

**Zion Lutheran Church  
Minutes of Council Meeting  
Wednesday, April 16, 2008  
7:30pm**

**Present:** Idella Ziegler, Nikki Haskens, Pastor Sogge, Kirk Bengtson, Jud Goerss, Marci Wold, Pastor Hahn, Dave Schmidt, Doug Schmidt, Pastor Svoboda, Deb Peterson, Arnold Rude, Jim Larson, Charles Krause, Carol Clark

**Devotions**— Carol Clark

**Minutes of March 19, 2008 Council Meeting**

M/S Goerss/Schmidt

**Financial Report**

The finance committee was unable to meet prior to this council meeting, due to the funeral of Pastor John's grandchild. Jud did note that concerning trends continue in both funds, with expenses exceeding receipts. The finance committee is meeting monthly to monitor these developments, especially as we enter the typically light summer months.

***Approved***

*M/S Schmidt/Clark*

**Pastors Reports**

Pr. Sogge – Four funerals have been conducted since the last council meeting. Kids' programs are winding down for the school year. She has been quite busy representing Zion in her position as Dean of the NW Conference which comprises 22 churches. She will be making a presentation Friday April 18 regarding the Sudanese ministry. Fifty percent of the churches in the conference have donated toward this cause.

Pr. Hahn – has been working extensively with the transition committee. Thoroughly enjoyed performing his first wedding at Zion, that of Pete and Sara Onstad. Myron conducted that homily.

Pr. Svoboda – Finishing details for summer youth trips. Had 10 days representing Zion in role as military chaplain. Attended an interesting conference at Willow Creek in Chicago last week on cultural shifts.

**Committee Reports**

**1A. Finance – loan update**

Jud noted that the renegotiation of Zion's mortgage had been completed and papers signed by Idella Z and Carol C on 4/3. Terms include a fixed rate of 5.5% for the next five years and after 4/9/2010 we can pay off the loan early should we choose to refinance with no prepayment penalty. The lower rate results in a monthly payment amount that is reduced by approximately \$1100.

Further, it was noted that as part of the refinance process, KleinBankcorp preapproved a second mortgage facility of up to \$180,000 to facilitate expenses that may occur with the roof and/or parking lot. Terms include interest only for the first year, with conversion to a 5 year fixed rate after the first 12 months.

**1B. Audit Update**

Nothing has happened yet with the audit, given that tax day was yesterday and as had been stated previously, we would not put the audit out for bid until after that had passed. The FC expects to discuss putting together an RFP at one of the next meetings.

## **2. Property—update on roof and parking lot projects**

Waiting for two more bids for the roof. Have four bids in hand for the parking lot, ranging from \$17,000 - \$40,000. Hoping to get one from the City of Buffalo for seal coating and restriping. Hope to get all the bids in and discuss within the next two weeks.

## **3. Transition Committee**

Sam Monson presented on behalf of this interim committee. The Transition committee consists of 12 enthusiastic individuals who will be pulling together information on the congregation's wishes and perceived needs as it relates to the calling of a Senior Pastor. This committee's work will also help profile and "package" the attributes (e.g., worshiping and giving units, for example) of our congregation to aid in an eventual call. The committee has prepared an extensive survey and will be distributing it in a variety of venues to the congregation. Their work will be hampered should there be a poor response rate to the survey. This committee is also putting together a list of Questions and Answers which will be featured in the bulletin and on the website. They are hoping their information will be gathered and turned over to a call committee by June or July.

## **4. 40 Days Follow-up**

Idella delivered 40 bags from Zionaires to Rivers of Hope. A group also recently spend many hours cleaning the pews with Murphy's oil and a lot of elbow grease – enjoy!

Conversations are occurring regarding how Zion might move forward with small groups/mission work. Global mission and Social Ministries will coordinate. If you are continuing with a project, put it in the newsletter so people see this is an ongoing ministry.

