

Minutes of the Church Council

JANUARY 22, 2012

The St. Pauli Church Council held its monthly meeting on Sunday, January 22, 2012 at St. Pauli Church. Members present: Faye Auchenpaugh, Arlo Rude, Wahna Smith, Jodie Torkelson and Pastor Carl Hansen. The meeting was called to order by Council President Smith at 9:30 a.m.

Pastor Hansen opened the meeting with a prayer.

Secretary's Report

Torkelson distributed the Minutes of the December 15th meeting. After they were read, Rude made a motion to approve the Minutes. Auchenpaugh seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Treasurer's Report

Auchenpaugh presented the Treasurer's report for December 2011. Expenditures were \$2,979.66 and Income was \$6,067.50. Checking account balance as of December 31st was \$14,535.29 and the savings account balance was \$20,355.46. Total assets were \$84,745.98.

Torkelson made a motion to approve the Treasurer's report. Smith seconded the motion, motion carried.

A draft budget for 2012 was presented and discussed. Minor changes from the 2011 budget were made to account for the fact that there will be no shared parish expenses in 2012 or Workers Compensation.

Rude made a motion to recommend the 2012 budget to the congregation for approval at the annual meeting. Torkelson seconded, motion carried.

Pastor's Report

Schedule - Pastor Hansen provided the council with his schedule of availability for February. Auchenpaugh will try to find pulpit supply for the February 12th worship service when Pastor Hansen is not available.

Lenten Services - the area ELCA pastors would once again like to do a round robin series of Lenten services. This was well-received last year and the council agreed that St. Pauli would again participate.

Northwest Minnesota Synod Report – the synod asked Pastors to encourage churches to file the annual parochial report by February 15th. Torkelson will file the report for St. Pauli and get assistance as needed from others with relevant information.

Bishop Wohlrobe sent a letter to all churches about the confessed theft by the synod's bookkeeper. In light of the pending charges, a forensic audit of the synod financial affairs is underway. In the meantime, the synod hired an outside accounting firm to manage the

bookkeeping functions of the synod office. The Bishop will keep congregations informed of any other developments. (Letter is enclosed in this newsletter)

The synod is holding a Church Council training session at Redeemer Church on February 19th from 2pm-7pm. Pastor Hansen said he found these events to be worthwhile and encouraged members of St. Pauli's council to attend.

Old Business: There was no old business.

New Business

New hymnals – St. Pauli will need to purchase additional copies of the new cranberry-colored hymnals if we intend to continue using it for services. There are not enough available for everyone to adequately share. Pastor Hansen said that the new hymnal has 10 settings for worship, including the one that we currently use at St. Pauli, and over 700 hymns. It may eliminate the need to use the green hymnal. Discussion was held on offering an opportunity for members of the congregation to purchase hymnals in memory or honor of loved ones. This has been done in the past. This item will be placed on the annual meeting agenda for further discussion by the congregation.

Draft agreement with Zion Lutheran Church was reviewed. A proposed change to include pastoral services for the Lenten season was discussed. There will need to be additional discussions with Zion on the details, including the financial contribution by St. Pauli. The draft agreement will be placed on the annual meeting agenda for discussion and input from the congregation.

Annual Meeting – the agenda for the annual meeting was discussed. In addition to the usual agenda items, the purchase of new hymnals, the agreement with Zion Church, the proposed painting of the steeple and the finishing of the pulpit base were added.

Furnace – Rude informed the council that he installed a toggle switch for the furnace. Toggle up for heat in the sanctuary and down to direct heat to the basement. The council thanked him for the work he continues to do to keep our church in excellent shape.

The meeting closed with The Lord's Prayer.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jodie Torkelson, Church Council Secretary



Northwestern Minnesota Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

January 6, 2012

The Epiphany of Our Lord

To: Congregations and Rostered Leaders of the Northwestern Minnesota Synod

Dear Servants of Christ,

God's grace and peace be with you as we walk in the Light of Christ.

Today it is my sad duty to inform you that, having confessed to financial misconduct last Monday, Mr. Robert Larson's employment by the NW MN Synod has been terminated by the synod executive committee effective January 2, 2012. Larson had been the synod's bookkeeper since September 1, 2004.

