



FARMINGTON LUTHERAN CHURCH CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING



January 12, 2010

Present: Senior Interim Pastor Phil Walen and Treasurer Sandy Christensen; Council Members Scott Neurauter (President), Chris Birch, Phyllis Blee, Vicky Cole, Rick Fencil, Tim Grundler, Gary Johnson, Sara Otterness (Vice President), Diane Randall, Alison Wenck. Absent: Council Member Kent Porter,

CALL TO ORDER

The Council gathered at 6:30 p.m. for Bible study provided by Pastor Phil. President Neurauter called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Neurauter asked for additions or changes to the agenda. Johnson asked for a discussion under New Business regarding Building Fund special gifts. Birch made a motion to approve the amended agenda, seconded by Blee. Motion carried. Neurauter mentioned the upcoming Annual Meeting to be discussed later in the Council meeting.

COMMUNION SIGNUP

The communion sign up sheet was circulated, seeking volunteers for February worship services.

CHURCH GROUNDS MAINTENANCE PROPOSAL (*Moved up from New Business*)

Birch introduced Dave Marsh, a member of the Property Committee since last spring. Marsh had furnished equipment for last fall's cleanup day and assists with other property duties. He proposed seeking bids for maintenance of FLC's six acres of grounds. His company, CGT, prefers annual contracts and could handle spring and fall cleanup, pruning, mowing, fertilization and chemical applications to keep the grass weed free. Due to budgetary concerns, he said, the Council might wish to determine what could be done by volunteers and what could be done under contract. He said his company could do year-round grounds maintenance work for approximately \$3,000 per month.

Christensen said that FLC's 2010 budget includes only \$12,000 for maintenance so FLC could not afford. \$3,000 per month. The budget listed \$21,000 last year for maintenance. Johnson said, "We're coming from an environment where basically all is volunteered. We have not had to budget for this in the past. People had donated the services. It's new to us. We are also struggling with the economy. It has put a pinch on us." He asked Marsh for recommendations to lower the maintenance costs. Marsh said that some areas, such as on the west side of the building, could be left unmowed for a more natural look. Bushes could be removed and grass in the islands could be replaced by mulch and plants that would be salt-tolerant and maintenance free, such as day lilies.

Randall said, "I think what you're giving us is a reality check, how much we have, how much time and energy it takes." She referred to the Property Team and the time they spend on maintenance.

CALENDAR REVIEW

The calendar was circulated for review.

REPORTS

Interim Senior Pastor

Pastor Phil submitted a written report for Council members to review. He specifically wanted to discuss information from the Youth Team about changing the grade level for confirmation classes to sixth through eighth grades, rather than the current seventh through ninth grades. Pre-confirmation classes would be offered for sixth graders, who would meet separately from the older students. Confirmation would be moved to Reformation Sunday so that ninth graders would have two months of classes in the fall. The Council reviewed a draft letter regarding the change that would be sent to parents of confirmation students. The Council concurred with the proposal.

Pastor Phil said a strong, gifted candidate for the Music Ministries position had withdrawn for personal reasons. Four more applications had been received and their resumes were being reviewed. He said a plan was in place to cover music needs for the next two months.

He said he would be out of the office for approximately 10 days. During his absence, special speakers would be present for worship services and Pastors Jamie Thompson and Deb Stehlin would be on call for any special events.

Pastor Phil said CPR and AED training was planned for staff. He asked if FLC could allocate \$40 for each person; Christensen said yes. He said he was grateful for the successful Worship Coordinator program.

Treasurer's Report

Christensen presented the Treasurer's Report. She said year-end numbers might change a bit but she thought "FLC would still be up \$35,000 to \$36,000. We had \$80,000 come in in December," she said, offsetting the deficit in Building Fund. She said the Stewardship Team had recommended that it would be fortuitous to "lump together" the General Fund and Building Fund for reporting purposes. Following discussion the Council concluded that the two funds should remain separate.

