

St. Paul's Lutheran Church
Congregation Meeting Minutes
June 11, 2023

Present: Zac and Linda Huffman, Cyndie Dixon, Erin Mitchell, Bernice Prescott, Marj and Jerry Kane, Chad and Andrea Muntz, Dorothy Clark, Kate and Ron Hausner, Jen and Chad Houck, Sandi and Bill Corwin, Jane Feltsentreger, Madonna Howard, Judy Tribby, Diane Segelhorst, Patrice and Del Jenstrom, Linda Craig

The meeting opened with prayer by Zac Huffman

The minutes of December 2022 were approved.

President's Report – Zac Huffman

Treasurer's Report (May, 2023)

- General comments
- May budget status: **99.43% of goal**
- Offerings YTD: \$75,266.19; under goal: **(\$427.36)**
- Expenses YTD: \$42,211.58; under budget **\$33,481.97**
- Overall YTD: all income minus expenses **\$33,054.61**
- 2023 budget: \$193,764.25; \$3,726.24 / week needed to meet budget

Current Asset Review: \$776,176.40 (May, 2023)

- 8 LCEF accounts
- Seeking ways to maximize ROI with minimal risk
- Financial advisors assisting
 - ~Doug Meyer, Wendy Quattrochi, American Portfolios:
assisting with analysis and recommendations
 - ~Laddering for all options
 - ~Current short term options provide higher yields
 - ~Longer term options provide hedge against falling interest rates

Pastor Teklu & Tsion Update

- Pastor Teklu passed February 4, 2023
- Tsion has sold Crofton home, purchased a new home in Apex, NC
- Family moving to Apex, NC June 21, 2023
- Farewell luncheon Sunday, June 18, 2023

Tsion plans on repaying the balance of \$40,000.00 from the \$50,000.00 housing allowance provided when they purchased their new Crofton home. She will send a check after settlement on their new home in Apex, N.C. This will enable us to provide a similar housing allowance to a new pastor, when called.

2023 Supply Pastor Recap

- Pr. Brian Rosenkoetter: 1/15, 2/5, 2/26, 3/19, 4/9, 4/30, 5/21, 6/11
- Pr. Jon Diefenthaler: 1/8, 2/12, 3/5, 3/26, 4/2, 4/23, 5/7, 5/14, 6/4, 6/18, 6/25
- Pr. Yared Halche: 1/29, 3/12, 5/28
- Pr. Juan Mendez: 1/22
- Pr. Bill Harmon: 2/19
- Pr. Robert Prescott: 4/6
- Circuit Visitor & Pastoral emergency contact :
 - ~ Pr. Matt Hilpert, Galilee Lutheran, Pasadena, MD
 - ~ 808-347-2876 (M), 410-255-8236 (O)
 - ~ m.hilpert@glcpasadena.org

2023 Average Monthly 9:30 AM Attendance

- January: 79 total (40 in person, 39 live stream)
- February: 107 total (57 in person, 50 live stream)
- March: 68 total (49 in person, 36 live stream)
- 1st Qtr: 85 total (49 in person, 36 live stream)**

- April: 70 total (52 in person, 18 live stream)
- May: 76 total (49 in person, 27 live stream)

Ministry Team Reports:

Education – Cyndie Dixon

From December until March, the Adult Forum consisted of watching and discussing various videos provided by Pastor Wackett. They including the Focus on the Family produced lessons by Ray Van der Laan entitled “Walking with God in the Desert”. That was followed by a study facilitated by Mike Toepper, entitled, God’s Yes and God’s No”, which is based on Walther’s works. The latest study delved into the Book of Luke. This was ended because it was the end of the year. Pastor Mentz will start another study in the fall.

Vacation Bible School will be held at St. Paul’s from July 23 – 27, 2023. Dollar Dinners will be held at 5:30, followed by the program from 6:00 – 8:00pm. The theme is “Knights of the North Castle”. Madonna Howard, Bernice Prescott and Cyndie Dixon are organizing the program. We still need volunteers to make it a success. There is a great effort being out into advertising and publicizing in the community. At this time, we are looking for Guides and a Snack leader.

