



**FARMINGTON LUTHERAN CHURCH  
CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING  
May 12, 2009**



Present: Senior Pastor Jeff Dorman; Council Members Scott Neurauter (President), Phyllis Bles, Chris Birch, Vicky Cole, Rick Fencl, Tim Grundler, Gary Johnson, Sara Otterness, Diane Randall and Alison Wenck; Treasurer Sandy Christensen.

**CALL TO ORDER**

President Neurauter called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

**LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

Pastor Jeff led a discussion on Relevant Ministry--connecting with people's needs. He asked Council members to "brainstorm" about needs. They listed such things as jobs, less stress, support, friendship, love, honesty, trust, significance, responsibility, connections, compassion, goals, justice, motivate, acceptance and a sense of belonging. When asked what people need help with, Council members listed commitment, addictions or effects of someone else's addictions, losses/grief, anger, patience, priorities, finances, families, relationships, parenting, kids, colleagues, other family members, communication, health issues and depression. Pastor Jeff mentioned building one another up in Christ and helping others through tough times. He said, "It's an exercise beyond having a Sunday worship service; it's how do we think in terms of relevant ministry. It's meeting people at the point of their need."

Pastor Jeff also discussed the fact that FLC is understaffed. He made comparisons between FLC and a church where he had served for several years as an interim pastor. Comparisons included the number of baptized and confirmed members, average attendance, disbursements, total indebtedness and staffing. He said it is difficult to meet needs in the community when the church is understaffed. He said he has been praying about the priesthood of all believers. People with a passion for something could serve as unpaid staff in specific areas or programs. He asked Council members to pray about this.

**AGENDA APPROVAL**

Neurauter asked if there were any additions to the agenda; there were none. Cole made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Bles. Motion carried.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

***Disciple Challenge*** – Neurauter said the scale had been balanced for the matching fund campaign. Giving had nearly reached the matching grant level of \$10,000.

***Evening of Sharing*** – Neurauter said the Council would be providing treats, serve and cleanup following the May 13<sup>th</sup> Evening of Sharing.

***Town Hall for Hope*** – Fifty to 60 people had attended the recent event.

***Thank-you reception*** – A reception was being planned for May 31<sup>st</sup> to recognize Pastor Michelle for her interim service. A gift would be provided, along with food and flowers.

***Strategic Planning*** – Neurauter said Beth Lewis, president of Augsburg Fortress, would present a workshop on strategic planning at the June 9<sup>th</sup> Council meeting for Council members, ministry team members and others who might be interested.

**Communications** – Neurauter reminded the Council of the importance of communicating with people when something would affect them.

## **DEVOTIONS**

Rick Fencil led devotions, based on being lukewarm, neither hot nor cold for Christ. .

## **COMMUNION SIGNUP**

Neurauter circulated a signup sheet for communion servers.

## **APPROVALS**

**Secretary's Report** – Otterness made a motion to approve the minutes for the April 14<sup>th</sup> regular Council meeting, seconded by Blee. Motion carried.

**Treasurer's Report** – Christensen had provided the Treasurer's Report via e-mail. The report said the cash balance on April 30<sup>th</sup> was \$103,727.74, which compared to \$96,788.41 at the end of March and \$91,788.41 at the start of the year. The report showed an increase in cash of \$7,470.46 during the month of April and an overall increase in cash of \$5,548.65 for the year. Components of the cash balances included \$24,820.10 in the General Fund and \$20,595.60 in the Building Fund. The remaining cash balance of \$58,312.04 was in dedicated funds, according to the report.

The Statement of Activities showed that revenues in April totaled \$69,618.05 versus expenses of \$62,4008.06 for a net positive balance of \$7,209.99. General Fund offerings totaled \$48,618.21. Also, \$17,723.13 was contributed to the Building Fund. April expenses included quarterly payments for insurance and City services.

Year-to-date activities showed a positive balance of \$5,548.65. Therefore, the treasurer's report said, FLC made up the deficit in April that had occurred year-to-date. Looking forward, Christensen said, May giving would include the "matching" gift program, which would increase the Building Fund by approximately \$20,000 above the norm. She had made the first half assessment payment in the week of the Council meeting.

