



CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

12500 Canal Road, Sterling Heights, Michigan 48313 | www.christsterling.org

COUNCIL MEETING

Monday, December 12, 2022

God is changing the world through you. Love your neighbor.

Attendance: **Onsite --** Pastor Luther Martell, Susan Haracz, Linda Howey, Katy Modrak, Kim Ostin, Kim Quigley, June Riggs, Lisa Stoen, Tom Tennant.

Online -- Barb Klein, Sharon Moss.

Welcome & Call to Order – Lisa Stoen

Devotion and Visioning – Pastor Luther

- Only three of the eight congregations in our conference have full time Pastors. What programs/resources/services can be shared among conference members? Example: confirmation classes.
- Pastor Luther states the conversation about the deficit is fearmongering, and we need to change our outlook to growth/mission.
 - Council members reply: It is our job to let the congregation know the facts and possibilities, not brush it under the rug.
- Off topic discussion started about giving and collection plates. Some want the collection plate passing to start up again, others do not, as we have other options for giving. Pastor Luther will add a slide to the Sunday presentation before service starts explaining the various options for giving, and the collection plates on stands will be placed at the entrance to the sanctuary.

CONSENT AGENDA

- Secretary's Minutes (November 14 and 28, 2022)

- Board Reports and Pastor Staff Report
 - Discussion of Continuing Education days and budget, Vacation days roll over, flex time/days off from Pastor's report caused Pastor's report to be tabled at this time.
- Building Requests – (none received)
 - **Motion:** Kim Quigley made a motion to approve the consent agenda (minus the above-listed issues).
 - **Seconded:** Katy Modrak.
 - **Vote: Abstained-0, Opposed-0**
 - **Motion Carried.**

DISCUSSION AGENDA

Old Business

- Financial and Treasurer's Report Y-T-D – November
 - **Motion:** Katy Modrak made a motion to approve the report.
 - **Seconded:** Kim Ostin.
 - **Vote: Abstained-0, Opposed-0**
 - **Motion Carried**
- Annual Budget and Election Meeting Recap

Budget to be presented to the congregation, and Election Meeting discussion points reviewed.
- Choral Scholarship Program Committee

Evan needs to meet with Endowment about guidelines and a committee for running the Choral Scholarship program.
- Office Manager Job Posting

Executive Committee members are to meet with Evan to discuss job responsibilities for the job posting.
- Janitorial Service/Property Management

This task is being passed to the Property Management Committee.
- Giving Kiosk Update

The process of investigations of options is more detailed than expected and will not be ready for Christmas. Taking the time to make an informed choice will save more changes down the road. New expected activation date is March.

- 2023 Church Directory

No change. The directory will be done in-house for 2023.

- Scout Sunday Pancake Breakfast Funding

Previously, the activity was added to the calendar, but no funding line was indicated. After discussion, the agreement is to move \$300 from LYO line item 6028 to Pancake Breakfast line item 0641. Line 6041 currently has a negative balance and the \$300 will cover the negative balance and the 2023 Scout Sunday Pancake Breakfast.

- **Motion:** Tom Tennant made a motion to approve.
- **Seconded:** Kim Quigley.
- **Vote: Abstained-0, Opposed-0**
- **Motion Carried**

New Business

- Year End Giving Campaign/Stewardship

There was discussion of increasing awareness of the types of giving available including payments from RMD's before taxes.

- Staff Insurance Changeover

New insurance information went out Friday.

- Scouts Charter Organization Representative

Troop 349 will change to Christ Lutheran Church for the Charter organization for 2023. This has been previously approved. There was discussion as to who will be the Charter Organization Representative (part of the BSA process). Paster Luther will hold this role.

Motion to Adjourn

- **Motion:** Katy Modrak made a motion to adjourn
- **Seconded:** Gary Clark, Sr.
- **Vote: Abstained-0, Opposed-0**
- **Motion Carried**

Board of Property Management – No report received.

Board of Stewardship – No report received. Did not meet.

2022 Board of Outreach Minutes

“In-Person” Meeting at CLC Wednesday, December 7, 2022 @ 1:00 p.m.

Attending: Susan Haracz, Eleanor Stolzenfeld, Lorraine Blevins, Diane McIntyre, Dan Palmer, Mona Palmer, June Riggs, Barb Klein, Lisa Stoen (chairperson)

Regrets: Cathy Huhn, Kathy Anderson, Sharon Moss, Kim Ostin

Food Pantry - All pantry items were removed from the shelves and placed on tables in hallway to clear space for new food items donated at the Food In-Gathering Sunday, November 20th. Two boxes of outdated items will be delivered to St. Paul of Tarsus the week of December 5th. Eleanor will inventory items on hand to determine any items needed for Christmas Food Baskets. Megan Modrak donated a \$30.00 Butterball gift certificate to be used for extra items.

