

**QUARTERLY MEETING OF THE VOTERS ASSEMBLY**

August 15, 2024

*Equipping Every Generation to Live Rooted in Jesus*

**CALL TO ORDER**

Congregational Chairman John Swiertz called the meeting to order at 6:32pm. There were 52 people present: 51 voters including 3 Pastors, and 1 non-voter.

**OPENING DEVOTION**

Pastor Anderson opened with prayer and devotion.

**REGISTRATION & RECEPTION OF NEW VOTING MEMBERS**

One new member was registered: Dennis Wilm

**APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**

Motion to approve the minutes from April 25, 2024 as presented was made and seconded. Minutes were approved.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**Vision Implementation Update: Sue Buettner & Pastors**

Sue Buettner updated us on the vision elements and what we've done over the last year. Obviously, we spent a lot of time on the capital campaign, but also staff wellness, engagement on church ministries, and overall communication. Pastor Anderson then highlighted the five values and as we've planned for next year, recognizing we don't want to take on too much. While we'll always be working on them all, we will use them like building blocks. So, this next year, we'll work on what we see as Foundational-Biblical Teaching and Authentic Relationships. We want to focus on these two building blocks for this next year. Then, we'll grow into transformational faith and generous living and then we will ideally live that out as a compassionate witnesses. The focus on those two this next year will especially be in worship and growing small groups outside of worship.

Pastor Schultz has some examples he shared regarding small groups. Ideally 3-15 people is a great size with benefits including encouraging and helping each other. Models include how we've done with the book church wide studies in the past and another option is a more organic approach. The big point is to highlight those two values to help people plug in to St. Paul.

Across all the boards, we want to collaborate on these two values and how we can each work on that.

**Capital Campaign/Ministry Expansion Update: Mike Yurk & Jason Hasenstein**

- Mike Yurk reported construction began Wednesday. If parking in the lower parking lot, please be careful and follow the fencing signs/notices etc. Construction will meet w us every other week. Lots going on in the next few weeks with footings etc. This week Mike met with businesses across street and homes along 6th Ave. Notified that the police will enforce construction traffic not going south on 6th ave. Trucks need to come north on 6th off of Beech St. and First Ave. Jessie Groh is our construction superintendent and schedules things out 6-8 weeks to get things done for goal of end of school move in timeframe (June 1). All contracts have been signed off on and so far are within or under budget.

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Catalyst invoices will now start coming in and presently we've spent \$273,000 towards architectural fees. \$1.6 million sitting in the fund to start paying the rest. Promissory notes have been signed totaling \$550,000 with members with a few more coming. This opportunity is still available to members and non-members in the foreseeable future. Likely looking at big invoices toward the end of the year.

**Sabbatical Policy Update/Sabbatical Announcement: Chairman**

Elders and council have been working on a sabbatical policy/benefit. The policy was approved by church council, Pastor Anderson has applied, and the sabbatical committee reviewed and discussed the application with Pastor. It was then recommended to the church council and was approved. He is planning September 1-Nov 30. Pastor will share more in his report. We hope this rest, rejuvenation, and work to be done will be beneficial for him and the congregation. Please keep him in our prayers as well as our other pastors, leaders, and staff as they all continue to serve.

**REPORT-DIRECTOR OF FINANCE**

- **June 30, 2024 FYTD financial results**
  - Print copy of the financial cover sheet for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2024 was available as you signed in this evening. We have more detailed reports available, if any have an interest in seeing those reports. Please let me or the finance office know.
  - *General Fund:* A few highlights on the general fund are as follows:
    - Total cash was approximately \$1.33 million as June 30, 2024. Cash at June 30, 2023 was \$1.65 million.
    - First two lines combined shown on the cover sheet - offerings, memorials and gifts – fell short of the 2023-2024 budget by about \$14,000 or 0.6%. The actual 2023-2024 amount was also approximately \$1,700 or 0.1% less than the prior fiscal year (2022-2023).
    - The 2023-2024 school tuition and fees surpassed the previous fiscal year by approximately 18%, which was combined result of increased student enrollment and increased tuition.
    - Year over year, extended care center income was flat and fell short of budget by approximately 9%.
    - On the expense side, total expenditures increased by approximately 4% this year as compared to the year prior. Approximately 80% of St. Paul's total expenses go towards payroll, health insurance and other employee benefits. The congregation and school have done a good job of managing all other expenses.
  - *Insurance:* I mentioned at our last voters meeting in April that St. Paul's property, general liability and umbrella insurance policies through Church Mutual were not renewed effective June 30, 2024. We solicited a number of insurance agents and carriers and found that the insurance marketplace is not the friendliest environment presently to secure new policies. With that, we obtained new property, general liability and umbrella policies with Cincinnati Insurance Company that were effective June 30, 2024. We also transferred our workers compensation policy from Church Mutual to a new carrier, SFM. Lastly, for a nominal annual premium of approximately \$1,000, St. Paul also entered a new policy to cover for potential cyber events.
  - Personnel met with Concordia Plans and one of the packages has been discontinued so next year only one option will be available starting Jan 1. HSA option is included and so thinking through this, there will only be one option. If not, they can take the buy out.