Awareness of the possibility of embezzlement of Synod funds first came to light late last week, and synod leaders took immediate action to deal forthrightly with this situation—including making a report to the Moorhead Police Department.

In order to ascertain the scope of this financial misconduct, the synod has contracted with Eide Baily LLP of Fargo to conduct a forensic audit of the synod's financial records during Larson's tenure on the synod staff. Informed by this forensic audit, a claim will be filed with the synod's insurance carrier, Church Mutual. We will also pursue every avenue of legal recourse that is available to us, trusting that God works through the protective structures of the creation—including law enforcement and the courts.

Even as we deal with Mr. Larson's misconduct and its effects on the life of our synod and its ministry partners, we are also taking specific steps to place our synod's financial operation on a sound footing once again. These steps include:

- Contracting with Fiebiger, Swanson, West & Company, PLLP of Moorhead to manage the bookkeeping functions of the synod office. Fiebiger *et al* is a trusted financial services firm that works with a number of small businesses and nonprofit organizations.
- Reviewing and, as needed, revising our financial management policies and procedures. It is vital that we learn from what has happened in order to minimize the possibility of such financial misconduct in the future.
- Keeping the congregations and rostered leaders of the synod informed about what has happened and how we are responding. Please know that because of legal considerations, it may not be appropriate or possible to answer every question persons might have about Mr. Larson's misconduct, until his case is adjudicated and until we have completed the claims process with our insurance carrier.

(over)

I regret the fact that Mr. Larson's serious breach of trust may, for some, tarnish the confidence that you have in all of us who lead our Northwestern Minnesota Synod. We pledge to you that we will do all that is within our power to seek justice for those who have been harmed by Mr. Larson's misconduct and to rebuild trust across our synod.

This sad experience reminds us once again that "we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves" (*Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, p. 95). With the Apostle Paul each of us realizes that "*I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.*" (Romans 7:15) But, for St. Paul and for us, that is not the end of the story: "*Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!*" (Romans 7:25).

Finally, I make **two requests** of you:

- Please be patient with members of our synod staff as we deal with this unfortunate situation. As you might imagine, Mr. Larson's misconduct has shaken us—personally, emotionally, even spiritually. ***We will do our best to continue serving you, the people of our synod.*** But we ask for your patience, especially over the next month, if it takes us a little longer to fulfill some requests for information, assistance or the presence of a synod staff person in your congregation.
- Please remember in prayer all those affected by this unfortunate situation: the officers of the synod, the synod council, the synod staff, our partners in ministry, and the Larson family. Please pray for God's healing and restoring power in all of our lives.

I invite you to draw sustenance from the same wellspring of biblical wisdom that is feeding my soul in this difficult time. "*Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words.... We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.*" (Romans 8:26, 28)

Your Brother in Christ,



Bishop Lawrence R. Wohlrahe
Northwestern Minnesota Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Last month, we published the minutes from the first annual meeting. We will continue to publish subsequent recorded minutes each month.

4 February 1896

The annual meeting of the St. Pauli Norwegian Evangelical-Lutheran congregation was held in the school-house on February 4th 1896.

The meeting was opened with prayer and song by the pastor I. T. Aastad as chairman. P. Simonson is put forward and supported as secretary for one year. This was unanimously accepted.

Reported as members of the congregation on February 4th 1896:

Halvor Johnson with wife and daughter
Peter Thune with wife and 4 children
Lars Lökken with wife and 5 children
Hans Amundson with wife and son

Gunder Torgersen, Knut Finstad, and Mikkel Seland are appointed to be advisory members at the congregational meeting. Tollef Erikson is proposed and accepted as one of the trustees of the congregation for three years.

Hans Fredrikson is proposed and supported as treasurer of one year. The proposition was supported and unanimously accepted to make a collection at the next service to cover the costs for a congregational protocol and a book for the treasurer. The proposition was supported and unanimously accepted that a committee of three men is appointed to direct the work on the graveyard of the congregation. The supervisor of the committee is A. Odegaard.

Alex Arveson, Hans Amundson, and A. Odegaard are put forward and supported as Sunday School teachers.