Good Shepherd Coalition - Received request for assistance December 1st for a client needing utility funds. Notified GSC CLC would commit to \$250.00 but that would deplete our funds for 2022. Have not received info to process request to date.

Outreach Ministry - Request form submitted November 3rd per board decision for \$220.00 to be donated to the ELCA from the Good Gifts Catalog for honeybees and vegetable garden. Amount is reflected in line item #6015/Outreach November YTD figures.

Thinking-Of-You/Shut-in members - Lorraine continues to minister to those on the prayer list. Jean Like - new address.

Homebound Communing Teams - Updated/revised schedule for November thru February has been sent out to communing teams. Plan to include Jean Like as soon as she is moved.

Quilting Ministry - Ladies continue to meet weekly, on Thursdays, to arrange color schemed squares, assemble and sew together. Sharon - update?

Prayer Shawl Ministry - Yarn will continue to be available in the Narthex for those wanting to partake and share their crocheting or knitting talents. Unblessed prayer shawls will be readied for their blessing during a worship service to be scheduled in the new year due to the busy schedule for December.

Old Business -

Received thank you from RMHC for the \$100.00 donation from aluminum tab collection/scrap metal.

Food In-Gathering/Sunday, November 20th - Donations were many and congregation participation bringing up items for the blessing allowed everyone to feel they were a part of. Transporting to the Fellowship Hall and sorting was smoother and more efficient than ever with so many helping hands.

2022 Thanksgiving Adopt-A-Families - Packed food baskets, Monday, November 21st at 9:00 a.m. for pickup scheduled noon to 1:15 p.m. Had many experienced helpers packing and a couple new ones, Diane McIntyre and Sue Kelly, joined us to find out more about what we do. \$100.00 gift cards were included in the families Thanksgiving cards. Families were extremely thankful. Request form submitted for purchase of gift cards for perishable food items - \$700.00 (\$100.00 per family). Only \$600.00 was used for the six families assisted. Extra

\$100.00 will be used for Christmas Food Basket gift card. Amount reflected in line item #6014/Food Pantry November YTD figures.

2022 Cookie Walk/Saturday, December 17th - 35+ bakers are signed up. Still approaching new members to see if they are willing to help out. Cathy and Diane completed Did you know??? tri-fold with all the ministries benefiting from the Cookie Walk fundraiser displayed in Narthex. Flyers also available at table. Notice was included in THE BEACON and scrolling announcements prior to worship. Asked to have notice added to CLC website and Facebook listing. Logistics and schematic discussion/prep & planning.

2022 Christmas Adopt-A-Families Food Baskets and Kids Gifts - Packing food baskets December 12th at 9:00 a.m. Available? Pickup will be scheduled noon to 1:15 p.m. Request form submitted for purchase of 14 - \$100.00 Walmart gift cards (1 - \$100.00 gift card per child) = \$1400.00 (to date we have received \$700.00 in AAF-Kids envelopes). Amount will be reflected in line item #6017/Adopt-A-Family December YTD figures. Request submitted for purchase of 5 - \$100.00 Meijer gift cards for perishable food items (have \$100.00 left from Thanksgiving food baskets). Amount will be reflected in line item #6014/Food Pantry December YTD figures.

Habitat for Humanity Volunteer Lunch - Dave Tirsell sent email request November 23rd for a lunch to serve ten Navy/Military volunteers plus five others at a new build on Thursday, December 1st at 42577 LaCroix in Clinton Twp.. I replied with a big "YES". With short notice, Dan and Mona were recruited to help Eleanor and I serve. Ordered catered lunch from Holiday Pizza - chicken strips, mostaccioli, salad, rolls and provided homemade brownies and snicker doodle cookies. Request form submitted for \$159.97 (Holiday food =\$130.00, food handler gloves and salad bowls= \$29.97). Amount will be reflected in line item #6030/Habitat for Humanity December YTD figures.

New Business

M.C.R.E.S.T. - Returning Home - Matching funds by sponsors, Weingartz and Christian Financial Credit Union, up to \$22,500. Donation? The board voted to donate \$200.00.

