

**Epiphany Lutheran Church  
Church Council Meeting  
November 12, 2019**

**Attendance:** Lynn Chrisman, Jim Pence, Kevin Saionzkowski, Darlene Bell, Pastor Brad Gee, Dave Zimmer, Margie Maurer, Mark Low, Lynn Rigelman, Bill Merriman, Jill Schellhase, Lori Toms-McMullen, Tonya Brown and Scott Gardner.

**Excused:** Bill Smith and Beth Klamo.

**Guests:** Barry Halter.

**Call to Order:** Lynn Chrisman called the meeting to order.

**Opening Prayer:** Pastor Brad led Council in prayer.

**Devotion:** Devotion by Beth was on the wonders that God has created for us here on earth. Enjoy the garden and the bird feeders. Enjoy every snowfall, watching birds. “Let them give glory unto the LORD, and declare his praise in the islands.” (Isa 42:12) We have a future filled with God’s love and peace, and we know that he has a lot in store for us.

**Minutes:** There being no corrections or changes, Council dispensed with the reading of the September 10, 2019 Minutes. After motion by Margie Maurer and second by Tonya Brown, motion carried to approve these Minutes.

There being no corrections or changes, Council dispensed with the reading of the October 15, 2019 Minutes. After motion by Lynn Rigelman and second by Dave Zimmer, motion carried to approve these Minutes.

**Treasurer’s Report/Approval:**

For September, there was an adjustment to Social Services for God’s Work Our Hands activity. The non-budget fund was moved into Social Services. That is now an accurate representation of where we stand with Social Services. The report and the Treasurer’s summary were updated for September. Expenses related to the meal for GWOH should be Congregational Life. We have budgeted for next year to keep it separate.

Year-to-date as of September 30, 2019, Gifts exceeded Expenses by \$2,081. Gifts are below prorated Budget by \$12,119. Expenses are below prorated Budget by \$15,776. Expense categories to note and monitor are Payroll exceeding prorated budget for staff payroll, and Operations exceeding prorated budget due to insurance variance due to timing of payment, copier/high speed/tech and continuing education.

There is nothing unusual to report on Large Disbursements. The monthly bank reconciliation has an unreconciled variance of \$1,154.11.

Fund balances are: Gifts and Furnishings \$76,068; Share the Light \$5,104; Unrestricted Savings \$83,588; 2021 National Youth Gathering \$9,882; Nonbudgeted Funds \$9,921; and Capital Campaign Fund \$148,511. The mortgage portion of the Capital Campaign could be used as a springboard for a new building. Funds from the Capital Campaign are being used to pay for the strategic planning consultant.

Bank Balances in the Operating Accounts are \$343,521 and Endowment Cash & Investments is \$199,772.

Year-to-date as of October 31, 2019, Gifts exceeded Expenses by \$9,002. Gifts are below prorated Budget by \$19,412. Expenses are below prorated Budget by \$12,160. Expense categories to note and monitor: Continuing Ed will exceed budget at year end; Staff Payroll, Building Operations, Copier/High Speed/Tech and Worship and Music will exceed budget by year end. We received a rebate from the Bureau of Worker's Compensation that was greater than what we paid.

There is nothing unusual to report on Large Disbursements. The monthly bank reconciliation has an unreconciled variance of \$1,120.28.

Fund balances are: Gifts and Furnishings \$102,898; Share the Light \$5,104; Unrestricted Savings \$83,588; 2021 National Youth Gathering \$9,932; Nonbudgeted Funds \$12,157; and Capital Campaign Fund \$148,538. The mortgage portion of the Capital Campaign could be used as a springboard for a new building. Funds from the Capital Campaign are being used to pay for the strategic planning consultant.

Bank Balances in the Operating Accounts are \$343,438 and Endowment Cash & Investments is \$200,052.

Church Windows implementation: 2019 data entry continues. In 2020, Church Windows will be the only program used. Kevin has a meeting scheduled with Pastor Carl and someone from Church Windows so we are set up to use that program in 2020. Lynn thanked Kevin for implementing the new system. Kevin recognized the work that Pastor Carl did doing double entries this year.

After motion by Scott Gardner and second by Bill Merriman, motion carried to approve the September and October Treasurer's Reports.

### **Pastor's Agenda:**

There will be a retreat scheduled with Council, staff and the Strategic Planning Team on either January 18 or January 25. This is a chance to be together in terms of how we implement the strategic plan. We will put together a schedule along with Cheryl Ricketts.

The Bowling Green University men's chorus will be here Thursday night. We are looking for volunteers to help with the meal.

The theme of Advent is “traveling light”, letting go of stuff, distractions and the past.

Energy has been going into the Strategic Planning Team and the Building Team. People are putting in the hours to make that happen.

