**Congregational Meeting Minutes**

**(Voter’s Meeting)**

**December 5, 2021**

**Present:** Pastor, Zac, Cyndie, Bonnie, Sadie, Marj, Jerry, Diane, Sharon, Jen, Sandi, Penny, Linda C, Linda H, Judy T, Jane, Chad, Andrea, Bernice, Madonna, Carol, Del, Patrice, Judy P, Erin, Dan, Marilyn, Dorothy

Zac Huffman, President, called the meeting to order at 11:45 am. Pastor opened with prayer.

**Minutes Approval:**

Minutes from June 2021 approved with grammatical corrections. Linda Craig made the motion and Diane S. seconded the motion. The attendees approved the minutes.

Dorothy noted that some people without access to email did not have access to the last meeting’s minutes. In the future, the previous congregational meeting minutes and newly proposed budget will be printed and available from the church office.

**Treasurer’s Report:**

Zac presented the report and the proposed 2022 budget for Charlotte, the current treasurer.

He noted that the Outreach budget line includes Hospitality Team expenses and Tina Jaison’s compensation.

The new Office Manager, Leigh Ann Hinton, will begin her employment with St. Paul’s on Dec. 6, 2021. She comes highly recommended.

The current Treasurer, Charlotte Angeli will resign Dec. 31, 2021. She will continue to work on the end of the year records through January or so. Her current salary is $7149.00. Beginning in January 2022, Michelle Crislip will become the Treasurer. Her salary will be $8000.00 per year. Michelle will *not* be performing the Accounts Payable duties. We need a member of the congregation to perform these duties. She will have a one - year contract. She will be given access to the Planning Center. In the future, Michelle will meet with Pastor, Zac and Linda Craig.

The Treasurer’s Report and the 2022 budget were approved after motions by Diane and Sandi.

The 2022 offering envelopes have *not* been ordered. The cost is $483.00 for a box of 200 (minimum). Presently, we only have 14 congregational members who use the envelopes. Those members will be contacted and a plan for their giving will be adopted.

**Old Business:**

It was decided that Policy Based Governance will continue as St. Paul’s governing structure.

Strategic Plan meetings, with consultant Tina Jaison, continue. She has been hired for four sessions, two of which have already been held. We are focusing on discipleship and creating an outward facing church community as we work on activities and goals for next year.

**New Business:**

Zac presented the Slate of Officers for 2022. It is intentional that the terms are staggered to prevent the Board from consisting of all new members.

It was noted that a Financial Secretary is needed to replace Michelle Crislip who is now the Treasurer.

St. Paul’s has been blessed with new Youth Leaders. Chad and Andrea Muntz are being trained by Joseph Hopehull at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in Glen Burnie and are eager to start a new, vibrant program on January 1, 2022.

The Tech Team Leader position is now vacant. John and Diane Segelhorst have stepped up to temporarily help with the technology during services.

**Reports: Pastor Teklu**

“The God of heaven will make us prosper, and we his servants will arise and build,…”. (Nehemiah 2:20)

The Lord of the church has given our congregation the privilege to proclaim the Gospel through Word and Sacraments. The Ministry Office has been working on the church’s vision to grow towards spiritual maturity and “an outward-facing church.” The Pastoral office has been working on the following activities in God’s grace.

1. **Member’s care.**

Parishioners that are homebound, sick, and in need have been visited, counseled, encouraged, and comforted with God’s word and sacraments. I have been blessed in Shepherding and counseling parishioners of St.Paul’s.

1. **Prayer Ministry**

St. Paul’s prayer team has been praying for members, believers, community, our nation, and the nations of the world experiencing different challenges and blessings.

1. **Worship Service**

We offer Liturgical and Praise worship services every Sunday. Both services can be attended in person or online. We thank God for protecting us during the COVID 19 pandemic and enabling us to continue to gather and worship our Savior. We have been meditating on God’s word based on context and themes.

1. **Adult Bible Class**

We are studying the book of Acts. I encourage all members to join the Bible class either in person or via Zoom. Bible study is where we grow in our faith as disciples and identify our spiritual gifts to serve the Lord. For those who attend the Bible class, the Holy Spirit has been shaping us with his word from the book of Acts.

