



# COMMUNITY OF CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

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6517 Finzel Road, Whitehouse, Ohio 43571

## Church Council Meeting Minutes – October 10, 2023

**In Attendance:** Kevin Swagler (President), Kara Yokum, (Vice-President), Sarah Rockwell (Secretary), Laine Davis, Pam Davis, Laurie Dewitz, Tammy Myers, Becky King, Don Schroeder, Zach Weber, Kathryn Whitacre, Carol Wiemken, Pastor Stephen Bond

Absent: Joseph Perkins

Guests: Michelle Gebhart

**Call to Order & Opening Devotions:** Kevin Swagler called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Carol Wiemken read the devotions and Tammy Myers volunteered to lead devotions for the next meeting.

**Agenda:** Pam Davis moved to approve the amended agenda and Becky King seconded the motion. Motion carried.

### Committee Reports

- Finance
  - Treasurers Report- (Joseph) – The Building Fund Income for September was \$11739, which is \$825 less than expenses. The Building Fund Year To Date is \$10,148 less than expenses year To Date. The General Fund income was \$25,423 in September, which is \$3,805 less than expenses. The General Fund Year To Date income is \$7369 less than expenses. Becky King moved to accept Joseph's treasurer's report. Tammy Myers seconded the motion. Motion carried.
  - Finance Committee Report (Kara) – Kara Yokum will give a copy of the draft memorial fund to Pastor Steve to allow him to provide input at a future meeting, hopefully November as we'd like to share it at the Congregational Annual Meeting.
- Pastor's Report – Pastor Steve is going to meet with the worship and music committee and will discuss moving to bread for communion. The shared Thanksgiving service will be at Zion Methodist in Whitehouse on Sunday Evening. Pastor Steve will be preaching. After discussion on the day of the week for this service, it was decided to let the hosting church determine when the service is held. Pastor Steve asked for consent for baptism on Reformation Sunday for the children who are likely to be joining the congregation at some point. The parents have a Lutheran history and would likely be a transfer situation.

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- Education and Youth (Lainie) – Alex Ackerman is putting out a survey to the youth to see what Social Media platform the kids are using. Sunday school is on the calendar – the next class is November 12<sup>th</sup>. We will be combining confirmation classes with Zion Waterville and St. Paul Haskins. The minister from Providence will be meeting with Pastor Steve re: a shared youth minister. The youth are hosting a breakfast on Sunday November 5<sup>th</sup>. There will be a free will offering at the breakfast. They will be having an election day bake sale on election day, 11/7. Becky is running bible studies on 8:30 am Tuesdays. Pastor Steve will lead the Adult Ed class on Sundays between services.
  - Kara Yokum moved to support Pastor Steve speak with the pastor at Providence on our behalf to get clarity on hiring a shared youth pastor. Becky King seconded. Motion carried.
- Outreach (Zach/Tammy) – Roche de Boeuf was successful. We are going to participate in Boo to Do in Waterville and need donations/volunteers. We discussed having a mailer to introduce Pastor Steve to the communities and promote our Christmas services. We will do an email vote after determining parameters/costs.
- Property (Don) – We discussed the hand sanitizer stations. While they have enough of them, with the sanctuary more closed off, we will move them to make them more easily available. Don is looking to get rid of some unused property – a cassette tape duplicator and paper folder – one option is taking a photo and putting them on Facebook Marketplace. Any items not marketable will be discarded. There was discussion on infrequent need for cleaning on Friday instead of Thursday when there is an event Thursday night or Friday. They will contact the cleaning company when an adjustment is needed.
- 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee –They are busy planning the Anniversary dinner, which will occur on May 4<sup>th</sup>. The official anniversary service will be on Sunday morning, May 5<sup>th</sup>.
- Worship and Music (Carol) – No report. Next meeting is October 12<sup>th</sup>.
- Social Action (Becky and Kathryn) – We blessed the school kits on Sunday and they are on their way. Trunk or Treat is at Salem Lutheran on October 28<sup>th</sup>. Candy donations are needed.
- Fellowship (Pam/Kara) – No Report. Creative Crockpot and game night will be at Yokums home on November 4<sup>th</sup>. It's an Adult activity.
- Stewardship (Laurie) – The new website is up and running.

### Unfinished Business

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1. 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – The next meeting is 10/19 and Pastor Steve was invited to attend. Eric and his wife are doing a concert at church at 2 pm on 10/29. Offering will be used toward the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary costs.

### New Business

1. Review of Dates for the Annual Congregational Meeting – Committee reports are due at least 2 weeks prior to the annual meeting, which will be on Sunday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>, after the 10:00 service. We need to give notice to the congregation 2 weeks prior to the meeting.
2. Discussion re: Youth Minister shared with Providence. Pastor meeting with the minister from Providence. There was some discussion on the Youth Gathering and if we want to attend.

### Adjournment and Prayer

- Becky King moved to adjourn the meeting. Laine Davis seconded the motion. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 8:49, followed by the Lord's Prayer.

