pm - 6:45 pm]

There was a brief discussion of council's role in the procedure of gathering and securing the church offering after each service.

Bob mentioned that he found attending the ongoing "Faith, Sexism, and Justice" church conversation, to be a meaningful learning experience. The last one is scheduled for next week, Feb. 26, 2017. Previous sessions took place on Feb. 12th and the 19th, 2017. This conversation will provide Grace Church the opportunity to provide feedback to the ELCA in the development of a social statement on "Faith, Sexism, and Justice," that will be proposed to our entire ELCA. Social statements help guide the church in discussing and advocating social issues in the greater community.

<http://gracelc.org/2017/02/09/faith-sexism-and-justice/>

Pastors' Report: Pastor Martha led a discussion concerning planning for Grace's 150th Anniversary: Pastor Martha reminded the council 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 150th anniversary of Grace.

It was suggested by the pastors and affirmed by council that representatives from the various committees gather together to plan the schedule for the September 24th events. It was duly noted that Pastor Kevin had a good idea to somehow include Rally Day in the anniversary events. The planning meeting will be held on March 30th, 2017 at 7:00 p.m.

Later in the fall we will also celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. Plans will need to be made for this as well. The Protestant Reformation began on Oct. 31, 1517. <http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/martin-luther-posts-95-theses> Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church was chartered Sept. 20-23, 1867.

It was noted that we are getting ready for the upcoming mid-week services, Ash Wednesday, March 1, 2017, and the season of Lent, (Quadragesima - that will extend until Easter, which this year is on April 16, 2017.) On Wed., March 1, 2017, Grace will have services at 12:00 noon, and 7:00 p. m. Folks attending the services will receive a copy of the 500th anniversary edition of Luther's Small Catechism.

Treasurer's Report. Treasurer Bill Comegna reported that Grace's income exceeded expenses in January and moreover, expenses came in below budget. (It is noted that there were five Sundays in January 2017.)

There was a discussion regarding the implementation of an improved process to apply accumulated surpluses in the contributions that are specifically dedicated to mortgage reduction. At the January meeting the council adopted a motion was brought forward by the church finance committee to maintain \$11,000.00 in a reserve for our mortgage payments – dedicated to debt reduction as specified by the congregation. This is the

equivalent of one mortgage payment, and anything in excess of that would be put towards the church's mortgage principal. The council discussed how much, how often, and when.

The council discussed that gifts of securities such as stocks or other appreciated assets can be a great tax-efficient method of making a gift to Grace. In this context, council discussed a proposed message from council concerning stock donations, to be included in Grace Notes: "Over the past few months, we have received several donations of appreciated stock from members of our congregation. Some of these stock donations have been designated for specific purposes such as debt reduction or building repairs, and others have been applied to general operating expenses..."

It was also discussed that we place an electronic copy of the stock transfer form on our website. (<http://gracelc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/PASSIVE-Schwab-trsf-instructions-1.pdf>)

A motion made, seconded, and passed, that we refer the treasurer's report to the audit committee.

Prayers of the Church – Bob, Jan, Pastor Kevin: Prayers of thankfulness for the talents of the church's leadership, wisdom in national and world affairs, for the leadership of an exciting new generation of younger members, and for the leadership of the City of Westminster, the State of Maryland and our nation.

New Business: The council had a discussion of the results of the audit of the church's membership rolls by Sheila Keefer.

The council was excited about the Grace Lutheran Church "Grace Weekly" – Constant Contact [weekly newsletter](#) initiative by Marian Shipley

Recently the church's checking account was the victim of a forgery. The forgery was caught very quickly by church staff, whose quick actions prevented further losses. The church then opened a new checking account with New Windsor State Bank. It was noted that the bank gave the church excellent customer service throughout the experience.

Announcements: Led by Jan Mickey, the council had an active discussion on the movie, "[Meatballs from Heaven](#)."

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m. with the Lord's Prayer. Respectfully submitted: Kevin E. Dayhoff, Grace Luther Church council secretary.

Rev. Martha Clementson, Co-Senior Pastor
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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)
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