Fisher House Michigan - Matching dollar-for-dollar by A.A. Van Elslander Foundation and the American Legion Department of Michigan up to \$300K. Donation? The board voted to donate \$200.00

Other new business

Tom Grunewald is in need of a microwave, so the board voted to purchase one for him.

Next Meeting - Wednesday, January 4th at 1:00 p.m. - Lunch get together?

Board of Worship Meeting Minutes

Monday, December 5th, 2022 - ZOOM at 3:00 p.m.

Attending: Pastor Luther, Evan Caldrone, Sharon Moss, Lisa Stoen, Barb Klein and Dave Anderson

Devotions - Pastor Luther - A reading from Matthew. John calls us to "repent" - bear fruit worthy of repentance.

Discussion included a mindset to be vulnerable to "new". Change is inevitable. Relating to people and wanting to be close, pre-pandemic vs. being aware of people in your surroundings to avoid unhealthy exposure. The world will be changing more in the next five years than it has in the last five hundred. Changing the way we work - on line vs. in the office. "Sing a new song!" Being open to change. Change what is bothering us. Waiting is hard, especially in this season of "waiting".

A/V Training will be scheduled after the A/V training guide is complete. Training guide should be finished by year end. Training target dates are Sunday, January 15th and 22nd. Evan will work with volunteers and train them in a live worship setting. Lisa agreed to be a substitute for those Sundays to allow Evan to be at the A/V desk. Evan informed board members that a new custom-built computer, with much more capacity to handle streaming services, received Council approval to be purchased. This should alleviate existing technological issues. Will be installed this week.

Discussed Generosity Project Temple Talks and how they are being received. Group decided to have two per month during worship - 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month beginning in January. Sharon will inform Board of Stewardship. Pastor asked to be informed who will be presenting talks prior to their scheduled Sunday. Hoping talks inspire members to participate in the giving of \$100 and sharing their experience at worship.

Advent Mid-Week Worship & Kataluma are using “Born In Us” devotion. Service at noon in the chapel area is a nice space and very meditative. Discussed naming this space the St. Thomas Chapel with the gifted altar, font, podium and paraments from St. Thomas Church. Board members agreed and a dedication date will be scheduled along with the purchase of a plaque to designate the area.

New Member Brunch and New Member Reception dates were rescheduled for Sundays January 15th and January 22nd.

Sunday, December 11th - Multigenerational Christmas Pageant will be held during sermon time. With the Annual Budget Meeting scheduled after worship, there will be no formal dismissal. To encourage meeting attendance, attendees will be offered coffee in the pews. Will need time to setup ZOOM for those participating online. Pastor will contact Clark’s to help serve and he will recruit someone to help him serve.

Saturday, December 24th - Christmas Eve Worship at 4:00 p.m. & 7:00 p.m. Discussed whether or not to have incense at both services. Board members decided to offer incense at 7:00 p.m. service only with it being the more “formal” service of the two. Information sheets will be provided explaining the meaning and use of incense. Advertising service times will include the use of incense at 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 25th - Christmas Day Worship at regular 9:30 worship time. Will include carol sing.

Sunday, January 1st - New Year’s Day at regular 9:30 worship time.

Sunday, January 8th - Baptism of Our Lord - New ideas include working with children attending. Liturgy of wet crosses - gathering children at font, dipping their hands in water and having them make “wet crosses” on foreheads of members they choose.

Communion Assistants Recruiting and Procedure - Pastor recruits volunteers prior to worship and provides procedure sheet. Welcoming to newer community attending. Including more participation among attendees. Pastor proclaims the meal, communes the assistants, Lay Assistant provides hand sanitizer to assistants, Pastor hands out wine trays and wafers, communed assistants turn, face congregation and present communion elements. Lay Assistant communes Worship Band and Choir/Song Leaders and Pastor offers communion in the pews to those with mobility challenges. Discussion included ushering directions for a better traffic flow. Lay Assistants are scheduled for December Sundays. Still need volunteers at both Christmas Eve services. Sharon will continue to recruit.

Board members were asked to come up with worship suggestions for Ash Wednesday and Lenten services.

Next meeting - Tuesday, January 3rd @ 3:00 p.m. via ZOOM (Office closed Monday after New Year’s Day).

Board of Evangelism – No report received.

Board of Parish Education – No report received.