1. **Confirmation Class**

Twelve confirmands are attending Confirmation Class. Education Team members and I have been teaching the classes. We are blessed to observe our youth grow in their faith every week. The teachers include Bonnie, Sandi, Judy and Cyndie.

1. **Youth Ministry**

We are preparing to start St Paul’s Youth ministry in the new year, led by Chad and Andrea Muntz. We thank the Lord for giving us the Muntz family to restart the youth ministry. I ask all parents of the youth to assist in prayer and in leading a class. After the confirmands complete confirmation class, we plan to continue a Spiritual Formation program through the Youth Ministry.

1. **Special Services**

St. Paul’s has meditated All Saints Sunday, Thanksgiving, and the Lord’s Advent. The Lord has blessed us and encouraged us in his word and spirit. We are preparing for the Christmas pageant, Christmas, Lessons and Carols, and New Year services.

1. **Supporting Teams**

There are active and helpful teams supporting the Ministry Office. The prayer team, Sermon Series team, hospitality team, home visit team, and advisory team. The team members are committed lay ministers serving the Lord joyfully.

1. **Training**

There are different pieces of training by the district and Concordia Seminary that I have been attending. The activities have been helpful and eye-opening. Most parts of the training are practical guidelines that seminaries do not teach. I also have coaches that mentor me. I thank God for all who are investing in me and other pastors.

1. **Meetings**

There are various meetings that I have been attending, including Staff and Team meetings, Board meetings, Circuit meetings, district meetings, and administrative meetings.

Finally, I would like to praise the Lord of the harvest who gave me the grace to serve him. I also thank you all for supporting me in your prayers and resources.

God bless you as you anticipate his advent!

Pastor acknowledged the Sermon Series Team, which consists of Jerry K, Del J, Betty F and Al O. They provide him with resources and ideas.

He also acknowledged his Advisory Team, which consists of Devan D, Kate H, Jerry K. They have provided great encouragement to Pastor.

The SED will be hosting a training in Orlando, Florida which Pastor and his wife will be attending. The church will be paying for their airfare.

**Hospitality Team – Jerry and Marj Kane**

The Hospitality Team has learned to vet the weekly New Movers lists and the operation is moving smoothly.

We receive about 25 household names each week, and after vetting for refinancers and duplicates from previous lists, we are mailing about 12 invitations each week.

Unfortunately, we do not believe anyone has responded yet. But the program is still young!!

Jerry, Marj and Erin handed out brochures to Crofton Woods families at Holiday Shop last Friday.

Team Members include Marj and Jerry Kane, Diane Segelhorst, Cyndie Dixon, Erin Mitchell, and Vonnie Callaway.

**Ad Hoc Reopening Team – Diane:**

The Reopen team has continued to address congregation requirements for the second half of 2021. We base our decisions on the recommendations of the CDC as well as the local Anne Arundel County metrics published by the County Department of Health, the CDC and Johns Hopkins Medical Center. We try to consider that much of our congregation is an at-risk group, since we have a large number of older congregants, as well as children who have not until recently been eligible to be vaccinated.

As you know, we revised our mask policy to require masks again back in late August when case rates and test positivity rates soared both Nationwide, and in our state and county. As those metrics locally declined, we revised the policy again as of October 31, 2021. Masks are now optional except for those members interacting with children, for whom they are still required.

We will continue to follow the metrics and adjust our policies as needed.

The next decisions we hope to address, in priority and date order, are as follows:

1. Resuming some form of communion either at the rail or in continuous (socially distanced) line
2. Wearing masks for youth and teens, and in the presence of youth and teens.
3. Reopening the coffee machines and coffee bar.

Respectfully Submitted,

Diane Segelhorst, for the Reopen Team

**Education – Judy Tribby**

Team members: Sandi Corwin, Cyndie Dixon, Devan Dugan, Heidi Wood, Bonnie Weinhold, Judy Tribby

The Education Team has met via ZOOM when needed due to the pandemic. Most of our activities are in progress and running smoothly.

Bonnie and Cyndi with help from Sandi have been running Sunday School during the Education Hour. Attendance has been steady with elementary school age children attending. A youth group for pre-teens and teens will start in January during that hour and plans are underway for toddlers and preschoolers. The Sunday School will present a Christmas Pageant on December 12 with additional participation by the Confirmation Class students.

