



**St. Paul Lutheran Church**  
**Congregational Council Meeting**  
*Meeting held in person or virtually*  
**Tuesday, October 20, 2020 – 6:30 pm**

**COUNCIL MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE**

X	Sarah Friesen-Carper, Pastor	X	Dale Brainard, Member at Large
X	Tyler Kroschel, President	X	Chris Clark, Member at Large
X	Andy Stoyke, Vice President	X	Jaime Fraley, Member at Large
X	Julie Coozenoy, Secretary	X	Arlie Post, Member at Large
	Chris Timmons, Treasurer	X	Karen Rozeske, Member at Large

Meeting called to order at 6:49 pm by Tyler Kroschel and opened with devotions by Pastor Sarah and God Sightings.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

- A motion was made by Chris Clark to approve the consent agenda, Pastor’s, Committee’s & Financial Report. Seconded by Arlie Post. Unanimously approved.

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

As of September 30, 2020	ACTUAL
General Fund Offering	\$ 10,180.00
Total Revenue	* \$ 26,832.50
Total Expenses (before mortgage)	\$ 9,029.59
Net Income (after mortgage payment)	-\$ 5,328.00
Mortgage Balance	\$375,139.25
Edward Jones Balance	\$ 39,992.58
*This includes \$14,000 from All God’s Children Preschool funds.	

**FINANCE REPORT:** The finance team discussed the following items:

- Wyoming First State Bank is starting to take applications for forgiveness on PPP loans.
- The Chisago County Grant application was submitted and we are waiting on a reply.
- I'll be getting in touch with the Loaves and Fishes volunteers later this week to get a meeting setup. I'm aiming for next week, so we can get started before November.

**INTERIM PASTOR’S REPORT: Letter to Council, Synod Assembly Report, and Follow-Up Report**

Dear Council,

As I hope you can see in my resignation letter, I am very proud of the work you have done in the last 15 months. As I was adding up the time we had together before the Covid 19 pandemic closed much of our “usual” functioning, I come up with about 8 months. In that time, you did an astonishing amount of work toward the health and healing of the congregation based on the recommendations of the Consultant, Susan Nienaber. Reading *Congregational Fitness* was a good start to creating a shared vocabulary and way of thinking about conflict and health. But I think the ways in which the congregation came together during the six funerals of September and October 2019 did as much if not more. Suddenly, there was no choice but to set aside differences and work together for a common goal – hospitality.

I am equally pleased with the completed Loving Behaviors list and the process the congregation undertook to work on it in December and January 2019 and 2020. I pray that those promises will carry you through the months and years ahead of you and that you will continue to grow in keeping that covenant with one another.

Similarly, I believe that other steps of regularly praying the Breakthrough Prayer, engaging in a healing service at Thanksgiving 2019, hosting fellowship events, and a very positive annual meeting, all were signs of healthful restoration.

In the 7 months since the pandemic forced us to close the building for regular use, we have not been able to accomplish everything which we might have liked. But still, there are signs of continued growth. Continuing to worship throughout the pandemic, the Covid 19 Response Team's work, finding ways to be together even though we are apart, pivoting to support faith formation and Ministry Team meetings, and continuing to stay connected in myriad ways are all signs of that hard work. I am particularly pleased with the folks who have taken on new leadership in the congregation. Additionally, you have handled the conversation around moving inside the building for worship with care and health. This has a potential to be a divisive issue, particularly given the divisive nature of politics in the U.S. right now and the ways which different sides seem to view pandemic prevention. How you continue this decision-making process and the communication around it will be very important for the cohesion of the congregation.

I know that you are aware of the long road ahead of you. There is still work to be done on the recommendations from Susan which would be helpful in the continued health process. There are still some in the congregation who are deeply wounded. There are still a few who have not engaged in the healing process. Some of that you as Council and as individuals cannot help. Some of it, you can. I trust that the Holy Spirit will guide you as you continue to lift up new leaders who will help to break the unhealthy cycles of the past.

One of the strange parts of interim ministry is that one never gets to see how things "work out." Rather than lament that, though, I give thanks to have been witness to the work of the Holy Spirit in this place and among you.

Peace to you! God is with you!

Pastor Sarah Friesen-Carper

### **Synod Assembly Report from Pastor Sarah October 2020**

The Saint Paul Area Synod Assembly was September 25 and 26. I attended along with the Voting Members from SPLC, Kathy Mills and Karen Rozeske. The assembly was conducted live via zoom this year. The synod staff handled that with grace and ease. We had a few technical difficulties on our end, but in the end, we managed to make it work.