Next meeting: November 14, 2023

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10-10-23

## TREASURER'S REPORT

1. All asset accounts are reconciled and up to date.
2. BF/GF for September
  - a. Building Fund
    - BF income was \$11,739 and \$825 less than expenses
    - BF YTD income is \$10,148 less than expenses
  - b. General Fund
    - GF income was \$25,423 and \$3,805 less than expenses
    - GF YTD income is \$7,369 less than expenses
3. 2024 budget planning process:
  - a. Pastor's Portico expense
  - b. Staff wages
  - c. Property budget
  - d. General committee input
  - e. 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary expense

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### **Pastor's Report to Council—October 2023**

*What follows here is a summary of places for reporting that seemed important to me to share with you all as leaders of the congregation, but if you would like additional or different information in the future, please just let me know and I'll happily adapt to what you would find most useful. –PS*

#### *Worship and Music*

- Sunday Mornings—With October 8 we move to two liturgies on Sunday mornings, and I'll continue to invite your feedback on how to make worship move well and smoothly. I would invite your input on the places I have already added small touches or differences to know what you think is working well or needs to be further retooled (stickers for kids in children's sermon, the Jesus figure placed around the church each Sunday, the sung Now the Feast liturgy, etc.).
- Installation Service—Held on October 5, with Bishop Beaudoin and other guests present; many thanks to all the congregation for the gracious ways you have welcomed me and my family, from the generous gifts and reception on my first Sunday through this installation service. Thank you kindly for your care, kindness, and all the energy you have spent for our sakes.
- Proposal to Return to Using Bread at Communion—I'll be proposing to Worship Committee (and invite any feedback from council here first) that we return to using bread on Sundays, something like naan or pita, with the continuation of offering gluten-free wafers as well. With Worship and Music meeting next on Oct. 12, I'll hope to have that change in place a bit later this month, if all are agreeable.
- Possible Baptism on Oct. 29 (Reformation)—We had a young mother with three children come to the door last week, introducing herself and her Lutheran connection in her family's previous location, and she and her husband would like for their little one, Valery, to be baptized and for them to have the prospect of being a part of our congregation. I would invite your formal approval of me to baptize Valery and to pursue conversation with the whole family as appropriate.
- Looking Ahead to Advent and Christmas Eve—Eric has shared with me the recent traditions we have for Advent with midweek services using Holden Evening Prayer, which I would love to see continue. We are also tentatively planning for a single morning service on Dec. 24 (which is a Sunday, the Fourth Sunday in Advent) and then to offer the usual evening services here this year as well for Christmas Eve. I would imagine that we would also have a single service on Dec. 31 in the morning.

#### *Christian Education*

- Adult Class (Sundays)—With the help of brainstorming conversation on Oct. 1, we will have a slate of different short series (5-7 weeks each, perhaps) for topics and studies for our Sunday morning Adult Class, beginning with a four-week introductory series, "Ask Me Anything: Things You Always Wanted to Know But Were Afraid to Ask" that will be shaped wholly from the questions and input from participants, and then we'll move on to more structured topics and series into the fall, Advent, and new year.
- Monthly Children's Sunday School Events—Christian Ed has set two dates so far, Oct. 8 and Nov. 12, for monthly kids Sunday School events. I'll be making a quick appearance at the start of both of those gatherings in the 9:15am time frame, and then jump back into the Adult Class.
- Connecting Points for Shared Confirmation Class—Our Lanie Davis gave me contact information for Stephanie Sargent at Zion, Waterville, and she has indicated that their new pastor,

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Meg Bolger, will be starting this October and will reach back out about pursuing a jointly-led Confirmation Class between our congregations as in the past.

- Thursday Afternoon Bible Study—I'll be restarting a weekly *daytime* Bible study on Thursday afternoons, beginning Oct. 12, for those who are interested, and then we'll look at additional series we might run on a weeknight evening for a short run (again 4-6 week kind of thing on a given topic) in other seasons (avoiding Advent, Lent, etc.). This will be a weekly gathering at 1:00pm here at Community of Christ.
- Online Resources Offered—Just to share with Council from last month (in case you've not seen from the newsletter also), I now have up and running these additional online resources each week: (1) daily devotions, posted both on Facebook and at [beinggraced.blogspot.com](http://beinggraced.blogspot.com), which run Monday through Friday; (2) weekly "Looking Ahead" videos that preview where this coming Sunday is going; and (3) the weekly podcast, "Crazy Faith Talk," which I do with two other colleagues in ministry on a variety of topics, which is also shared on our Facebook page, too. I'll continue to invite your feedback as to how we make good use of these kinds of tools, and to hear what other kinds of online resources would be helpful for us to share with the congregation and community.

### *Synod and Wider Church*

- Meeting with ELCA and Other Colleagues—I've gotten connected with the other ELCA pastors in our Conference to learn about their monthly gatherings across our area, and I was able to attend the September meeting already, and to meet Pastor Lee Ann in person at that time as well. I also plan to attend the weekly pastor's text study, along with our own Fred Shuman, on Tuesday mornings, when my calendar allows.
- Initial Planning for Thanksgiving Service—I've been told about the traditional Thanksgiving Eve service shared between Community of Christ, Hope UMC and Zion UMC, and I've reached out to the other two pastors there to inquire about plans for this year.
- Planned Participation in Trunk-Or-Treat at Salem—I'll plan on being on site at Salem with our outing to their Trunk-Or-Treat and continuing our tradition of mission partnership with Salem Lutheran.