Confirmation Class meets on Thursday evening and is taught by Pastor Teklu, Sandi Corwin, Cyndi Dixon, Judy Tribby and Bonnie Weinhold. Students who are unable to be physically present join by ZOOM.

Pastor has adult Bible Class on Sunday morning during the Education Hour.

New leadership has been recruited for the youth group. The first activity will be the Sunday morning sessions during the Education Hour starting in January.

We hope to resume VBS in person this summer. Discussions will start after the holidays.

Respectfully,

Judy Tribby, Team Leader

**Sunday School – Bonnie Weinhold**

Our average Sunday School attendance is eight, with a high of ten.

Sunday School kids have wrapped up the Lutheran Hour Ministries Gospel Adventure Thailand Trek program. With the help of our congregation, they’ve raised $114.65 for this mission. Many thanks for supporting and encouraging our kids!

Along with the regular Spark curriculum, kids enjoyed making Thanksgiving crafts for our homebound members in November and are now focused on the first Christmas as they practice to present their Christmas pageant on Sunday, December 12, at 10:30 AM.

We will be adding a preschool group to our Sunday School. We need volunteers to help out with this once a month. Volunteers will be provided with very easy lesson materials. Preschoolers will spend the rest of the time playing and singing. Please see Cyndie or Bonnie if you can help.

Thanks to the efforts of Chad and Andrea Muntz, a Sunday School program, along with SPY activities for middle and high schoolers, will also be coming in January.

Thanking God for blessing our Sunday School!

Bonnie

**Tech Team – Diane**

I am NOT the Tech Team chair – that position has been vacant since the departure of Charlie Frater in October. Anyone interested in the position please contact me or Zac.

In July, the tech team received approval from the BoD to purchase additional equipment to assist in streaming of services. That equipment was received but has not yet been installed. It includes hanging microphones and combiners which will be used to capture the organ and general congregational singing, and a replacement wireless belt pack and associated equipment to replace Pastor’s aging equipment. A video switcher for when we upgrade to multiple cameras was also purchased, though we have no immediate plans or capability to use it. We hope to install the organ mics and associated equipment in January, and also install the upgrade to Pastor’s wireless mic at that time.

At the end of October, we transitioned to using the software package Proclaim to produce the service slides for both services. This software is a bit less powerful than the ProPresenter software used previously, but is much easier to learn and easier for multiple people to use. It is also about $165 less expensive per year. On November 28, we successfully streamed the liturgical service for the first time. The piano and organ sound are not perfect, but hopefully will improve when we install the new equipment. We will be streaming all services from now on, both liturgical and Praise and Worship. Those of you who are not able to attend the midweek Advent services this month, they are available on livestream and for later viewing on our YouTube channel.

Streaming a service requires two people in the tech booth for each service. One person operates the camera and streaming equipment, and the other advances the slides and turns the mics on and off as necessary. This second job, in particular, is VERY easy to learn. Anyone who can use social media or run (not create) a PowerPoint slide show can learn to do this job in five minutes or less. Right now, we have only 8 people who are on the team, and many of them are only available one Sunday per month. That leaves the remainder working 3-4 services per month. I personally have been or will be in the tech booth for 11 services in November and December. We desperately need more people to step in. Please talk to Diane or Jen to sign up to learn and help.

Thanks to Max Houck for training some of us on how to live stream the service. Thanks are also due to Pastor’s friend Pastor Josh who came and helped us learn how to put the “lower third” words on the video for the software we are using now and embed videos for the band to use. Many thanks to Jen Houck and Erin Mitchell who stepped in after the departure of the office manager to help with creating the slides for both services. Diane will be training the new Office Manager on the software tools necessary with the hope that she will fully take on this job in the future.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Segelhorst

**Worship – Jane**

The 8:15 a.m. service is now known as the Liturgical Worship Service. The 10:30 a.m. service is now known as the Praise and Worship Service.

Charlton Henry, organist, has had the three pianos tuned. He also had instrumentalists perform for Reformation Sunday, October 31, 2021.He continues to work with the Pastor in planning the 8:15 a.m. Sunday Liturgical Worship services.