Pastor’s Report

Monday, November 14, 2022

Report of the Senior Pastor
Rev. Luther J. Martell

Christ Lutheran Church – Sterling Heights, MI

Report Period October 7, 2022 — November 10, 2022

Special Emphases of Call

Special Attention to Ministry by Pastor for Congregation

- ✓ Stewardship Development
- ✓ Getting to know congregation and members
- ✓ Getting to know community needs
- ✓ Development and implementation of education and leadership programs

Support and Encouragement for Pastor by Congregation

- ✓ Robust discipline of prayer
 - ✓ Establish and practice Mutual Ministry
 - ✓ Commitment to ministry expressions that are effective in today's world
 - ✓ Permission to experiment with ministries designed to serve neighborhood
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Ideas | Proposals | Developments

- **Sound Familiar?** Ridership on subways systems throughout major US cities is down post-COVID. SF is at 40% of pre-pandemic levels, DC—45%, Boston—50%, Chicago—55%. Resultingly, all these cities are experiencing financial deficits. Part of the issue is that people have started new habits while others are now working from home. To address the issue, NYC, experiencing 65% ridership, is increasing the cost of fares while rolling out a plan to encourage ridership by reaching out to specific neighborhoods in ways they can relate to. CLC is not the only congregation facing new financial realities. And churches are not the only institutions affected. Instead of continuing to blame a changing world for our struggles, what if we were to be a beacon of hope and leadership showing not only other congregations how to adapt, but leading the world in hope and commitment and resolve?!
- **Fearmongering.** Fearmongering is the action of deliberately arousing public fear or alarm about a particular issue. CLC practices fearmongering. And we need to reject it.

Referencing Sunday's congregational meeting, how many times in the history of this congregation has CLC been denied a mortgage for the initial build, additions, remodels, or refinancing? However, we do have a significant history of large gifts of money landing in our laps without notice. We are much more likely to get a financial gift than be denied a mortgage. Why don't we talk about that?

I have also heard it said we will run out of money in seven years. Someone, please help me with the math! This year's deficit is likely to be about \$50,000. We've only \$350,000 in reserves? I am not arguing that we should spend our reserves as we currently are. It's not sustainable. We need to make some changes.

Again, the Parable of the Talents is instructive. If we need to be afraid of something, we would be wise to fear God, paying attention to what happens to the foolish person who did nothing with the master's gift.

A different way—the faithful way—instead is to celebrate the favor of the master by risking everything given to us in Gospel ministry for our neighbor.

God says again and again, “Do not be afraid!” Manipulative fearmongering has no place in God's kingdom.

- **Council Visioning.** Beginning in January, plan on 30 minutes at the start of every council meeting for an Exec-collaborated visioning session that will include devotions and communion. As our constitution frequently articulates, church council and officers are called to lead the congregation in executing its mission. (Leadership and management are two different concepts.)
- **Staff Meetings.** Regular staff meetings Monday mornings at 11:00 have resumed with Karen now in the office, facilitating communications and coordinating ministries. Evan and I met itinerantly on an as-needed basis. A third staff necessitates a more formalized approach.
- **Community Cultivator of Young Life (CCYL).** At November's second council meeting, we discussed sharing a vision with the congregation for hiring the CCYL person as part of a two-point strategy for addressing budget deficits. The first is increasing offering income through Stewardship. The second is to invest in a new ministry that serves the community in which we live. I would like to see us communicate this vision to the congregation at our February annual reports meeting, including a potluck. The interview team is in place to make a recommendation to the Church Council in charge of hiring, similar to calling a pastor though non-pastor positions do not go to congregational vote.
- **Video Bible Study.** Initiated by Sue Kelly (formerly St. Thomas), two sessions of “The Chosen” series have been viewed and discussed as part of a new adult education opportunity. This two-week trial resulted in a commitment to meet Thursdays at 1:00, beginning January 5. **[Update] Kataluma.** Kataluma resumed with the first Wednesday of Advent, Nov. 30. The dinner church format includes soup supper and conversational devotion and sacrament. After Advent, Kataluma will continue to meet, becoming the foundation of after school tutoring ministry which will utilize the new computer lab.
- **[Update] Kataluma.** Kataluma resumed with the first Wednesday of Advent, Nov. 30. The dinner church format includes soup supper and conversational devotion and sacrament. After Advent, Kataluma will continue to meet becoming the foundation of after school tutoring ministry which will utilize the new computer lab.
- **[UPDATE] Computer Lab/After School Tutoring Ministry.** Preparation of the computer lab has resumed. Restoration of church debit card has made it possible to purchase computer tables. Volunteers have been recruited to arrange furniture and accomplish final readiness tasks like touch up paint and secure bookshelf. January will mark the finalization of tutor and other program volunteers before recruiting six students (half our capacity) to begin. Of course, a full capacity program that will impact our neighborhood remains predicated on the CCYL position above. I can conceive, establish, and jumpstart the program but cannot direct it on a day-to-day basis. This would be one of the jobs of the CCYL with whom I would collaborate.
- **[Update: Maybe in the New year!] Day Off.** My official new day off will be Thursday each week, meaning I will be in the office M-W with Thursday and Friday and Saturday being flex days

accommodating a day off, a sermon prep day, and one day of working from home. I will be in my office on any of those days as situations, needs, and ministry events dictate.