### **Committee Reports/Roundtable:**

#### **Budget and Finance:**

Total Proposed Budget: \$787,497

- Budget increase of 2.57% (2019 Budget was \$767,782)
- Benevolence will remain at 10.00% of undesignated receipts
- Love offering required each week to support budget is \$15,144

#### **Summary of Budget Decisions:**

- Staff base salaries were increased by 3% as recommended by the Mutual Ministries Team
- Portico Benefit Services Gold+ Insurance Plan will be paid for The Minister of Music and Minister of Education. Pastor Gee and the Minister of Youth are enrolled in private insurance plans and are reimbursed as part of their Salary. The combined insurance increased by an average of 4-6%. I don't have final numbers for Pastor Gee and Minister of Youth.
- We have been blessed with the opportunity to add an Intern from Seminary at a cost of \$1,600/month. The 2020 costs could be covered by the Capital Campaign funds allocated to “Transition”.
- In 2018, we added additional vocalists, on a part time basis to the 11:00 Service at an annual budgeted cost of \$6,240. This will be returned for half the Sundays in 2020 at an expected cost of \$2,080. (\$40 per Sunday for 26 weeks for 2 additional vocalists)
- The largest increases in the budget are the payroll (\$10,870), Youth (\$3,000), Benefits (\$3,055), Benevolence (\$1,971), Social Services (\$2,500) and Congregational Life (\$725). The decreases are for Evangelism (\$1,500), Continuing Ed (\$1,750) and Reimbursed Expenses (\$775).
- Property Budget was increased slightly, with an expectation that the LED lighting will reduce the Utility cost and other expenses can be performed for close to the same level as 2019. Building Insurance expense and the Umbrella Policy premiums are expected to remain the same as they were last year. This seems to be consistent with past budgets where the premium is set and is not expected to change.
- Office Supplies was increased by \$1,000 to take into account the additional cost for paper and ink required to print our own bulletins. Postage was decreased by \$500 with the expectation of doing more electronic distributions and eliminating some mailings.
- There is no budget for Stephen Ministry. The expectation is that we have the staff for training and any associated costs can be provided from other sources.

- Worship and Music was reduced by \$1,225, with the expectation that we will be printing our own bulletin covers and not have to pay for these from an alternative provider. It was also increased by \$1,500 in order to pay for required maintenance on the hand bells.
- The Youth Budget was increased by \$3,000. This is less than requested, but is expected to provide additional funds for the Bellaire partnership, Retreat and Camp, Trunk or Treat, Programming and Recognition of Milestone Moments.
- The Evangelism budget was reduced by \$1,500, with the expectation that funds can be obtained from Thrivent.
- The Social Services budget was increased by \$2,500 to cover the First English food expenses, which was accidentally removed last year.
- Congregational Life budget was increased by \$725 to better reflect actual expenses.
- Reimbursed expenses have been reduced from \$7,800 to \$7,000 to bring them more in line with actual expense levels.
- Capital maintenance in 2019 included outdoor and indoor LED light replacement. Could this additional budget line item be eliminated? It amounts to \$3,400. This, too, was a reason for the small increase in the Building Operations budget. All capital maintenance will be funded by use of the Facilities Maintenance Fund.
- The cleanliness of this beautiful place of Worship is priority and as such, we continue to weigh the benefits of using a cleaning service or changing to in-house janitorial services. The budget amount for “Janitorial” will be sufficient for either in-house or contract services.
- Benevolence increased from 11.5% in 2013 to 13.5% in 2018. The Benevolence for 2019 was reduced to 10%. This amount doesn’t include the many special offerings and projects that we support throughout the year which are considerable! Council prays that this will only be a one-year reduction to aid compensating the temporary decline in Undesignated Offerings. This 10% level continues into 2020.

After motion by Lynn Rigelman and second by Margie Maurer, motion carried to approve the 2020 budget as presented.

**Congregational Life:** A Congregational Life sponsored hike took place on Saturday, October 19, 2019, at Rock Bridge State Nature Preserve.

Other up-coming activities are: An evening of Christmas caroling to some of our shut-ins on Sunday, December 1; details to follow. We are also in the planning stage for the next Women’s retreat to be held Saturday, January 18, 2020, and led by Brenda Buckwell again.

The next Congregational Life meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 19.

**Evangelism:** Nothing to report.

**Pre-School Board:** Lynn further explained how the money given to the pre-school is used. The school's only source of revenue is tuition. The last increase was in 2017. We expect to raise tuition in 2020. The rate is based on tuition costs of surrounding pre-schools. This covers salaries and operating costs. Benevolence from the congregation covers a curriculum trainer coming in once a year and equipment replacement in the classrooms.

**Property:** The committee will be putting in the balance of the LED lights this weekend. The snowblower was stolen and will need to be replaced. Due to the cost of replacement, this will not be turned in on our insurance to avoid an increase in our premium. Bill estimates it will cost approximately \$350 to replace it with another battery-operated snowblower. There is money in the Facilities & Maintenance fund.

**Social Services:** We are almost finished collected food for the LSS Food Panty. The Christmas catalog will be out soon.

**Stewardship:** BE CHURCH worship services started October 13, as planned. The final BE CHURCH worship will be on November 17. Giving Commitment Cards and the letter will be mailed to homes early the week of November 18. Commitment Cards will be in the bulletins the following week.

**Worship and Music:** Nothing to report.

**Youth:** Trunk or Treat was a success. There were over 400 in attendance.

Jeff has started confirmation classes. Scott praised Jeff for how he has taken the confirmation class and reshaped it, and how he is introducing the kids to Jesus. Jeff is a true believer and a great leader. It is great to be part of his team.

The Bellaire Christmas party is coming up.

**Old Business/New Business:** The Intern Committee is still meeting with Barry. A lot of hard work is happening with the Strategic Planning Team. They are shaping our direction and where we want to be.

The annual congregation meeting is scheduled for December 8 after the 11:00 service. Please plan to attend.

Lynn and Pastor Brad will be soliciting congregation members for the Nominating Committee.

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting will be on December 10, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. at Lynn's home.

**Adjournment:** Lynn led Council in the Lord's Prayer and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Darlene Bell, Secretary