I encourage you to check out the highlights at the synod website: <https://www.spas-elca.org/events/synod-assembly/>.

Here are a few as I see them:

- Bishop Patricia Lull was re-elected for a second 6-year term as Synod Bishop on the first ballot.
- Several Synod Council and other Committee Members were elected.
- We celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup>, 40<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of the ordination of women in the ELCA, the first Black Woman in the ELCA, and the ordination of LGBTQ women in the ELCA respectively.
- Three resolutions were passed:
  - Resolution 2020-1: Love Your Neighbor – A resolution Opposing Gun Violence
  - Resolution 2020-2: A Resolution to Stand with Immigrants, Refugees and Asylum Seekers
  - Resolution 2020-3: A Resolution Encouraging and Facilitating the Use of Anti-Racism Resources for Congregations.

- There was a hymn writing competition to go with this assembly's theme, "With All Our Heart." There were 43 entries which were judged by people outside of the synod. Three hymns were highlighted as winners. Those hymns are available to congregations in the synod to sing. There are recordings and music available on the Synod Website. Personally, I was pleased that one of the winners was my brother, Paul Damico Carper.

Overall, I was amazed at how smoothly the assembly went, especially given that we could not meet in person. I certainly missed being with people, the comradery, the singing and worship. But I am proud of how the synod staff worked and how the synod voting members and visitors cooperated. And the technology was amazing.

### **Final Report:**

Note: As this is my final report to you, it includes less about the last month than about total wrap up.

- I. Administration
  - a. Weekly staff meetings with Office Admin and Wednesday afternoons in the building. Melissa and Claudia have both indicated they would feel much more comfortable in the office if air filters were in place.
  - b. I will turn over my keys, computer and any relevant documentation on Wednesday, October 28<sup>th</sup> after Confirmation. All personnel files, for which I am responsible, will be updated by that time.
  - c. The Parish records are in process of being updated by Julie Cozennoy and Melissa. Julie and I will sign a document to that effect.
  - d. The church has been using my Zoom account for meetings at no cost since March. Chris Timmons is researching means of on-line gathering for November and following.
  - e. Final Refresh and ReNEWS article will be this Friday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>. Final Facebook video announcements and Devotion will be October 28<sup>th</sup>.
- II. Education
  - a. Weekday Bible Study has moved into the Fellowship Hall with a zoom alternative. I do not know what the plan is for November and following.
  - b. Confirmation is moving into the Fellowship Hall for the last two classes in October. The Adult Guides, Exec Team, and Pastor Christoff will decide what to do after that. 11 kids are signed up for Confirmation class – it's a great group and I'm sad to say goodbye to them!
  - c. 5 session Bible study on Isaiah "In the Days to Come..." ended September 30<sup>th</sup>. Held via zoom at 7:30pm on Wednesdays, there were 8 participants.
- III. Worship
  - a. Worship has been outdoors – even in the cold! The Baptisms on October 18<sup>th</sup> were a real highlight!
  - b. Theme for the Season After Pentecost, is The Book of Acts: The Holy Spirit Moves!
  - c. 5 worship services; 5 sermons; 5 children's sermons

- IV. Pastoral Care
  - a. Grateful to the Fellowship Team for their planning and events in the summer and September!
  - b. Pastoral care and congregational care
    - i. October 25<sup>th</sup> will be the last Sunday of Zoom Fellowship Hour
    - ii. Pastoral contacts: 26
- V. Consultant's recommendations
  - a. As I wrote in my letter above, we engaged with many of the recommendations from Susan and there are still more which would be helpful to the congregation. I have indicated to the President and Vice President that I especially think the following would be important:
    - i. Healing/Restorative Opportunities for the whole congregation, especially in learning different ways of talking and listening in large groups. Susan suggested training Circle Facilitators with which the Synod Office can assist.
    - ii. Establishing proper channels for concerns and feedback. We've set up a couple of ways for people to ask questions and give feedback over the last 7 months, specifically the Ask The Council/Executive Committee/Pastor form on the website and several surveys to gather information. These have been useful, but a larger plan and process would be a great idea moving forward.
    - iii. Clarifying Roles for Clergy, Staff, and Lay Leadership
    - iv. Clarifying Identity and Purpose of the Congregation – this will happen best with the new pastor. I remember Susan sharing with us the need for a razor sharp sense of purpose around which everyone can rally.
    - v. Governing Structure/By-Laws – work on this was side tracked mostly because of the restrictions of the pandemic. It isn't the world's most fun work, but it is a good idea to make sure everything is in-line with the ELCA Model Constitution for Congregations and then to be clear about any changes or surprises along the way.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Call Committee**