Worship & Music

- **Preached & Presided** 11/13, 20, 27, 12/4
- **Weekly Children's Messages** in the PrayGround when children are present as part of worship liturgy
- **Wednesday Chapel @ Noon** 11/16, 23
- **Lakeside Community Chapel** 11/16, 23, 30, 12/7
- **Advent Noontime Chapel with Soup & Bread Lunch** 11/30, 12/6
- **Advent Kataluma Dinner Church** 11/30, 12/6,
- **Generosity Project Presentations**, first Sunday of each month beginning in November

Official Acts

- **Baptisms—0**
- **Weddings—0**
- **Funerals—0**
- **Membership changes—0**

Greater Community

- Participated in Interfaith Thanksgiving Worship event at Warren United Methodist Church 11/22

Pastoral Care

- On-going pre-Marital conversations with Kelsey Barshaw and Brad Heffner
- Home visits with Communion by personal request—4
- Hospital visits—2
- Death Care for CLC Families: Hughes, McDonald, Ross

Administration/Staffing

- Weekly conversations (scheduled and ad hoc) with President Lisa Stoen to accomplish good communication, same-page strategy, and coordinated leadership activities.
Weekly staff meetings Mondays at 11:00.

Communication and Correspondence

- Weekly Video Messages distributed Wednesday mornings
- Fashioning and focusing electronic boulevard messages to be timely and relevant
- Writing, Editing, Publishing "The Beacon" Electronic Newsletter

Boards & Committees (DNM=did not meet; DNA=did not attend)

- Church Council (11/14, 28)
- Executive Council (11/11, 12/8)
- Worship Board 12/5)
- Finance Board
- Education/Youth Board (DNM)
- Stewardship (DNM)
- Outreach (DNA)

- Prayer Ministry w/ Diane M.— weekly check-ins. Diane now working in the volunteer office one day a week to make phone calls and update prayer list on CLC website

Youth Ministry

- Conversations with Pr. Dave at King of Kings surrounding joint ventures with all conference churches
- Participation in Conference Confirmation classes at King of Kings

Education Ministry

- Baptism catechesis with Jones family
- WELCA Bible Study 11/15
- Weekly Wednesday Zoom Adult Bible Study (Refresh) Currently discussing lectionary scriptures for upcoming Sunday Wednesdays at 10 am
- Weekly “The Chosen” video bible study Thursdays at 1:00 pm

Mutual Ministry

- Mutual Ministry Team: Kim Ostin, Eric Briskey, Lenore Barshaw, Sharon Moss, Susan Haracz, Dennis Foss (DNM)

Conference, Synod & Churchwide

- Attended closing worship and banquet at St. Thomas LC 11/13
- Attended Conference Meeting at Holy Cross surrounding smaller congregations corroborating to provide robust ministry while remaining financially viable 11/26
- Serving on Synod’s Discipline Committee
- Quarterly ZOOM meetings with Bp. Kreiss and Synod pastors and staff
- Weekly breakfast meetings with conference pastors

Professional Reading

- “Fewer than half of Americans will be Christian by 2070.” The Christian Century magazine, November 2022.
- “Who Will Love the Ugly Things?” The Christian Century magazine, November 2022.
- “Ubuntu is a Way of Life.” Living Lutheran magazine, November 2022.
- “On the Playground, Grace Steps In.” Living Lutheran magazine, November 2022.

Vacation / Continuing Education

- Granted 8/1/2022 4 weeks’ vacation / 2 weeks’ Continuing Education
- Vacation (4 weeks=20 days, 4 Sundays): **Used—10 days, 1 Sunday**; Balance—19/5
- Continuing Education— 2 weeks: (10 days, 2 Sundays) Used—None; Balance—40/8

Personal Notes

- Thursday is my official day off; now flexing Thursday through Saturday from office and home
- Contact information:
 - Cell: 586.606.1688
 - Church email: prluther@christsterling.org
 - Personal email: luther.martell@gmail.com
 - Address: 3730 24 Mile Road, Shelby Township, MI 48316

