

**St. John's Lutheran Church**  
**All Commission Meeting**  
*Sunday, September 23, 2018*

Attendees: Siera Garcia, Education; Deacon Amanda Sabelko, Staff, Education; Dan Allen, Personnel, Kim Allen, Council Treasurer, Education, Finance; Sam Marsland, Media; Lindsay, Colwell, Staff, Youth and Family, Growth and Hospitality, Mission and Outreach; Jim Evenson, Youth and Family; Tim Hruska, Personnel; Jen Hodgman, Food For Friends; Tracy Lee, Food for Friends; Ann Brenke, Worship and Music; Tanya Young, Altar Guild, Mission and Outreach; Daniel Ziebel, Mission and Outreach; Amy Weaver, Worship and Music; Renee Solberg, Thrivent, Lutefisk; Gail Jensen, Memorials/Interior Design, Thrivent; Cindy Franke, Memorials/Interior Design; Kay Hodge, Funeral Luncheons; Carol Cady, Altar Guild and Education; Phyllis Sands, CKP and Worship and Music; Charlotte Andreen, Growth and Hospitality; Lois Lau, Growth and Hospitality; Linda Wunderlich, Worship and Music; Gloria Gilbertson, Worship and Music; Clark Johnson, Worship and Music, Dan Paulsen, Council, CKP; Rachel Linbo, CKP; Jessica Paulsen, CKP; Jon Klein, Council; Jackie Longendyke, Mission and Outreach; John and Ruth Allen, Staff; Jodie Tvedt, Worship and Music, Altar Guild; Shelley Gustafson, Worship and Music, Altar Guild; Al Flickinger, Council, Youth and Family, Call Committee; Madi Flickinger, Youth Troup; Joel Mindermann, Council; Jennifer Smith, Council President; and Kelly Utesch, Council Secretary, Education

1. Jen called the meeting to order at 11:53 and notified all attendees that the all-commission packet and meeting minutes would be published on the website.
2. Purpose
  - a. Empowering leaders
    - i. Listen to others
    - ii. Collaborate
    - iii. Money (Properties, Bibles, Mission) – offers freedom to offer up ideas and activities
    - iv. Volunteers (ask and seek out) – empower volunteers to assume leadership roles
    - v. Support – build up leaders to allow them to run with their ideas
    - vi. Information and knowledge – one can't lead without being informed
    - vii. Succession plan – to allow key leaders to run their course and to prepare new leaders to step into important roles
    - viii. Gap after formal education offerings (after confirmation) – inviting
  - b. Educational offerings (What do we offer?):
    - i. Recruiting and supporting volunteers
    - ii. Reaching out to other community churches
    - iii. Younger people (involve CKP parents as kids are young and will grow with the church)
    - iv. Collaborate – make inviting, and don't pretend to be experts\* (save this item for addressing in future)
    - v. Offer child care to allow adults to volunteer
    - vi. Inclusivity
    - vii. Look at immediate thoughts from council packet
3. Strengths

- a. Wednesday programming
  - b. History and tradition
  - c. CKP's prepping kids for education
  - d. Supporting youth
  - e. Welcoming
  - f. Kids programs (VBS, Club 56, Music/Special Music)
  - g. Facility (welcoming to outside groups) – community outreach
  - h. Giving
  - i. Volunteers
  - j. Strong visitation programs to seniors
  - k. Meals on Wheels
  - l. Bus (providing the opportunity to participate to those who wouldn't otherwise be able to attend)
  - m. OASIS
  - n. Stepping up with asked
  - o. Members in other leadership roles
  - p. Ministry of Encouragement
  - q. Open doors to large, non-member funerals
  - r. Meet people where they're at (latecomers, noisy children, "imperfect")
  - s. Step up when there is a need
  - t. Submit respective commission meeting minutes and know they are ready by Council.
  - u. Invitation to add yourself to Council agenda to present issues/problems/ideas
4. Challenges
- a. Being more welcoming
  - b. Recognizing new people
  - c. Reaching out to non-attending members
  - d. Do we really provide what new members need?
  - e. Clear and frequent communication – announcements, social media, newsletters, Snippets
  - f. History and Traditions (prohibits inclusivity)
  - g. Expecting others to volunteer
  - h. Barriers to entry
  - i. Simplify for time/tasks
  - j. Big Church – making changes can be a slow process
    - i. Council meeting minutes posted on website
    - ii. Plan to add all commissions' minutes to website
  - k. Selective in giving – lack of trust in leadership to spend resources ("blind faith")
  - l. Better signage and identifying features
  - m. Grow as a team/building relationships
  - n. Perceived groups/cliques
  - o. Clear path with services (traditional/blended/contemporary services)
  - p. Dabble in so many areas that we may spread too thin. Work on "intentional outreach".
5. Budget (presented by Kim Allen, Council Treasurer)