## **Old Business**

### **1. Constitutional Review committee**

The list from last month was misplaced – volunteers needed for this. Dirk Foster, Jim Larson, Charles Krause and Carol Clark will serve. Pastor Hahn will coordinate. Basic duties to reconcile Zion's most recent constitution (2002) with the ELCA's most current Model Constitution.

### **2. Plans for discussion of ELCA Draft Statement on Sexuality**

Adult Ed committee is in a bit of transition with several members cycling off. A note will be placed in the bulletin calling for additional members. Expect to meet within the next few weeks to lay out plans for discussion forums not only on the ELCA's draft, but on various related topics surrounding the presentation and discussion of difficult issues.

### **3. Follow-up on primary discussion at March meeting**

Idella met with Marv and Mary Jopp and laid out four different alternatives for them to consider in order to come to closure on the issues at hand:

- a) participate in mediation with a neutral outside party interviewing pastors, staff, Mr. Jopp, and individuals he selected that he felt could help elaborate his issues. The use of this counselor would be paid for by Zion.
- b) If he refused to consider mediation, the issue would come back to council for consideration under article 15 of the constitution. Given Mr. Jopp's earlier request for a special council meeting, the issue had been raised to the council level and could no longer be handled directly with individual pastors.
- c) the result from the discussion with the counselor would be a behavioral contract that ALL parties would need to agree to abide by.
- d) failing to agree to any of the above options, council may consider assisting Mr. Jopp in

transferring to another congregation.

MOTION was made to present Mr. Jopp with a written invitation to participate in a counseling process with Brian Willette to be paid for by Zion. It is expected that Mr. Willette will conduct a variety of interviews with pastors, staff, Mr. Jopp and any other individuals he feels would be appropriate. Mr. Willette would then prepare a behavioral contract for all parties to abide by. Mr. Jopp will be requested to respond to this invitation within a week.

***Wold/Larson – original M/S; Larson/Haskins friendly amendment to stipulate the invitation be in writing.***

#### **4. Personnel Committee Appointment**

Tabled until next month

#### **New Business**

##### **1. Marysville Church Discussion (this will become an order of the day whenever our guests arrive.)**

Tabled until next month

##### **2. Forward in Faith semi-annual mission gift**

Pastor Becky motioned that this semi-annual gift be made to the All Kids Can Learn, Inc Zambian Orphanage Project. Jim Larson seconded. Approved

##### **3. Adjustment of membership statistics**

In an effort to clean up our membership roster, Pastor Hahn is preparing a letter to those outside commutable distance and/or with no phone numbers or address. List was circulated at this meeting, let Pr. Hahn know by 4/23 if there are specific individuals who should remain on this list or if you have changes to the letter. Pastor Hahn's next cut will be those who have not communed or contributed in the past two years.

#### **Open Forum**

Susan Marsh noted that she and her husband, Terry, had been active members for 35 years and their kids and grandkids are also members. They have been exceptionally disheartened by what has been occurring in recent months, especially rumors and innuendos that were spread about Terry and the situation with the Jopps. She admonished council for not calling Mr. Jopp in already to present his side of the story.

LeeAnn Goerss noted she has spent many sleepless nights fretting over issues that are happening at the church, including those that have happened recently to Mr. Jopp and Mr. Marsh. She noted her disappointment with the church leadership – pastoral, staff and council. She also noted that biased depiction of events in the timeline presented in Mr. Jopp's issue and the biased presentation of events.

Bob Freidrichson asked about the performance review process as laid out in the constitution and whether or not it was regularly implemented. Pastor Hahn noted that the implementation of regular performance reviews is something he is working with the Personnel committee on. Each staff member has been asked to prepare a self appraisal and goals for the coming year and will be meeting with personnel committee.

#### **Benediction**

The Lord bless us and keep us. The Lord make his face shine on us and be gracious to us. The Lord look upon us with favor and give us peace.