The 10:30 a.m. Praise and Worship Service with the help of Linda Craig and Cyndie Dixon continues. Cyndie is choosing the songs and Linda is the singer. Joining Linda with the singing is Carrie Segelhorst, Cyndie Dixon, and Bonnie Weinhold. Devon Hale-Smith and Charlton has been helping with the keyboard. Anyone who wishes to join the group is most welcome. Anyone who has any ideas concerning finding a new leader for the group is most welcome.

Bernice Prescott is the new chair for the Altar Guild. Under her leadership we have not lost a beat. Thank you, Bernice.

Sandi Corwin continues to schedule the acolytes for the Sunday services and oversees their training. Thank you, Sandi.

Jane Felsentreger continues to schedule readers and ushers for the Sunday services. She also provides ushers with guidelines. There is a need for more ushers, especially at the 10:30 a.m. Praise and Worship Service. Volunteers for reading and ushering are always welcome. Ushers are also needed for the

4:00 p.m. Christmas Eve “Praise and Worship Service”. Please see Jane Felsentreger.

Diane Segelhorst and her crew of volunteers have continued with the slides on screens during the services and are now streaming both services. Thank you, Diane, for helping with this project.

The Worship Team continues to help Pastor with ideas and recommendations concerning the Sunday Worship Services, especially the special services such as Reformation, Mid-Week Advent, All Saints’ Sunday, Christmas Eve services, to name a few.

Submitted by Jane Felsentreger, Worship Team Chair

**Altar Guild – Bernice**

**Altar Guild Report – Congregational Meeting, December 5, 2021**

This is my first report as the Altar Guild team leader. It is brief because I just assumed this role on October 1, 2021.

The Altar Guild is a group of dedicated ladies who strive to provide a reverent environment by caring for the altar and the items used in our worship services. We prepare for Holy Communion, change banners and paraments, and clean and store Communion vessels and linens. We decorate the church for the Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter seasons and for special events as needed. We also have some helpful husbands who step in when heavy lifting is necessary, and we appreciate them.

The Altar Guild presently has eight members, as two have left this ministry this year. We would welcome any new members. Serving on the Altar Guild is a wonderful way to support the church, honor the Lord, and enjoy the fellowship of others. Typically, each member performs the weekly duties with other members for a total of three months across a year, as well as working several times for major holiday preparations. The current members are Carol Cook, Sandi Corwin, Linda Craig, Sharon Heineken, Rachel MacCumbee, Erin Mitchell, Bernice Prescott, and Jessica Silbert.

Just this past weekend, the Altar Guild prepared the sanctuary for Advent; we hope it helped you prepare for the season. In addition to the members, I want to thank Dan Mitchell plus Erin’s brother and mother for all their assistance.

If you are interested in joining the Altar Guild, please let me know. We would enjoy your participation.

Bernice Prescott

**Property – Zac**

* + Insulation:  The Narthex insulation replacement project was completed November 21, 2021 (Cameron Group).  All batting was removed and replaced with spray foam insulation. ($14,585)
  + HVAC:  Matrix Mechanical made adjustments to the AC system in July.  They have been contacted to do the same system check for the heating component.  Previously suggested that we remove all of the wall-mounted heat pumps to seal up the walls.
  + Eagle Scout projects:  The well containment project to replace railroad ties with paver stone was completed in November.  The east side fence project (Threesome Auto) did not proceed as anticipated and remains for St. Paul’s to consider. ($500)
  + Mulch:  A mulch party took place in August.  John & Diane, Del & Patrice and I spread 2 1/2 trailer loads of mulch on all beds around the church.
  + Patrice and Del continue to take care of grass cutting, fertilization and seeding.  Suggest scheduling a leaf raking party in early Spring.
  + Water system infrastructure:  Water filtering and system components continue to be an issue.  Del and Patrice have installed dehumidifiers for summer humidity control, replaced the woman’s Fellowship Hall toilet and fix things as they are identified.  John regularity cheeks and maintains the water filtering system and is in process of replacing the main water heater. ($200)

**Fellowship and Outreach– Penny**

**FELLOWSHIP** -- COVID continued to curtail almost all Fellowship events for this calendar year. That said, high points for this year included an Easter-Brunch-to-Go, a bagged snack and filled Easter eggs for every adult and child who attended worship on Easter morning. We celebrated the 1-year anniversary of Pastor Teklu’s ordination with a potluck luncheon in July as well as the establishment of OASIS, a summertime fellowship/outreach effort under the auspices of the Worship & Music Team with Michelle Angeli taking the lead. The awarding of the Folk Scholarship in August gave another reason for a safely conducted reception gathering.

