

Creator Lutheran Church  
Council Meeting  
February 10, 2014

Present: Rexanne Graham, Ruth Perkins, Dave Anderson, Marcie Reid, Tom Barr, Katrina Minton Davis, Sara Mahnke, Pastor Elaine Swigart, Keith Marshall

Absent: Dean Ramberg

Meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

Devotions/Prayer: Katrina shared a devotion called "Everyday Miracles" on Acts 5 and opened the meeting with prayer.

Transition Team Update: Pastor Elaine, Judi Richardson and Mike Rutkosky will meet to discuss further potential transition items to work on with the congregation, church leadership, staff, etc.

Minutes: Tom made a motion to accept the minutes of January council meeting as written. Marcie seconded. Motion carried.

Pastor's Report:

This has been a wonderful month in the church. It seems every day is filled with God's interruptions to my plans with chance encounters with members, neighbors, and ministry partners.

Although we have several people with "flu" and colds and two joint replacement surgeries, we have had only one serious illness among our people. We have had several family members of members who have been ill so our prayer list is long. But, calling has been mostly for fun and just to spend time with our people. Several of our older members are struggling with end of life issues. I have met with several inactive members and am still trying to reach out to more of them.

I am still working with Stephen Ministers and find it hard that people who could use one of our wonderful ministers are still reluctant to do so. Somehow we need to get over the "I'm not sick enough for a minister" mentality.

We baptized two children and have another family who want their baby baptized. They will be part of our new member class in March. As we are having a lot of repeat visitors it looks like Adult Education will have a good class to work with.

I continue to go to the Interim Ministry group meeting once a month at the Synod Office. It is good to relate with and share with other ministers who are doing the same work that I am.

Keith and I are attending the lectionary study group at Messiah Lutheran Church. Keith presented last week and I will present Tuesday of this week. This has been a great way to begin studying before preaching - so many great minds with deep exploration of the scriptures.

I met with most of the ministry teams this month. There is so much going on. How exciting it is to watch people engaged in and excited about ministry. Meeting with the foundation team was great; planning for the spring is under full swing with a class and new ways of approaching our members about what the foundation is and its importance in the life of the church. Judi Richardson, Donald

Eismann and I will attend a lunch later this week celebrating our connection with Thrivent (now no longer "Thrivent for Lutherans," but "Thrivent for Christians."

As worship together is central to us as Lutheran, we are working on trying something new in March. Craig, Keith and I meet together most weeks to plan and prepare worship. Part of what we do together is to dream of what might be. The worship team has approved our stepping out a bit on the fifth Wednesday of March with a truly contemporary service, adding some pieces, re-writing some others and (remembering the order of Lutheran worship) will have some fun with how we do worship. Hopefully it will help people understand what is core to worship and what can be different and remain essentially Lutheran. We will be involving the Youth, drama, lots of musicians, possibly a team approach to the sermon and more...stay tuned.

I continue to meet with staff every other week. I hope you know what a faithful, loving, dedicated staff we have. Our discussions during the devotions are often amazingly deep and faith revealing. Of course, I interact with staff as they are here on a daily basis.

Keith and I continue to enjoy the Thursday morning Bible Study. We are now working through First Peter and will probably tackle The Revelation of John in the spring.

Companions on the Journey has been successful in integrating new members and surprisingly has offered a venue for seekers to come and meet more of us as they prepare to join our new member class in March. Our final "Companions" dinner will be on February 26.

Keith and I will wrap up our work with the Confirmation Class (at least formally teaching them) this month. WE have enjoyed teaching them and learning from them as they grow in faith and understanding of what it means to be Christian, Lutheran and Creator children.

As I began, I close. This has been a great month at Creator.

#### Intern Report:

January and the beginning of February have gone well. Below are a few highlights:

- Spent one week at Luther Seminary to complete my final course. It was both rewarding and somber to be there for a final time.
- Confirmation has began again. We have only a few weeks remaining before Lent. I look forward to evaluating the year with the confirmation guides, Terri and Pastor Elaine.
- It has been good getting back on the RCL for preaching. I enjoyed preaching a series in Advent. However, the RCL is what I will using in the future and it is good training for me to preach from it.
- I attended the Bishop's Convocation held at the Seabeck Conference Center. The topic of conversation on the question of Same-Sex Marriage. It was led by the bishop of the Oregon synod. This was my first time attending the event and meeting many of the pastor's in the synod for the first time.
- I will be gone on February 23rd for an anniversary trip.
- My Coffee Talk class, "Why Lutheran?", has been responded to well. People have been engaged with the material. In light of the positive response to the course, I am considering offering further study on the Augsburg Confession.
- Continuing to make plans for my Intern project in May. More information and publication will come out as we get closer to Easter.