Sunday School – Erin Mitchell

- The Dig In curriculum was great and I will to continue to use it in the fall and finish our trek through the Bible. We finished the year in Psalms.

- Sunday school averaged 3-5 students, between the ages 4-10 this spring. One student will be aging out to the youth group in the fall.
- I'm still looking at options to include some sort of toddler lesson time next year.
- I will continue to teach if the time can remain at 8:30 a.m. My family is unable to commit to a post-service time as the kids frequently have other activities that we need to get to.
- There are a few willing substitutes on deck for next year, so I think we will be in good shape to keep the ship upright.
- The end of the year celebration ice cream and yard game party was well attended by the Sunday school and youth families, as well as some other church members! Approx. 25 total attended, which was great for being held on a holiday weekend.
- Goal check in:
 - Short term goal: get families to keep bringing their kids – especially drawing in existing members who haven't come to Sunday school, connect the kids into the congregation more
 - Making progress – had one long time member come to class in April!
 - Watching the kids interact with adults outside of their family on Sunday mornings and at events suggests that the kids know the adults and the adults have gotten to know the children.
 - Long term goal: grow the numbers enough to have a toddler/preschool class and an elementary class.
 - Looking into ways to do this for fall
- Q3-4 Goals:
 - Short term: Offer a toddler class.
 - Long term: Grow the numbers and get those children to keep coming back

- A note to remember for the upcoming VBS: As established under Pastor Teklu's guidance, ALL adult volunteers (18+) who wish to work with children at St. Paul's must meet certain criteria prior to beginning to work with them. These are: be a member for at least 6 months, complete Ministry Safe training, pass criminal background check.

Youth – Chad and Andrea Muntz – Baby steps, connections, 2-3 members, Youth funds – switched rooms, chairs, cozy, continuing Fruits of the Spirit/ How their faith connects with real world events. Chronological Bible, over 2 years, may need volunteers when Muntz are not there, Their youth group, combine science and religion/service outreach – within and without church building/March Madness/concert/improptu games/Toby Mac concert/

Technology – Diane Segelhorst

Many thanks to the members of the Tech team who help every single week to present the services in church and stream them online. Members are Diane Segelhorst, Jen

Houck, Stephen Wise, Patrick Dugan, Erin and Avery Mitchell, Steve Orozco, and Zac Huffman.

Ongoing tasks:

- Create weekly announcements (Erin Mitchell)
- Mentor Susan in creating weekly Planning Center services and Proclaim slides for services (Diane Segelhorst)
- Report music selections to appropriate licensing authorities (Erin)
- Schedule weekly and special live streams (Diane)
- Schedule volunteers for tech booth (Jen Houck)
- Update outdoor sign (Diane)

Projects completed or in progress as of June 11, 2023:

- Eliminated unused cables and installed shorter cables to improve functionality of tech booth.
- Improved video system by replacing multiple combiners and splitters with central video hub
- Provided combined camera and slide feed to the nursery TV that mimics the stream but in real time
- Replaced Fellowship Hall projector
- Enabled dual belt pack (Pastors) mics
- Enabled playing/projecting of CDs/DVDs, primarily to support VBS
- Ongoing maintenance of existing equipment

Projects planned for 3rd/4th quarters 2023:

- Provide sound to nursery
- Replace ancient streaming computer with new computer. The one previously purchased but never installed is not suitable for this purpose. Dan Mitchell assisting in this effort.
- Procure and install amplifier for FH sound system

Worship – Jane Felsentreger

The team welcomed David and Amanda Sturgeon to the team.

Bernice Prescott, Altar Guild chair, reported that new communion trays have been ordered and will be blessed before being used. The original trays were donated by Jackie Abend. A mysterious crack appeared in the trays making it necessary for replacement.

John Segelhorst and Dan Mitchell are working on purchasing a new computer. The team continues to work on sound for the nursery.

The team discussed changing the worship service for the months of June, July, and August. The change involved using the beginning of the once used Contemporary

Service and then using the long communion prayer from the liturgical service. The team could not make a decision. They wanted to know the source of the Confession and Absolution and the Creed. Jane and Diane accepted the task to research their origins.