### *Public Presence*

- Social Media Resources—As noted above, we have several new regular social media offerings that can be a digital front-door for people inquiring about our congregation, including devotions, videos, and podcast, as well as the weekly "Spot Jesus" posts and others. I'd continue to invite your input on how we maximize those resources and get the most out of those platforms.
- Waterville Boo-To-Do—I've been asked to be part of our presence at the Boo-to-Doo in Waterville on Thursday, Oct. 26, and so I'll plan to be there for that early to mid evening.

### *Member Care*

- Homebound Visits So Far—Michelle gave me the listing of our five members who are currently permanent residents of nursing/senior care facilities (Kay Burdo, Lois Wise, Marie Panning, Pat Campbell at Elizabeth Scott, and Tom Jennings at Lakes of Monclova), and I've begun visits to them, as well as having visited Sandy Elholsz at Lakes of Monclova.

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- Connecting With Visitation Committee—I plan on joining the Visitation Ministry Committee at their upcoming meeting to be brought up to speed there and to find out how I can be a part of that ministry as well.

### *Administrative Matters*

- Mutual Ministry Committee Meeting Set—We have a first date for Mutual Ministry to meet on Wednesday, Oct. 25 at 6:30pm.
- Inquiry about Nominations/Annual Meeting/Etc.—I have gathered that our annual meeting is usually held in early December, and would want to know what I'll need to be doing for my role in preparation, things like: (1) how are nominations for new council members and other leaders procured, and do we need to be doing those things now? (2) have we set a date for this year's meeting, and what does that do for worship on that Sunday? And (3) what would you like to see in an annual pastor's report from me this year?

### *Beginning Vision for 2024: Meeting Jesus*

- I'll share more as we proceed through the fall, but I'd like to propose as an overarching theme/focus for 2024 in our worship life, devotional and discipleship life, and other dimensions, a focus on getting to know Jesus more deeply. If our mission here is "Making Jesus Known," (which is a brilliant statement of purpose), then maybe it's worth us taking the time to get to know Jesus again more deeply this year, so we know who we are introducing others to! That would include focus in the devotions I would write and some class series I would teach in the year ahead, and it would hopefully also lead into connections in our outreach, social ministry, and service projects to see these as ways to encounter Christ as well as to reflect Christ. If that concept seems agreeable, I'll share more at our November meeting with a more full introduction to the idea.

Respectfully submitted,  
Pastor Steve

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## **Youth and Education Committee**

### **October 2023 Committee Report**

#### **Committee Members:**

Cammie Abraham, Lorri Britsch, Lainie Davis, Laurie Dewitz, Kristen Schuchmann, Makayla Stewart

- Makayla Stewart is now handling the preparation and maintenance of the wiggle bags.
- Alex Ackerman is working on a survey that will be sent to our teen youth and young adult members to determine most used social media platform.
- Next Sunday school dates – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of month for next 2 months. Sunday October 8<sup>th</sup> and Sunday November 15<sup>th</sup> in between the 2 services, starting about 9ish in the fellowship hall. Pastor Steve mailed a postcard announcing Sunday School addressed to the children.
- Pastor Steve has connected with Waterville Zion to follow up on previous communication with Stephanie Sargent regarding Confirmation classes. He received a positive response, and their new Pastor starts the week of 10/9 and they will reach back out soon.
- Youth sponsored breakfast is scheduled for November 5<sup>th</sup> in between services.
- Youth sponsored bake sale on election day, November 7<sup>th</sup>.
- Women's Bible Study Tuesdays at 8:30am
- Pastor Steve will lead Adult Ed class on Sundays in between services and look to begin a mid-week Adult Ed class, possibly something with a short-term series study.
- **Next Meeting – Monday October, 16<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 p.m.**

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## Activity Report

### September 2023 Outreach

**Committee Chairman:** Greg Myers

**Committee Members in Attendance:** Shelly Hayes, Robin Fritz, Kristen Schuchman, Kari Swagler, Marlene LaChine

- Roche de Boeuf is on schedule and it looks like we have all time slots filled. Zach, Kevin and I will be setting up on Saturday. Zach will be picking up table, chairs and canopy. The bags are stuffed and I ordered more candy to give out. Should be a fun day and look forward to seeing how well attended the event will be.
- Zach sent out an update on the Deppen family from council
- Name Tag Sunday on 24<sup>th</sup> for Pastor Steve first service
- Shelly has us registered for Boo to Do in Waterville. This will be Thursday October 26 from 5-7. We will be looking for a couple of volunteers for this event and will need to order candy.
- Next meeting October 17<sup>th</sup>.
  - Need to discuss more ideas for the holiday season. I am not sure what committee handles the Angel tree or possible thoughts of doing a soup kitchen event. Bring your ideas to discuss.

Next Meeting October 17, 6:30pm.

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