- At the end of February I will be at the midway point of my Internship. This Thursday evening the Intern Committee will share their Mid-Term evaluation of me.

Treasurer's Report: January was a low giving month and there were some additional expenses around the frozen water pipes. General giving trend over past two years shows a slow decline. Council discussed ways to counteract that trend. Stewardship meets on Wednesday and will discuss ideas from Council and send action items back to Elaine and if needed council.

#### Ministry Team Reports:

**Church in Society** - The team met in February and donated funds to the following organizations: Bonney Lake/Prairie Ridge Food Bank and Backpack Program, Sumner Food Bank and Backpack Program, Empowering Lives - Purdy Prison Program, and Habitat for Humanity. Team reserved a table at the Auburn Youth Resources annual fund raising breakfast on February 14, 2014. There are eight places at the table and it appears that most of them will be filled by Creator members.

**Stewardship** - Next meeting February 12 at 6:30 pm.

**Fellowship** - Extend invitation to Holocaust Museum at PLU. Working on Women's Fashion Show and Luncheon

**Youth & Family** - Will be meeting on February 20

**Property** -. Has been busy working on a lot of small projects around the church. Need to repaint the yellow strip for the fire lane out front once the weather is better.

**Small Groups** - Women's group has 16 women studying the book of John. No new small group leader has been found yet. Men's small group retreat was a success, the worshiped at Celebration in Anacortes.

**Worship Team** - No report

**Adult Education** - Will need to discuss changes that may need to happen in next 3-4 weeks. Keith was canceled due to snow for last session. Foundation team is requesting a Sunday to present on Foundation Giving. A couple of sessions are planned on "What Youth Want", followed by a series with Kathy Norris and then Dan Peterson

**Invitation and Outreach** - No report tonight, other than positive response to cards sent to visitors

**Finance** - Not able to pull all year end reports and forms needed yet; year end not completed until January 31, 2014. Nancy Marquiss, Jeanne Anderson are on the audit team which is led by Janice Pendergast. Will begin in a couple of weeks when team members are available. The team is looking for one more person. We are not in compliance with recent update to Constitution. Elaine will investigate and discuss with staff and develop a plan.

**Stephen Ministry** - Stephen Ministry is still doing continuing education on 1st and 3rd Thursday each month. Starting more outreach with bulletin flyers and note writing campaign to people on the visitation list. The purpose is to get all Stephen Ministers matched with a care receiver.

**Advocacy Ministry** - We were not able to attend Advocacy Day. Will be attending an offering of letters workshop hosted by Bread for the World, March 1 in Tacoma.

**Foundation Fund Ministry** - Report from

Call Committee:

Old Business:

Pastor Elaine reviewed the form developed for Staff Partnerships Collaborative Review and goal setting and will be working with Personnel Team to do staff reviews.

Puget Sound Energy Audit - Were not able to contact this month.

Independent Contract Agreement Web; Council reviewed the contract agreement for Brian Hinkley that was approved by the congregation at the annual meeting. There was on typing correction noted.

New Business:

Constitution Update: The Southwest Synod has updated the Model Constitution for Congregations and are encouraging congregations to update their constitutions to reflect the new language. Tom will review proposed changes for content. Ruth will work on red line version for April Meeting for Council Review. Changes would be voted on at June Congregation meeting.

Annual Celebration Meeting: February 23rd Meeting. Tom will MC the event. Elaine will work on powerpoint for Tom to use. Fellowship will work on a sign-up for food. The event will start after second service at 12:15 p.m.

Congregation Report: A copy of the Congregational Report for the year ending 12.31.2013 was left in Rexanne's mail slot. Elaine will check to make sure the report was sent electronically and that this copy is for council records only.

Narrative Budget Discussion: Some information was shared about putting together a narrative budget for next year. More discussion is needed but the decision needs to be made well before it is time to put the budget together as the information is formatted very differently.

Prayer concerns of the group were shared and meeting closed with prayer.

The meeting was closed with prayer at 8:30 p.m.

In His Service,

Ruth Perkins

Council Secretary

Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting: March 10, 2014

Snacks/Devotions - Sara Mahnke