The Treasurer said that FLC's cash balance is up by about \$46,000; dedicated funds also increased. December giving had been "quite a bit higher than the previous year." She attributed part of the increase to the Gifts that Give campaign. Despite the increase in December giving, Pastor Phil said he thought the weather had kept attendance down at Christmas Eve services.

Pastor Phil noted that the reserve number going into the new year was \$76,000 compared to a beginning balance of \$39,900 a year ago. Christensen credited the increased reserve to a positive inflow and said the reserve would help carry FLC through the summer months when giving is lower.

In the written report, the Statement of Activities showed that revenues in December totaled \$81,204.51 versus expenses of \$60,580.54 for a net increase of \$20,623.97. The report noted that General Fund offerings totaled \$51,956.16. Also, \$25,809 was contributed to the Building Fund. Year-to-date activities showed a positive balance of \$36,112.42. The report pointed out that the surplus was in the General Fund and giving was still behind for the Building Fund.

MINISTRY TEAM REPORTS

Reports had been e-mailed by several teams. Several others had not met in December.

Children's Education – The report indicated that 15 youth and six adults had attended the December KiC movie event. A KiC pool party was planned for January 22nd. A second session of the Love and Logic Class would be offered following a successful first session. The Christmas program “Miracle at Midnight” had been offered December 12th and 13th during worship services, with the children doing a “fantastic job,” according to the report. An Epiphany Extravaganza was planned January 10th from 4 to 7 p.m. Several team members planned to attend a Recharge Conference on January 9th. Funds collected by teachers and families from the Sunday School program would be used to plant a tree as a memorial to Shirley Iverson, Deb Buhmann and Lexi Iverson. Planting would take place the first Sunday in May. Randall suggested working with Pam Schoolmeester, a gardening volunteer, to select a planting spot.

Global Missions – This group made plans for the January 31st Mission Sunday. Also discussed was Mission Jamaica and collecting funds for student needs prior to the trip. Sponsorship promotion for Lutangilo Secondary School continues.

Worship & Music – At its recent meeting, the team had discussed options for communion, thanked the many who helped with the children's Christmas program and discussed the scheduling of ushers for Christmas services. Approximately \$3,000 worth of SCRIP cards was sold on December 13th. Besides being available on Sundays, SCRIP would be available at one Saturday service each month. The new Worship Coordinator Team volunteers had begun their duties the previous Sunday. Each Sunday two people from the team will be responsible for checking that everything and everyone are in place for worship. A representative from the new team would be invited to join the Worship and Music Team. Activities for 2009 were briefly reviewed. The largest goal carried out was the Holy Hoot-n-Anny held last fall.

APPROVAL OF REPORTS

Secretary's Report – Blees made a motion to approve the December Council meeting minutes, seconded by Cole. Randall asked when and how the unofficial discussion held following adjournment of the December Council meeting was being addressed. Neurauter said the Executive Board had discussed the matter and decided that 3% salary increases would go to all full-time staff members along with a 2% benefit increase. He said the topic would be included in global approval of the 2010 budget. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report – Johnson made a motion to approve the December report, seconded by Fencil. Motion carried.

Ministry Team Reports – Cole made a motion to approve the reports, seconded by Johnson. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Non-member List – FLC's membership had been reviewed and letters were sent to those who had not been active in recent years. Neurauter said those who did not respond would be moved to inactive status although they could be reinstated to membership at any time if requested. He asked for a motion to move those on the list to inactive status at the end of 2009. Wenck made a motion to that effect, seconded by Otterness. Motion carried.

Annual Meeting – Neurauter asked for volunteers to help with sign up, count votes and carry microphones to those who wished to comment. Johnson, Fencil, Wenck and Randall volunteered. Cole

asked Council members to bring bars or cookies to go with the soup and bread that would be served. The meeting would follow the light lunch.

Council Retreat –Pastor Phil provided an information sheet regarding the Toolkit for Congregational Leaders event scheduled February 27th. Neurauter said he hoped all the Council members would be able to attend.