Christensen said it would be interesting "to see how things come around for the summer. After Easter, it looked as if the regular giving was down to the previous average, about \$6,000 per week. "We're going to have to live on the Easter and Lenten gifts over the summer and hope we get a bump in the fall," she said. Sufficient funds remained in the Building Fund due to the generosity of the matching fund and a generous gift from the family of Steve Swenson.

Otterness asked if an increase had occurred in the number of members who use the Simply Giving program. Christensen said dollar amounts appear to have increased but not the number of people who are involved. Randall asked if there was any way to tell if people were regularly giving the encouraged 1% increase or "giving on the front end." Christensen said it appeared that most of the increases in giving came from one-time larger gifts that will not occur on a monthly basis.

Christensen mentioned several things that were helpful to the budget, such as selling the church van to eliminate insurance payments, resolving several property issues and ending

the contract for HVAC service. She said that monies were coming in for Vacation Bible School registrations, several people had donated office supplies and postage costs had been lower.

Johnson made a motion to approve the Treasurer's report, seconded by Birch. Motion carried.

Randall said she understood that the matching fund would be used for assessments only, not for the General Fund. The Council agreed and asked Beissel to clarify this.

## **REPORTS**

**Senior Pastor** --Pastor Jeff reviewed his written report with the Council. He said he had recently attended a networking luncheon with local pastors and leaders from the schools, City Council, Community Action, Trinity Care Center and Community Education, along with the Police Chief. Greg Olsen, FLC's new intern, had also attended. Pastor Jeff said the event had provided a wonderful opportunity to meet community leaders and he expected further dialog with individuals.

He reviewed the top priorities for the next one to three years as revealed in surveys of church leaders and staff. These priorities include adult ministries, empowering leadership and developing solid financial resources. Additional priorities were establishing specific, concrete missional objectives, growing a dynamic high school ministry and fostering need-oriented evangelism.

He also discussed the general expectations of the St. Paul Area Synod for internship sites, including the roles of the congregation, supervisor (Pastor Jeff), a lay committee and financial expectations. He asked the Council to suggest members for the lay committee, which will serve as a special resource to the intern, observe the intern's work, engage in regular discussions with the intern, and provide feedback and evaluation. Volunteers for the committee will be sought from the congregation.

Pastor Jeff said that Olsen and his wife, Michelle, would live in a parsonage in Dennison. Olsen had offered to handle a Saturday night service or two over the summer so that Pastor Jeff could have time off.

**Interim Associate Pastor** – Pastor Michelle had provided a written report outlining her work with the four Stephen's Ministers, obtaining communion kids for them, visiting FLC members in nursing homes and hospitals and calling on several who are shut ins. She also taught several confirmation sessions, would teach the May baptismal preparation class, preach twice on Sundays in May and serve as pastor on Memorial Day for a time of remembrance at the FLC cemetery. She also would represent FLC as a voting delegate at the Synod Assembly May 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>.

## **MINISTRY TEAM REPORTS**

Neurauter said he had received reports via e-mail from most of the ministry teams. Excerpts from those reports follow:

**Adult Spiritual Growth** – The team had hosted Town Hall for Hope on April 23<sup>rd</sup> and promoted Financial Peace University. A Prayers Around the Cross event was scheduled for 7:30 p.m. June 1<sup>st</sup> with Grundler as leader. A Take It to the Limit six-week Bible study had begun with another scheduled to begin May 20<sup>th</sup>. Nooma was continuing on Sunday mornings and a women’s Bible study led by Christine Sachs would begin soon.

**Children’s Ministries** – The report said the year-end Wednesday and Sunday school classes would be held May 13<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>, featuring games and ice cream. Registration for summer classes and 2009-10 was discussed. A fee of \$12 per child with a maximum of \$24 per family would be charged to cover the cost of background checks for involved adults (\$10 per person for approximately 75 people). Forty-five 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> graders had signed up to attend the June 22<sup>nd</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> Bay Lake Camp. Vacation Bible School was set for July 27<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup>. A family camp-out would be held August 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup>.

**Fellowship & Service** – The team had discussed the June 11<sup>th</sup> salad luncheon and plans for the reception on Pastor Michelle’s last day. The Fall Craft and Bake sale was set for the first Saturday in November.

**Global Missions** – Discussion had included donations, including \$1,010 to the St. Paul Area Synod for support of FLC’s companion congregation in Idete, Tanzania; \$2,100 for 84 gift cards of \$25 each (half from Cub and half from EconoFoods) that will be donated to the seven schools in Farmington for families in need; and \$300 as a summer activity fund for children who need financial assistance for community pool passes.