- The Call Committee has begun meeting and will start looking at candidates in the coming weeks. At this time, if you know of a pastor that you feel could be a great fit for St. Paul Lutheran, please contact a member of the Call Committee. All nominations will be kept in confidence. The deadline for nominations is Saturday, October 31, 2020.

### **Sunday School**

- Held outdoor Sunday School lessons on 9/27 and 10/11. Lessons are continuing the focus of/through the disciples. The former was the story of Mary and Martha and the latter was the blessing of the children.
- Attendance for 10/11 was 7 kids across 4 families. Though the group was small, the kids had fun discussing the "difficulties" of being a kid, reading the story interactively, and playing a "blessings" relay race.
- Neither Chris nor Katie have been able to put the finishing touches in the Sunday school room, yet, due to schedules. We are planning for at least one more outdoor class on 10/25 and will reassess based on weather.

**OLD BUSINESS**

- **PPP Loan:** Wyoming First State Bank is starting to take applications for forgiveness on the loans. Paperwork will be submitted next week.
- **Chisago County Grant:** Application was submitted and we are waiting on a reply.
- **All God's Children Preschool:** Discussion was held around the possibility of opening the preschool in the fall of 2021. It was decided we would table discussion around reopening until 2021.
- **Worship Services for November:** We will continue to hold outdoor worship services (weather conditions and temperature permitting). The tech team will determine whether it is warm enough to hold outdoor worship. If outdoor worship is cancelled, it will then be streamed live and an email will go out notifying the congregation there will be no drive-in worship service.
- **Ministry Site Profile:** The MSP was accepted by the Synod office and is now available for all to view.
- **Call Committee:** The call committee has begun the process and will start holding meetings at the church to find our settled call pastor.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- **Pastor Sarah's Resignation:** Pastor Sarah submitted her letter of resignation effective October 28, 2020
  - Dale Brainard made a motion to accept Pastor Sarah's letter of resignation. Chris Clark seconded. Unanimously approved.
  - The Council would like to thank Pastor Sarah for her dedication and hard work in helping to heal and move our congregation forward. We would like to give her an extra thanks for her willingness to hold outdoor worship for the past five months, under a variety of weather conditions!
- **Loaves & Fishes:** The Loaves & Fishes team will be meeting to work on the fall pledge campaign for the coming year.
- **Communications Team:** The Communications Team will be formed and will work towards increasing our communications – both internally and externally.

The meeting ended with a bible verse and prayer from Jaime Fraley. This prayer is fitting for today's weather and us moving forward:

*The LORD will keep you from all harm— He will watch over your life; the LORD will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore. Psalm 121:7-8*

Dear God,

Please protect us on the journey we are about to take. Support us with Your strength and grace when we are weary. Help us to be mindful of Your presence and love in times of stress and guide us to make our time together meaningful and memorable. Amen.

**A motion was made by Julie Cozennoy to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Tyler Kroschel. Unanimously approved.**

**Date & Time: Tuesday, November 17, 2020 at 6:30 pm**

**Devotions: Karen Rozeske**

*Julie Cozennoy*

Julie Cozennoy

St. Paul Lutheran Council Secretary

**Summary of motions made at October Church Council Meeting**

- A motion was made by Chris Clark to approve the consent agenda, Pastor's, Committee's & Financial Report. Seconded by Arlie Post. Unanimously approved.
- Dale Brainard made a motion to accept Pastor Sarah's letter of resignation. Chris Clark seconded. Unanimously approved.
- A motion was made by Julie Cozennoy to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Tyler Kroschel. Unanimously approved.

**Summary of motions made via Email between the September and October Council Meeting**

- On September 15, 2020 Dale Brainard made a motion to approve the September Church Council Minutes via email. Seconded by Chris Timmons. Unanimously approved.
- On October 6, 2020 Tyler Kroschel made a motion to approve the Ministry Site Profile via email. Seconded by Karen Rozeske. Unanimously approved.