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- *Building Fund*: The upper right-hand corner on the cover sheet reflects the building fund. Under Assets, please notice that we continue to separate the funds contributed to SPL for prior debt reduction (which totals \$260,000) and the upcoming capital campaign (which totals nearly \$1.6 million). On the ministry expansion project, St. Paul has paid approximately \$273,000 to date towards architectural services received to date.
- *% increase was asked on prop ins-* current policy is about almost double the previous rate. This was not budgeted for, so we will just have to deal with this moving forward.
- **Annual financial statement audit of St. Paul Lutheran School**
  - Participation in the Wisconsin school choice program inherently has a number of compliance requirements. One of those requirements is that St. Paul must have an annual financial statement audit performed. The fiscal 2023-24 audit of the school began near the end of July. We anticipate receiving a draft of the auditor's report at some time in September. Once we have a copy of the report, we are happy to share with anyone that has an interest in reading it. Please let me or the finance office know of your interest. The report must be submitted to the state of Wisconsin by mid-October. I will have a copy of the final audit report available at our November meeting.

**REPORTS OF ADMINISTRATIVE BOARDS**

**ELDERS – Brad Dorn**

- 11:00 outdoor worship services began June 16th and will run weekly through September 8th, the weekend of the church picnic. We've had a few rainouts so far this summer but have also been blessed with some very good weather.
- Ordination anniversaries were recently recognized for Pastor Maschke with 50 years and Pastor Schultz with 5 years. Dr. Kevin Voss will be recognized for 20 years later this month. We as a congregation are blessed to have these faithful servants as part of our church family.
- The board of elders oversees a Student Aid Fund whose purpose is to provide financial assistance to members of the congregation attending school for full time ministry as a pastor or teacher in the LCMS. It is funded primarily through earnings from an endowment fund established in 1983. This year approximately \$9,800 was distributed among 3 students.
- Beginning after Labor Day the Pastors will distribute the wafers during communion. This is to ensure that communicants receive one of the elements from a pastor when a pastor is serving on the lector or pulpit sides. That wasn't the case when we began serving both common and individual cups on both sides earlier this year.

**EVANGELISM – Casey Haas**

- Preparing for picnic, free will offering.
- Planning new member lunch after fall class
- New members always welcome to join our board

**YOUTH – Nichole Haas**

- Thank Amy Steiner and Elizabeth Wulfkuhl who joined Pastor Anderson at Whispering Pines as chaperones before starting back to school.
- Gearing up for the Lutheran Youth Gathering in 2025 with about 30 youth planning on attending.
- A CUW team is forming to help out especially during pastors sabbatical.
- Distributed devotion books and bookmarks to 5<sup>th</sup> grade and confirmands to encourage participation.

**STEWARDSHIP – Tim Hallett**

- The Board of Stewardship has been focused on congregational engagement with Servant Ministries. This included speeches by each Board member, Faith in Action form updates, and working closely with Marty Hauser to get up to date information on members. The Board has been coordinating with the Picnic committee to include a ministry fair for congregational members

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to learn more about each of the ministries. We are updating the scholarship policy for the upcoming year.

**CDS – see principal's report**

**PERSONNEL –** (John Sweirtz shared for the Board of Personnel)

- Jason explained the staff insurance issue
- Sabbatical policy work was the main focus for the last few months as well as budget.

**PARISH ED – Rachael Hasenstein**

- VBS was held in June with approximately 215 children registered and 90 volunteers.
- Rooted Women has been added as a line item to the Parish Ed. budget. They continue to offer multiple opportunities for women to engage in small group studies, service projects and family events such as the Mother/Daughter Tea held in May
- Sunday School will start back up Sunday, September 15
- A list of family activities for the year and Stepping Stones classes have been scheduled for the year.
- Currently our board has 1 vacancy and 3 long term members going off the board at the end of the year. Anyone interested in learning more about the board or potentially serving please reach out.

**PARISH PROPERTIES – Rob Gridley**

- New tables and chairs in gathering hall are in place.
- Large bushes removed by entrance and getting quotes for hiding what was behind them
- Volunteers doing plantings in carport area
- Carport repaired after being damaged again
- Visits and inspections done before construction happened

**PASTOR'S REPORTS**

**Pastor Anderson-**

3 Joys and a Challenge...

Joy #1- Youth Ministry-retreat at Whispering Pines in Shawano and he loves the trips. Continue to realize the importance for them to begin to seek relationships in person versus on their phones. Enjoy youth ministry a lot and still is passionate about this. Goal before sabbatical is getting plans in place for the youth for next year.