Fellowship events not tied to the Team specifically, the Ladies’ Breakfast and Lunch groups continued to meet and to expand to restaurants in early Spring. Our usual wait staffs at these establishments were pleased to welcome us back to indoor dining. And the Men’s Weekly Coffee Hour was re-established at Wegman’s Café with a generous donation from the Ted Felsentreger memorial fund. A hearty group of 5-8 men regularly meet on Wednesday mornings to drink coffee and to solve world problems. Both the Women’s and Men’s groups warmly welcome newcomers to their fellowship.

As far as 2022 plans, we look forward to being able to hold more fellowship events when data shows that most school-age children in the county are vaccinated and area COVID rates continue to decline, thus making it safe to gather in-person inside and out of doors. There are plans to begin another Men’s Fellowship Group for men who are still in the workforce – please stay tuned!

**OUTREACH --** This team stayed engaged and busy all year. LOVE boxes were mailed to 5 St. Paul’s college students in February. Three Food Drives were held in February, in April, and in September; the April drive also benefitted CCCC’s Baby Pantry. One or more county residents have begun leaving food at the church door from time to time; these foods are generally taken up to the Lutheran Mission Society for their feeding program.

CARE bags continue to be made up and to go out monthly to those St. Paul’s members who are homebound – numbers of bags vary from 9-14 throughout the year. At Easter the CARE bag recipients also get Spring flowers and they will get poinsettias at Christmas. The CARE bag ministry expanded to a *weekly delivery* of a hardcopy sermon, worship folder, and various announcements for 4 households this year – many, many thanks to Bernice Prescott and Judy Tribby, and to Charlton Henry, Diane Segelhorst, Jane Felsesntreger for their faithful devotion to these deliveries!

Two graduating high school seniors – Anthony MacCumbee and Gretchen VonSeggern - were honored with a reception and each received a handmade quilt from the Quilters, reminding them that wherever they go in life they are covered by God’s love and prayers from their St. Paul’s family.

School teachers and families from our LifeBridge partners were gifted with cards to help pay for school supplies at the start of the 2021-2022 school year. Over $700 was collected and distributed for this purpose.

As we begin this Congregational Meeting, gifts and food are being collected for 6 families we’re sponsoring through the Lutheran Mission Society Miracle of Christmas (MoC) program. In addition, the Empty Nesters/Partially Empty Nesters have amassed a collection of toys to contribute to the MoC for the 2021 season.

Everyone is aware of the contributions made to St. Paul’s and to outreach efforts by the Quilters’ weekly ministry. Their annual Quilt Sale yielded over $14K and their contribution to St. Paul’s was $7K. We salute them for their devoted work and for their steadfast support of the church.

Finally, Penny Courtney was appointed in early 2021 to serve out an unexpected vacancy on the Lutheran Mission Society Board of Directors. Having completed that term of service, she was elected to her own 3-year term on the Board beginning in January 2022.

**STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL for 2022** – To hold a Pie Social at Thanksgiving 2022!

Respectfully submitted,

Penny Courtney -- for OUTREACH Team/FELLOWSHIP Team, 2021

**Website Report – Patrice**

Website Team Report 11/2021

Team members:

Patrice Jenstrom (chair)

Del Jenstrom

Heidi Wood

Rick Wood

Cyndie Dixon

2021:

Continued routine weekly and monthly updates of various pages and documents

2022:

1) Refresh/update the entire website keeping things simple and easy to maneuver yet still appealing to the public:

-videos and photos

-font

-wording

-look

2) Train a backup web admin

Respectfully submitted,

Patrice Jenstrom

The meeting ended at 1:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia L. Dixon

Secretary