

**FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH  
PLANNING COUNCIL MEETING**

**May 27, 2010**

Members attending:

President	Bob Niedringhaus
Vice President	Becky Hoversten-Mellem
Treasurer	Jim Zastrow
Secretary	
Councilors-at-Large	Char Juntunen, Tom Whittaker
Past President	Mary Streufert
Pastors	Pastor Larson, Pastor Judd
Boards	
Caring Ministries	
Church in Society	Sheryl VanScoy
Education	George Rennan
Evangelism	Dave Walter
Global Ministries	Elaine Elness
Operations	Tim Schandel
Stewardship	
Worship, Art, Music	Erna Peterson
Youth	Bob Pearson

**Handouts:**

- Agenda
- Associate Pastor's Report
- FLC Task Force on ELCA assembly bound conscience decision-May 2010
- Financial Report for April 2010

**Call to Order & Devotions**

The meeting was called to order shortly after 7 p.m. Sheryl VanScoy led devotions with a poem entitled "Dandelions" from Father Anthony DeMello's book Song of the Bird and a reading from Henry Nouwen's book Bread for the Journey entitled "Meeting Christ in the Church."

**Pastor's Report**

Pastor Larson encouraged all to read Pastor Judd's written report. She thanked all from First Lutheran for their support and encouragement in general, and specifically following Ben's death. She advised that the family has now made it through all the major public events that featured Ben, with the recent graduation of his class at Wartburg being the final event. She said that there were many mentions of Ben; 3 of the 4 members of the quartet which Ben formed and led sang; people from Haiti attended; Renee accepted his diploma. A very moving experience.

Pastor Larson recommended that council consider providing ELW hymnals for FLC children for their use in learning about Lutheran music, worship practices, and liturgy. She recommended that the children have their names engraved on the hymnals, but leave them in church until they finish Sunday School. Bob asked about plans for hiring a Youth Director and a Music Director. Pastor Larson reminded those present that she is Chief of Staff, and in that capacity is responsible for hiring and firing of staff. She said she plans to invite a small number of people to help hire the 2 directors. A notice is out on the Music Director; the Youth Director's job description is not yet ready, so that may take a bit longer. Tom asked what role she sees for BOY and WAM. She said they will probably interview the finalists. He advised that the BOY Continuing Resolution states that the board is responsible for managing the hiring of youth program staff, and he suggested that if we are not going to abide by

that resolution, we should change it. Pastor Larson agreed. Tom asked Pastor Larson if there is a role for youth in the Youth Director hiring process; there may be a youth in the small group.

### **Finance Report**

Jim handed out copies of the April 2010 Income and Expense report. He pointed out that:

- Income through April is essentially on plan and actually ahead of 2008 and 2009 when the one-time conversion of dormant accounts (done in 2009) is deleted.
- Expenses are about \$11,000 better than plan.
- Income less expenses is \$10,999 ahead of plan.

Jim noted he is not knowledgeable about the details of TFR finances. Pastor Larson said his only responsibility with TFR is line-of-credit issues.

- Little Treasures Mary reminded the group that LT hopes to move into a newly finished space at Lakeshore when their lease from FLC expires at the end of August, assuming they can raise the money required to finish the space by the end of May. She said that while LT and Ecumen have raised quite a bit of money, \$50,000 is still needed. LT asked to extend their stay slightly beyond August 31 if work is under way but not finished. EC agreed to keep the original deadline; Mary advised them to start looking at other options.
- Churchwide Assembly Bound Conscience Task Force Mary distributed a paper describing an FLC task force that will explore ways to help members understand the full meaning of the ELCA Assembly decision regarding bound conscience (Resolution #3 regarding individual churches calling gay and lesbian clergy in committed relationships). Claryce Swensen will lead the task force, and Laura Holter, Don Streufert, Michele Asp, Lois Janson, Ginger Backus, and Pastor Judd have offered to serve. The group needs two more men; Claryce is trying to resolve. Question was asked what "bound conscience" means in this context. Pastor Larson explained it is carefully formed opinion based on the study of scripture and Lutheran theology; and reminded us that we are being urged to respect the bound conscience of others, not demand that they respect ours. Sheryl said the narrow scope of the study shocked the BCIS, which had been advocating a broader discussion on prejudice in general, patience, and justice, which in their minds made it a Jesus issue.
- Gamblers Anonymous Mary gave a brief update on the GA issue: A member of BCIS asked permission to hold GA meetings at 7:30 p.m., Fridays at FLC (the most tempting time for gambling addicts). EC agreed security considerations preclude such a meeting and recommended use of the annex basement. However, LSS is not enthused and is concerned about security and liability. There are 15 GA chapters meeting in the area, with the latest start at 7 p.m. Sheryl said the BCIS member has decided to drop the matter. The discussion raised a general issue of security. Tim advised that the main entrance on Superior Street and the canopy door on London Road are open while construction is ongoing. He said that Operations plans to draft a security plan by August or September which will consider keeping one door open and staffed by a receptionist, with a second door accessible via a security camera through receptionist; motion sensors on the third floor; and/or one or more cipher locked doors for after hours access. Pastor Larson urged them to err on the side of openness and access. Tom suggested the key is that people feel secure everywhere in the church. He offered to write an article for the Builder.
- Youth and Family Activity Report Pastor Judd read excerpts from an email he received that expressed concerns about the extended period of time without a Youth Director. Specifically:

- \* The youth feel forgotten
- \* It is time to get a youth Director on board
- \* Why will it take until the end to May to finish a job description?
- \* Afraid we will lose gifted volunteers because of the delay

Pastor Larson said she stopped the process of replacing the youth directors last August on the advice of Catherine Anderson, who suggested that transition is a good time to evaluate FLC's youth ministry. Pastor Judd read the youth ministry portion of his written report, and feels that in the end FLC will have a better youth ministry because of the process. The goal is passing on the faith to youth, and that adult involvement is critical to doing

so. Tom said it normally takes 6-9 months to hire a youth director once we start soliciting candidates, and asked if the process could speed up.

- Sunday School Update George reported changes for Sunday School. Preliminary plans are to have a workshop rotation Sunday school called "Faith Quest" using the Augsburg Spark Bible, and curriculum. It will feature large group meetings for 20 minutes, followed by small group meetings for 35 minutes. Sunday school teachers will be called "Shepherds;" they have not yet been selected. The Fish Force role will change, but there will be added tasks. They have 11 and would like more. Sheryl suggested that we consider adding 7th/8<sup>th</sup> graders to Fish Force because they have nothing to do Sunday morning. This plan is the product of two small group meetings led by Sarah Gunderson, who is enthused about the change. Most of the current Sunday School teachers have not been told. Discussion ensued. Sounds good, but we have to sell it to the congregation. Please give us a 1 page summary we can use to advocate the program. George will forward an e-mail from Sarah.

### **New Business**

Planning Council Retreat Bob suggested council have a retreat, possibly at Heartwood Conference Center in Trego October 9. He asked everyone to let him know whether that date works.

Council Meeting Dates Bob suggested July 22 and Sept 23, both at 6:30 p.m. No objection.

### **Other questions/concerns/announcements**

Rhubarb Fest is June 26. Need rhubarb!

Volunteers are needed to paint the Youth Room, basement Sunday School room, and Choir room.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m. with individual prayers initiated by Bob Niedringhaus and closed by Pastor Judd.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tom Whittaker  
Substitute Council Secretary