It was unanimously accepted, proposed and supported that every voting member of the congregation shall pay for the past year, 1895, \$2.00 as the pastor's salary. It was proposed and supported that every breadwinner shall pay \$ 3.00 and every bachelor \$ 1.50 as the pastor's salary for the coming year 1896. This was unanimously accepted. It was proposed and supported that the pastor's salary shall be paid to the trustees and handed over to the treasurer before the end of December 1896.

It was proposed, supported and unanimously accepted that our next annual meeting shall be held in the first half of January 1897.

It was proposed, supported and unanimously accepted that the congregation shall make use of [*illegible*] and of the Synod.

Upon proposal the meeting was ended.

Copied by P. Simonson, secretary

The officials of the congregation are, trustees:

Gilbert Skjerva until 1897
Odegaard until 1898
Tollef Erikson until 1899
Hans Fredrikson, treasurer 1 year
Pete Simonson, secretary 1 year

P.S., secretary

Why and How Do We Use Ashes on Ash Wednesday?

Ash Wednesday is the Wednesday of the seventh week before Easter and the first day of Lent. The day is named for the practice of imposing ashes, a practice which many Lutheran congregations have found to be a very meaningful part of the Ash Wednesday liturgy.

Using ashes as a sign of repentance is an ancient practice, often mentioned in the Bible (e.g., Jonah 3:5-9; Job 42:6; Jeremiah 6:26; Matthew 11:21). The early Christians adopted the use of ashes from Jewish practice as an external mark of penitence.

Ashes symbolize several aspects of our human existence:

- Ashes remind us of God's condemnation of sin, as God said to Adam, "Dust you are and to dust you shall return" (Genesis 3:19).
- Ashes suggest cleansing and renewal. They were used anciently in the absence of soap. On Ash Wednesday ashes are a penitential substitute for water as a reminder of our baptism.
- Ashes remind us of the shortness of human life, for it is said as we are buried: "earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust."
- Ashes are a symbol of our need to repent, confess our sins, and return to God.

St. Pauli News in Detail



Donate items for Lutheran World Relief Kits to help people in need.



This Lenten season, our congregation is taking part in LWR's Baskets of Promise appeal. Each Sunday in Lent, beginning with February 26, we will collect items to form LWR Personal Care Kits that help impoverished people stay healthy in life's most

challenging situations. ALL members of the congregation are encouraged to take part.

Check the full-page insert for the collection schedule. If you have any questions, please contact Sharon Bugge, Sally Torkelson or Virginia Anderson.

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**Sunday, February 12
10:30 am**

Marlyn Johnson from Oklee will be speaking to us this Sunday about the important work the Gideons do around the world.



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February Milestones

Birthdays

Feb. 18 Pr. Mary Hansen
Feb. 20 Gary Iverson
Feb. 25 Arlo Rude
Feb. 26 Evie Johnson
Feb. 27 Edna Rondorf

Anniversaries

Feb. 27 Edna and Eugene Rondorf

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Lenten Services

We will participate again this year in a "round robin" schedule of pastors leading Lenten services. Watch the bulletins and March newsletter for schedule. Pastor Carl will lead worship on Ash Wednesday.



Greeting and Ushering

Feb. 5 Jim Rondorf
Feb. 12 Arlo Rude
Feb. 19 Barb Smith
Feb. 26 Wahna Smith

Sunday Service:

- Light altar candles before service and put out flames after church.
- Act as Greeters and hand out bulletins.
- Usher for offering and communion.
- Tidy up pews after church to make it ready for the next Sunday's services.

Altar Preparation: Jan Strandlie



St. Pauli Lutheran Church is in need of new Evangelical Lutheran Worship hymnals. We would like to give people the opportunity to donate hymnals in memory of a loved one or in honor of a living person. If you would like to donate, please complete this form and return to Wahna Smith at the address below. If you would like to remember or honor someone separately, feel free to list these on the reverse side.

Evangelical Lutheran Worship Hymnal

Donation and Order Form

Name: _____

Regular Print Edition: Qty: _____ @ \$25.00 = Total: \$ _____

Large Print Edition: Qty: _____ @ \$80.00 = Total: \$ _____

The price includes \$2.50 for the silver imprinting of "St. Pauli Lutheran Church" on the cover.