- a. Amy Weaver inquired about giving to ELCA Synod – she stated that the Presbyterian church asks each member to give a set amount. How is this fee assessed/asked for by the ELCA Synod? St. John's currently gives around \$20,000 to the ELCA for the mission of the Church. St. Johns does not pay per member; our donation is given from Lutefisk proceeds. Currently our giving is \$20,000 per year, but per Pastor John this could be more for a church of our size. We send members to represent St. John's to Synod Assembly.
- b. Our financial situation has improved from previous years, but is still not where we want to be. We offer a number of important programs that support the Church's mission. However, we have a cash flow problem that occurs in certain months. Kim stressed the importance to all Commissions to be more cognizant of resources when making purchases. We currently carry a \$100,000 mortgage, \$14,000 owed to the foundation, and a \$35,000 line of credit for a total of \$150,000 in remaining debt.
- c. Kim advised all commission chair people to remain engaged and to review their monthly financial reports. Make sure your commission has identified a member who is willing to take on the financial aspect of your commission and act as point of contact. Commissions need to identify this person and communicate this financial person to Kim Allen. If anyone is not receiving reports, be sure to contact Kim or Shelly at St. Johns.
- d. Finance meetings are open to everyone, if you have a need/concern please contact Kim and we will add to the Agenda and readily discuss with you.
- e. Kim will review reports with anyone who may need assistance with understanding the financial reports.
- f. Rachel Linbo asked if there were financial people within the church who may be available to join various commissions who better help each commission with managing their budgets.
- g. Kim reminded all to make sure that purchase authorization forms are completed and signed after purchases are made. Report these purchases quickly and use the respective budget accounting number, along with a brief description. One does not need to include proper names.
- h. Kim reminded all that she is required to sign the purchase authorization if it is over \$100, but that does not add value as the money is already spent. Instead, the communication needs to improve between commissions and Treasurer when issues arise that may put them over budget.
- i. Plan to budget for 2019 by October. Reach out to Kim with questions, but all commissions need to be engaged and active during the budgeting process; this has not occurred in the past. Make sure all the needs for the respective commissions are addressed; is your budget too high or too low in areas – discussions need to be had rather than just maintaining. She noted that some budget lines haven't changed in 5-10 years.
- j. Some commissions have dedicated accounts for a specific need/purpose. Dedicated accounts are not ending – continue to reduce the number of them year after year, they are monitored closely by Finance commission for need/use. For commissions who have dedicated accounts, reconciliation of those accounts is required on a monthly basis. Be sure to note what goes in and out of those accounts and then have a purpose for the

remaining spending. Dedicated accounts are not intended to allow that money to sit for years and not be used; while the general account checkbook is negative. Dedicated accounts currently total \$40,000 while the checking account for the general fund is only \$2,000.

- k. Kim asked all members that if they have a checking account, that is outside the general fund and dedicated accounts, they contact person needs to schedule a meeting with Finance to discuss this purpose of this account. Why does this account exist – does a budget need to be established that would remove this need? These checking accounts do not allow us to account for or record transactions, we cannot improve on things that are not recorded on our financials. This meeting should be scheduled with Kim/Finance before the end of the year.
  - l. Sam Marsland noted that Media Commission has several account numbers and was hoping they can merge them into one account. They feel that streamlining is possible.
  - m. Jessica Paulsen asked if CKP is included in this request, but Kim said they are considered an independent entity, so they should use their own income and expense accounts. Other entities that fall into this type of category would be Food for Friends, Thrivent Choice, and the Foundation.
  - n. Kim asked all leaders to not spend if items are not needed, even if there is room for the budget. There are some who believe that their budgets will be reduced in the future if money is not spent, and this is untrue.
  - o. Kim requests that most purchases are final and complete by December 15<sup>th</sup>. There is a lot of work from the financial aspect of closing the books at year end and we need the purchasing of items to be minimal at year end to help facilitate the close and debt payment planning.
6. Work (Jen Smith) – Kim requests that all commission leaders bring homework back to their respective commissions to discuss details of streamlining communication, efforts, and budgets. She requests to submit efforts put forth by November 1<sup>st</sup> so that it may be included in the Council Packet for Council’s November meeting.
- a. Questions to address include:
    - i. What is most important right now for your respective area?
    - ii. Who must do what? Who is the right person in each role (Who do you have? Who do you need?)
  - b. Maintain open conversations and dialogue with commission leaders. Jen provided recent examples, including:
    - i. OASIS meals moving from the Education Commission to the Mission and Outreach Commission
    - ii. Active discussions on the best placement for the old altar that was recently refinished. Commissions that should have input for its use include
      1. Properties
      2. Education
      3. Mission and Outreach
      4. Youth and Family
      5. Altar Guild

- c. Jen asked the attendees what else is needed, or what is needed from Council in order to help each commission fulfill their missions. Jodie asked the group about how they go about recruiting volunteers for events. Several responded with Sign Up Genius, personal invites, the Commission Expo, Ministry Site Plan
7. Jen closed the meeting in prayer.
8. Meeting was adjourned at 1:45pm.