The team did decide to hold fellowship every other Sunday beginning June 11th, the date of the Congregational Meeting. There will be a sign-up sheet for volunteers – 2 to bring snacks, 1 to make coffee, and 1 to clean-up. Jen Houck, Fellowship Team Chair, has agreed to help.

Other Announcements:

The team was congratulated on a successful Lenten season without an interim pastor.

Members of the team congratulated David and Amanda on their selections of music for the services. Together Jane, David, and Amanda make these decisions.

Bernice Prescott will be working with Susan with the announcements in Sunday bulletins.

Bernice will also order carnations for Mother's Day.

Cyndie Dixon volunteered to find something for the Dad's in June.

Fellowship – Jen Houck

Team Members – Jen, Sadie, Carol, Penny

1st & 2nd Quarter events we supported:

- December—Advent-palooza: supplied cupcakes and juice/water
- February—Pastor Teklu's Funeral reception. Coordinated with the family's caterer and helped to feed over 200 mourners with both American and Ethiopian food.
- March—Supplied luncheon of wraps, chips, fruit, and drinks for Grief counseling session with Pastor Dave Betzner.
- April— Brought back a full Easter brunch with the help of the entire congregation.
- June—High School Senior recognition (thank you to Penny and Bernice) cupcakes, cookies, cheese & fruit, and juice/water
- Starting Summer Fellowship (today, June 11); Asking for 2-4 volunteers every other Sunday for light refreshments. Sign up in narthex.
- June 17 Will be hosting a going away luncheon for Tsion, Jonah & Selah. Will be asking for congregation to bring sides, desserts. We will be providing fried chicken and drinks.
- June 19 — Fundraiser for BIRC (Bowie Interfaith Recreation Council) Scholarship Golf Outing; Max is a scholarship recipient

3rd & 4th Quarter

Upcoming Events:

- Have rejoined BIRC. Recreation/fellowship through sports. Will be sending information periodically (Softball and volleyball leagues; bowling and golf fundraisers)

- July — Support reception for new vacancy pastor (when known)
- August — Folk Scholarship reception
- December — Advent by Candlelight & Advent-palooza
- Help support other teams for VBS, Trunk or Treat, etc.

Goals:

1. encourage and enable other teams/work groups of parishioners to create their own fellowship/small group gatherings.
2. build a larger core group of Fellowship Team members and begin to try to create groups within each event (set-up/decorating, serving, clean-up, etc.) in order to make sure the work is more evenly distributed.

Website – Patrice Jenstrom

I am looking to reestablish a diverse and creative team to freshen and improve St. Paul's website over the next 6 months or so.

No technical experience is required - only a desire to trade new ideas and contribute to making our website more attractive and effective while enjoying some fellowship in the process.

Interested? Say YES and contact Patrice Jenstrom (website admin) at 443-254-6765 (text or call) or email at web@stpaulscrofton.com.

Property – Zac Huffman for John Segelhorst

The Property Team consists of: John Segelhorst – Chair, Diane Segelhorst, Zac Huffman, Patrick Dugan, Del Jenstrom, Patrice Jenstrom, Craig Silbert and Steven Wise

There were no major projects during July - December, 2022. There are no major projects targeted through June 2023. The Property Team continues to address minor day to day issues as they occur.

Jan - May 2023 Completed:

- Altar and Sacristy hand rails install
- All flower beds weeded and mulched
- Electric sign panel circuit board replaced
- Patrice and Dell Jenstrom have resumed grounds maintenance duties

To Do:

- Install Narthex bottled water dispenser system
- Rewire baseboard heating plant

Congregational Profile Update – Diane

Team members: Diane Segelhorst, Donna Howard, Judy Tribby, Dan and Erin Mitchell, Chad and Andrea Muntz, Bernice Prescott, Kate Hausner, Penny Courtney, Amanda and David Sturgeon, Zac Huffman

Purpose: Write a Congregational Profile to assist the SED LCMS in preparing a call list for St. Paul's.