**Outreach and Growth** – The group had made plans to have a float in the Sunday, June 28<sup>th</sup>, Dew Days parade. Bay Lake Camp attendees will walk alongside to hand out FLC information and candy.

**Property** – The team had welcomed two new members. A thank you was extended to those who helped with the May 2<sup>nd</sup> spring cleanup. Repairs had been made in the men’s bathroom and floodlights were to be replaced in the sanctuary.

**Worship and Music** – The team planned to invite all ministry teams to attend a fall event-planning meeting. Children’s Ministry had agreed with the team’s decision to replace the previous Rally Sunday with a fall event. Sunday school would begin Sept. 13<sup>th</sup> with a special kickoff. A variety of ideas had been explored for the fall event and a timeline developed for planning and promotion. A special event in March had been discussed.

**Youth Ministries** – The team had learned that the youth’s concession stand at the FLC garage sale had earned \$272. A total of 27 youth had attended an April 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> confirmation retreat. The plant sale pickup was scheduled for May 9<sup>th</sup>. Twenty-two youth had signed up to attend the Senior Recognition event May 20<sup>th</sup>. Gift blankets would be given to graduating seniors and cake would be served between services. Mystery summer trip ideas were discussed. Ten tickets had been ordered for the Higher Ground Music Festival August 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>. It was decided that families of confirmation students would be asked to write one check for a suggested amount of \$80 rather than paying for program costs at four different times during the year. FLC youth have been invited to assist with two events at River of Life Church in North Minneapolis. The events are a “Raise the

Roof' concert/benefit to raise money for a new church roof and Vacation Bible School. The youth events calendar for 2009-2010 was determined.

**OLD BUSINESS –**

**Financials** – Neurauter reminded the Council that attendance drops during the summer and so does giving.

**Synod Convention** – Only three delegates had been obtained for the Synod convention, with four more needed.

**Employee Handbook** – The updated handbook would be sent to the Council via e-mail.

**NEW BUSINESS –**

**Approve Confirmation Students** – Pastor Jeff distributed a listing of the confirmands recommended by Arlan Olson, Director of Youth Ministries. Johnson made a motion to approve the list of confirmands, based on the pastor's recommendation, seconded by Fencil. Motion carried.

Otterness made a motion that the new confirmands receive giving envelopes, seconded by Grundler. Discussion centered on the need to instruct confirmands regarding giving as a way of life. Wenck offered to speak with the directors of Youth Ministry and Children's Ministry regarding adding instruction to the confirmation curriculum. Motion failed.

**Wedding Coordinator** – Pastor Jeff said Anna Johnson had been hired as Wedding Coordinator. She will function as an independent contractor and be paid a fee by the couple.

**Fall Planning** – Randall reported on the Worship and Music Committee's plans for a fall event to replace Rally Sunday. She invited the ministry teams to attend the committee's next meeting on Tuesday, May 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Covenant of Conduct** – Pastor Jeff said that a Covenant of Conduct had been discussed at the recent all-ministries retreat. Such a covenant would fit into the values of the congregation and offer a guide for healthy living together. The Council consensus was to look at what other churches have done, obtain more information and place the item on a future agenda.

**Stewardship Ministry Team Structure** – Pastor Jeff said that a change to the Stewardship team structure had been discussed before he arrived nearly a year ago. Three sub-teams with separate responsibilities were suggested. Following discussion, Beissel made a motion to split the Stewardship Ministry Team into three responsibility areas – financial, generosity and volunteer, with the leader of the generosity team representing all teams in reporting to the Council. Johnson made the second. Motion carried.

**Council Potluck** – Neurauter proposed a 6 p.m. potluck dinner for the June 9<sup>th</sup> Council meeting, prior to the strategic planning workshop.

Neurauter announced that Matt Piller had resigned from the Council, effective immediately. Discussion centered on filling the vice president position. Beissel made a motion to table the issue to allow time to review the FLC Constitution, seconded by Bles. Motion carried.

Council members signed a letter of thanks to Sue Swenson for her generous gift in memory of Steve Swenson.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m. on a motion by Blee, seconded by Cole. Motion carried.

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lea Guenther,  
Recording Secretary

**MEETING REMINDERS**

Executive Board: Tuesday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2009

Council Meeting: Tuesday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2009