We will be ordering "In Memory Of..." and "In Honor of..." bookplates for attaching to the inside cover. Please check one of the below:

_____ I would like to write the information on the bookplate myself.

_____ Please write the following information on the bookplate for me:

- In Memory of _____
by _____
- In Honor of _____
by _____

Return before February 28, 2012 to:

**Wahna Smith
928 Arnold Ave North
Thief River Falls, MN 56701**



OLD DUDES

(Genesis 5)

Back in the days of Adam & Eve...

...people lived a long, LONG time.

If your grandpa lives to be a hundred years old these days, you think, “Boy – he is really OLD!” Adam lived until he was **930** years old! Yikes! – that’s a lot of candles to have to blow out on a birthday cake!

So after Abel died and Cain had to leave home, Adam and Eve had another son named Seth. When Seth was born, Adam was 130 years old. When Seth called Adam his “old man,” he wasn’t kidding!

When Seth was 105, he had a son named Enosh. Enosh was Adam’s grandson.

When Enosh was 90, he had a son named Kenan. Kenan was Adam’s great-grandson.

Adam’s great-great-great-great-great grandson was a man named Enoch. Adam lived so long that even when Enoch was born, Enoch’s great-great-great-great-great grandfather Adam was still around!

When Great-Great-Great-Great-Great Grandpa Adam told stories about the old days – they were REALLY old days.

Imagine sitting by the fire with Enoch while Grandpa Adam told stories from when the world was brand new!

Enoch loved God and always listened to him, and the Bible says that he never died. Instead, God just took him up to be with him in heaven. One day people looked around, and said, “Hey! Where did Enoch go?”

“Heaven knows!” people must have replied – and they were right!

But before that, Enoch had a son named Methuselah. You might hear someone say sometime, “He’s as old as Methuselah!” That’s because Methuselah was the oldest man who ever lived. He lived until he was 969 years old.

People lived a LONG time back in those days.

Until something *terrible* happened.

Next time...

“TIMES CHANGE”

The Back Page

Phones In Church

A man in Ames, Iowa, decided to write a book about churches around the Country. He started by flying to San Francisco and started working East from there.

Going to a very large church, he began taking photographs and making notes.

He spotted a golden telephone on the vestibule wall and was intrigued with a sign which read, "Calls: \$10,000 a minute."

Seeking out the pastor he asked about the phone and the sign. The Pastor answered that this golden phone was, in fact, a direct line to Heaven and if he paid the price he could talk directly to GOD.

The man thanked the pastor and continued on his way. As he continued to visit churches in Seattle, Phoenix, Salt Lake City, Denver, Oklahoma City, and around the United States, he found more phones, each with the same sign, and with the same answer from each pastor.

Finally, he arrived in Minnesota. Upon entering the church in Goodridge, behold he saw the usual golden telephone. But THIS time, the sign read, "Calls: 35 cents."

Fascinated, he asked to talk to the pastor, "Reverend, I have been in cities and towns all across the country and in each church I have found this golden telephone and have been told it is a direct line to Heaven and that I could talk to GOD, but in the other churches the cost was \$10,000 a minute. Your sign reads only 35 cents a call. Why?"

I love this part...

The pastor, smiling benignly, replied, "Son, you're in Minnesota now. You're in God's Country. It's a local call."

For God so lo**V**ed
the world,

That he g**A**ve
his on**L**y

Begott**E**n

So**N**

That

whosoever

Believeth **I**n Him

Should **N**ot

perish,

But have **E**ver-
lasting life."



Quilting for LWR

Everyone had such a good time quilting on Wednesday, January 25, and we were able to finish seven or eight quilts! Sharon Bugge came down early to set up all of the tables and turn on the heat, so everything was ready for us. The coffee pot was on at all times and the conversations never flagged.

Because this was such a success, we agreed to repeat this prior to our February 15th WELCA meeting. We will begin at 2:00 pm, but feel free to join us at whatever time you are able.

We had a couple of quilting novices in January who were experts by the end of the day! We encourage any and all beginners to join us. Bring a sewing machine if you are able.

Supper will be served at 6:00 pm (Sally Torkelson and Faye Auchenpaugh, hostesses).

Men who will be attending study group that evening are also invited to come for supper.