Process:

We wrote a Congregational Profile in 2019 in preparation for the call to Pastor Teklu Ketema. However, much of this is outdated. We will begin by eliminating things which are no longer relevant, such as our turmoil with our previous Pastor, references to an active Praise Band, and contemporary worship service. The congregation has made significant progress since 2019, including a Strategic Vision process, a Strategic Plan that we have been executing, and changes in response to the pandemic. We obviously will address Pastor Teklu's presence and influence, and our grief and sense of loss over his passing. All of these issues will be wrapped into the questions in the Congregational Profile form. Our last Congregational Profile was a 16 page document, so there is much work to be done to update it.

Two additional sections of the Congregational Profile are Financial Information, which will be prepared by Dana and Zac, and Demographic information. We have already received a Demographic report on our surrounding community and need to compare that to our current membership. Diane and Zac will work on that section.

Timeline: The team meets on June 12 for our first meeting to review the existing profile, broadly discuss deletions, changes, and additions, and make writing assignments. We hope to have a completed document to the congregation for review by early August. The congregation will have two weeks to provide comments, and the team will then discuss and incorporate those comments where possible. The intent is to have the completed Congregational Profile to the District President by early September.

Outreach – Bernice

The Outreach Team exists to serve various needs of our members and persons outside the church, with the intent of "reaching out" and showing the love of Christ for all people. During the first half of 2023, the Outreach Team has continued all prior activities that serve this purpose, including:

Monthly food collections for the Crofton Christian Caring Council food pantry Please remember that, while the pandemic has ended, hunger has not; contributing to the food pantry allows us to assist hungry people in our community; each month's requested items are announced in the newsletter. If each of us gives just a little, we can make a huge impact.

Preparing and delivering monthly care bags to our homebound members – Care bags typically include the church newsletter, Portals of Prayer, publications from Concordia, brain activity

books, holiday cards, craft items from our Sunday School kids, a quilted item from Dorothy, and 5 or 6 sweet and savory snack items. Very importantly, delivering the bags provides an opportunity for a wonderful visit with the recipient. Each month we have prepared and delivered from 10 to 14 bags. If you would like to provide items for the care bags or make deliveries, please contact an Outreach team member.

Participating in Winter Relief -- This activity provides shelter, meals and living essentials to homeless individuals in our immediate area. Local churches together are responsible for one week in February. St. Paul's contributions this year were one hot dinner, one hot breakfast and one bagged lunch, each for 25 persons. Additionally, we gathered and provided one large box of toiletries and three huge bags of new socks and underwear; these were distributed to the individuals as needed. The Quilters provided enough full-size quilts for each person to keep one if desired.

Love Boxes for College Kids – In February, we gathered gift items from the congregation and sent a box to each college student from St. Paul's, to show our love and care for these young people. The boxes included desk supplies, gift cards and, of course, loads of study snacks! Everyone from St. Paul's is invited to participate in this fun activity, and the kids really appreciate it.

Support to our Pastoral Family – The congregation joined together beautifully to support and assist Pastor Teklu's family throughout this period, by driving Jonah and Selah home from school and to and from their sports activities, escorting Pastor to various medical appointments, providing housecleaning services to reduce that burden for the family, sponsoring a relaxing spa day for Tsion, and sending cards, notes and messages of encouragement.

For the second half of 2023, the Outreach Team will continue the ongoing activities of food collection and care bags and will begin planning for next year's Winter Relief. Additionally, we will undertake the following activities:

School Supplies Drive – In coordination with Vacation Bible School, the congregation will gather supplies for the upcoming school year for students in need.

Thanksgiving Baskets – St. Paul's always provides Thanksgiving food baskets for individuals and families in the community, generally through the Lutheran Mission Society, whose staff can identify those with the greatest needs. Members will be able to select the items they will provide from a posted list.

Christmas Outreach -- Likewise we provide food, clothing, toys and gift cards for the LMS Miracle of Christmas program, which spreads joy to those in need and reminds them of Christ's love. Members select the gifts they wish to purchase.

The Outreach Team is always open to ideas of new or improved means by which we can live our faith and share it in our community, and always welcomes new participation in outreach and

new members to our team. Please contact any team member with questions or suggestions; our current team members are Sandi Corwin, Penny Courtney, Judy Tribby and Bernice Prescott.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia L. Dixon

BoD Secretary