Joy #2- You-the laity. Faith in Action forms and finding ways to step up. With so many open board positions, we need greeters, and many roles-we cannot do ministry without you. Thank you for serving and I encourage you all to get involved and encourage your friends to do the same.

Joy #3- Express appreciation for the sabbatical. I know it's a lot to ask for me to step away, recharge, refocus and be better going forward. Many are stepping up in a big way to allow this for me. I don't take it for granted and that it's a sacrifice but I 100% believe it will be beneficial. Regarding this there will be another letter that will discuss not only what I'm doing while gone- leadership, PhD, and rejuvenation, but this letter (which is already online and paper copies will be available) will be about logistics, communication, and directions for the a congregation. Don't want you to think I don't care while I'm not here. It's the opposite, I will be doing this to serve you better and am excited for all of us moving forward.

Challenge- Continue to keep our ministry of St. Paul in your prayers. We are well situated and in a very exciting time. But that means Satan will try to thwart ours and God's plans for us. So please keep this ministry in your prayers, for God to protect us, keep us from being discouraged and continue to move forward for our future.

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Questions-If we see you during sabbatical, how do we act around you? (Answered in the letter as well). You can say hi to me if you see me. It's more about remembering to treat me as Luke Anderson and not Pastor Anderson to not counteract what we're trying to accomplish with the time away.

What is the plan for Wednesday night bible class? Ministry will continue and won't pause. Study on the Chosen during the Wednesday night timeframe. There will still be all the ministry things, just in different form/led by others.

**Pastor Schultz-** see his note

- Grants-\$2000 from district for college students for care packages.  
\$2000-for Gathering program, TV in pastor's office, idea is to use for couples counseling or use for the space for meetings it can be an alternate video site.
- Elections-general reminder be spiritually mature and please remember we are Christians first and Americans second, and it doesn't need to spill out everywhere.
- Sept 15 psri begins, about 30 to confirm and CDS confirmation class starts next week
- Podcast-about how buildings make ministry possible highlights the past, present, buildings, and leading up to the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary.
- Coverage is set for sabbatical thanks, I feel supported.

**Pastor Maschke-**Thanks for the anniversary celebration! The shut in calls continue but he's off for now, 3 weeks post-op from his hip surgery but plans on preaching at the end of the month. GriefShare to start up again on September 9 at Providence Place. Please consider it for any type of loss or grief and/or encourage others to attend.

**PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

1. Teachers returned this week and have been busy in meetings, new reading curriculum professional development, CPR training and getting their classrooms ready. Orientation Day is Monday and school starts on Wednesday.
2. Thursday, August 22 is our Panther Parent Back to School Food Truck Night from 4:30-6:30. Join us as we celebrate the start of the school year.
3. Enrollment for the 2024-25 school year will be in the low 380's. As expected, a slight decrease from last year because of a large graduating 8th grade class and smaller Kindergarten class. Exciting news is that we have over 100 PreK students.
4. Lutheran Counseling and Family Service will be expanding so a counselor will also be available to members as well as students. Tues & Wed 3:30-6. Pastor Schultz will be a good reference and more info to come.

**LIVING WORD HIGH SCHOOL REPORT:** no report was offered.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Ratification of Board Appointments: Chairman**

John requested for board ratification for an appointment of Mark Roeder for the Board of Stewardship to fulfill a term ending 2026. Motion, seconded and approved.

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**Endowment Committee Report -Jason Hasenstein**

- Endowment fund balance is approximately \$1,175,000 as of June 30, 2024. Over the past 12 months, the fund balance increased by \$147,000 or about 14%. The endowment fund as well as each of the other investment funds overseen by the committee each continue to be invested through similar investment policies comprised of a combination of fixed income and equity-based investments.
- 2024-2025 endowment grant applications were approved at the April voters meeting. Funds have been set aside in the form of cash to be distributed for the approved grants in the current fiscal year.
- Lastly, to highlight one of the other funds overseen by the endowment committee. At this meeting we will highlight the Bleeke Memorial Scholarship Fund. Scholarships are available from this fund with the purpose being to promote Lutheran elementary and secondary education specifically with St. Paul, Living Word, Sheboygan Lutheran, and Milwaukee Lutheran High School. Eligible persons are 8<sup>th</sup> graders who plan to enroll at Living Word, Sheboygan Lutheran or Milwaukee Lutheran. The terms of the scholarship state that it is a one-time only award. I will be doing a better job to help promote awareness of this scholarship with the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade classes at St. Paul. Up to 4 scholarships can be awarded from this fund annually. For students that may be interested, an award selection committee would be comprised of 3 faculty members and 2 members of the Board of Education to make a decision of whether to award the scholarship.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Next Voter's Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 21, 2024 at 6:30.

The Meeting was adjourned at 7:51PM with prayer and singing of the Common Doxology.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jill Hoven, Congregational Secretary