Audit – Neurauter said he had overlooked the appointment of an Audit Committee to review the Treasurer’s records. He said the committee should include at least four people approved by the Council. People were needed the following Saturday morning at 9 a.m. Dennis Watson, Christensen and Mark Pearson from the Stewardship Committee would be present. Council members suggested several names. Johnson made a motion to approve Watson and any of those on the suggested list who agreed to serve when contacted. Wenck made the second. Motion carried.

Building Fund – Johnson said that it had come to his attention that the standard operating procedure for memorial gifts given specifically to the Building Fund was that the gifts were used to help pay the mortgage, not principal on the loan, unless otherwise designated. The Council discussed development of a form on which memorial donors could select an option. Wenck said she would ask the Endowment Committee for input.

OLD BUSINESS

Nominating Committee – The Nominating Committee had proposed a list of candidates for offices and positions. The names of candidates would be brought to the Annual Meeting for a vote. Blees made a motion to accept the list of candidates, seconded by Cole The list included:

2010 Church Council positions – Kent Porter, one-year term filling a vacancy on the Stewardship Team; Connie Honrud, three-year term, Fellowship & Service; Chris Patsche, three-year term, Global Missions; Kris Akin, three-year term, Strategic Planning; and Julia Michels, three-year term, Worship and Music.

2010 Nominating Committee – Lisa Carey, Teri Cordes and Pat Wrucke, one-year terms. Two more people would be needed for that committee.

2010 Endowment Committee – Dennis Watson and Lorraine Thompson, corrected three-year terms starting in 2009; and Linda Landwehr and Connie Dahl, three-year terms.

2010 Church officers – Scott Neurauter, one-year term as President; Sara Otterness, one-year term as Vice President.

Randall said the 2009 Nominating Committee had found it difficult to find candidates to fill various team representations rather than seeking only Council representatives. She suggested that the Council discuss this practice. According to the FLC Constitution, Pastor Phil said, the President and Vice President should be selected from the 12 Council members. Each Council member is to relate to a team and report to the Council but does not necessarily chair the team.

Neurauter said the FLC Bylaws had been reviewed with several changes proposed. Calling a special congregational meeting to discuss the changes and vote on them would be discussed at the February

Council meeting. Randall also said that questions might be raised at the Annual Meeting about someone serving as President two years in a row. Motion carried.

Olan Mills Photos – Neurauter said that Olan Mills had added one more day to take photos for the church directory.

Budget – Neurauter said the final draft of the 2010 budget had been sent to the Council via e-mail. He asked if Council members agreed with the final changes. He said the areas of change were increasing the line item for Building Fund revenue to match expenses, adjusting wage increases of 3% for all full-time staff and placing \$21,000 of remaining funds into a line item for an Associate Pastor, date to be determined.

The Council discussed obtaining a part-time Associate Pastor to avoid “burning out” Pastor Phil. Giving would have to be sustained for a few months, with an additional \$700 per week needed for a 20-hour per week position and \$1,000 for a 30-hour per week position.

Birch made a motion to approve the proposed 2010 final budget, seconded by Wenck. Motion carried.

Christensen suggested that the Property Team be asked to develop a recommendation regarding grounds maintenance. In the past, mowing of grounds had been done voluntarily by a member and his employees. Volunteers have mowed islands and done some trimming and weeding.

Birch said he had received a complaint regarding plowing of the FLC parking lot on Christmas Eve. Only part of the parking lot had been completed. He said the contractor is paid per plowing time and per amount of snowfall; volunteers clear the sidewalks.

Neurauter distributed a rough draft of the Annual Meeting agenda.

ADJOURNMENT & LORD’S PRAYER

Johnson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:33 p.m., seconded by Birch. Motion carried.

The meeting closed with the Lord’s Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Lea Guenther,
Recording Secretary

Meeting Reminders:

Executive Board: Tuesday, February 2, 2010, at 7 p.m.

Council: Tuesday, February 9, 2010, at 7 p.m.

