

CONGREGATION MEETING NOTES: Sunday, March 18, 2018

CALL TO ORDER: Meeting was called to order with prayer at approximately 10:45 a.m.

FINANCIAL UPDATE: Attendees received an updated summary snapshot of income, regular operating expenses and significant outstanding invoices (most notable outstanding expense is \$3000 remaining on parking lot light poles). Very conservative Snapshot shows just under break even for all ministries combined – noting that giving has actually been slightly higher and payroll was estimated “high” to ensure no surprises. We continue to prioritize payroll and loan payments above all other obligations. Progress continues to be made since our January push. We can celebrate that we quickly reached our extra giving goal of \$12,000 goal. Weekly congregation giving has increased to meet the needed \$1000 per week average to cover operating expenses – thank you to everyone who so graciously and generously dug deeper to support this ministry. Moving forward, our efforts on refinancing the loan (wrapping in the line-of-credit) should result in significantly decreased monthly loan payments. We are still waiting for the formal appraisal, which was ordered by the bank several weeks ago. We continue to touch base with Mundelein Community Bank/Maria Warden in an effort to keep this process moving. Countryside Fire appears interested in buying some of the land between our buildings, though their process may take some time. On the expense side, Bryan and Ken Pawlak noted that the water heater in the attic appears to have failed. (Due to the type/location/application, we will apply for a formal permit and have contacted a licensed plumber – initial bids gathered after the meeting put the cost at over \$1000.)

SYSTEMS/PROCESSES/EFFICIENCIES: We are working on some of our accounting processes, which largely rely on spread sheets created many years ago. We are looking to move to a cloud-based QuickBooks, which may run as much as \$20 per month but which will provide auto back up, support multiple users/log ins, and work across all platforms (rather than paying for a hard copy QuickBooks to run on one machine in the church office). QuickBooks is used by many businesses and churches, and should interface with our online banking applications and payroll processor. The goal is to make it easier to run reports, create budgets and track finances in real time. Dan Dahlke has offered to do an audit, which hasn't happened in several years. We are also looking at payroll processing expenses, with thought of moving to PayChex as a more economical online processor. On the facilities side, we will contact ComEd for an energy audit to see if we can bring down our energy costs – and continue to switch out of lightbulbs to longer lasting, more efficient LEDs.

SARA STUMME MEETING: On March 11, leaders met with our region contact Rev. Sara Stumme, the Associate to the Bishop for the MCSELCA. The meeting dealt more with business practices and finances, rather than mission and spiritual direction. Pastor Stumme expressed concern that we were not generating enough revenue/giving to be sustainable. She noted that Grace Lutheran Church in Libertyville was looking to call additional pastoral support (part- or full-time) and perhaps merging Christ Lutheran into Grace might be more viable. In a merger, Grace would move our assets under their “umbrella” and we would purchase part-time pastoral and personnel support from them. Pastor Stumme noted that the Synod offers a consulting program where they will cover up to a third of cost. These options will be kept in mind, though it would appear premature given Christ Lutheran's recent progress as well as additional options still in play.

JUSTWORSHIP: We send blessings and well wishes to the justWorship congregation, who will move back to a home-based ministry after their March 25 worship. Pastor Jin Lee addressed the congregation during worship today.

VISIONING TEAM: The Visioning Team has met and Task 2 questions were routed, asking congregation members to communicate with someone outside our group to better understand who the community thinks we are and what we should be doing. June Moore related her interview responses, with her interviewee stating that security, sanctity and privacy were key qualities of a good church. Leaders and members should offer examples of good Christian behavior, and the leaders should be open minded. Pastor has asked all of us to continue with our interviews and also to begin looking at Christ Lutheran's call. **Task 3 questions added to the end of these meeting notes.**

VOLUNTEER NEEDS: Synod Assembly is June 8 & 9 in Tinley Park, with early bird savings (\$175 vs. \$200 per person) available until May 8. Several people have volunteered, and we open the invitation to others who may be interested. Check your calendars and contact the church before the April 15 Council Meeting for consideration, which will be decided at the next Council Meeting (info at <http://www.mtselca.org/assembly/>). Council and PreSchool leadership is an ongoing need, with a Congregation Meeting to vote on council/board positions expected in early fall. Please consider how you might participate and where you feel in interest/call. We also look for people to connect in tasks from reading to teaching to greeting. The greeter role is surprisingly important, both in helping people feel comfortable here as well as helping minting security. We are all greeters, and that engagement (and vigilance) is important on all of our parts.

PASTORAL SCHEDULE: Pastor Amy will be on a reduced schedule this summer, particularly in terms of time at the church during the week. This supports Pastor Amy's needs as well as our traditionally low summer giving season. We will monitor and see how it works for everyone. Regarding Sundays Away, attendees suggested we do some lay leader worships, as well as look to some of our previous supply pastors, including Pastor Fred Rajan and Pastor Joleen Gleasman.

SCHEDULE CHECK: All in place for **Holy Week/Easter**, including set up time at approximately 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, March 31. Congregation encouraged to attend **25th Anniversary of PreSchool Fundraiser, Saturday, May 5** at DoubleTree, Mundelein. Auction donations are needed/appreciated. Invitations out soon. Please support and celebrate!

FALL FEST OUTREACH PROPOSAL: Ken Pawlak presented ideas for opening our doors to the wider community. Given our terrific yard, love of music, and gift of feeding people, he suggested a musical Fall Fest to be held outdoors in late September. Attendees noted we have the big picnic/open house at the end of August – perhaps we could do more at that time with displays about Caring Hands or Scout Partners, or provide more activities for the wider community. The Fall Fest is something that will take planning, support and legwork from the whole congregation. The congregation is encouraged to talk with Ken, share ideas and dream big.

WORSHIP/CONGREGATION LIFE SCHEDULE:

- Lenten Wednesdays – Supper/Outreach Presentation starting at 6p (March 21 is last – *Our response*)
- Palm Sunday – March 25 at 9:30a (*gather in Fellowship Hall with palms*)
- Maundy Thursday – March 29 at 7p (*includes foot washing*)
- Good Friday – March 30 at 7p (*includes candle service*)
- Easter Sunday – April 1, 9:30a worship followed by Brunch (*set up on Saturday after 9:30a*)
- Council Meeting – April 15 after worship
- Confirmation – Each month through May; Confirmation & First Communion celebrations
- PreSchool Anniversary – May 5, Crown Plaza in Mundelein

ADJOURN: *Adjourned at 12:15 p.m. with The Lord's Prayer*

Thank you for your faithful commitment.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Brandl

VISIONING TASK #3

Questions to ask others...

- What are your life concerns and/or what are the main concerns in the community?
- Where can the church help today?
- Do you have an impression of our congregation?

Questions for each of us to consider...

- What is our call as church?
- What do we aspire to?
- What does our faith in Jesus compel us to do?

Please "report back" at our next Visioning meeting, planned for late April (possibly April 29th).