

Vision & Mission Forum (Annual Meeting) Minutes
January 28, 2018

In Attendance:

Pastor Rick Skare, Lead Pastor
Pastor Kristin Skare, Pastor of Spiritual Care
Pastor Tyler Strom, Pastor of Faith in Action
Jim Peterson, President
Michelle Andersen, Vice President
Josh Holland, Treasurer
Linda Thomas, Director of Administration
+an additional 61 congregation members

The meeting was called to order by Jim Peterson

Opening Prayer
Pastor Tyler Strom

Presentation of Meeting Instructions and Agenda
Jim Peterson, President

Discussion: None

Approval of 2017 Annual Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the 2017 Annual Meeting minutes was made by Pastor Rick Skare and seconded by Les Smith.

Discussion: None

Vote by roll call: 0 opposed. Motion passed.

2017 Financial Report
Linda Thomas, Director of Administration

Totals through December 31, 2017:

Regular Offerings in 2017: \$1,251,059.69
Budgeted Offerings in 2017: \$1,228,113.00

Total Church Operations Income in 2017: \$1,549,246.78
Budgeted Church Operations Income in 2017: \$1,488,730.00

Total Church Expenses in 2017: \$1,500,244.01
Budgeted Church Expenses in 2017: \$1,522,263.00
Total Income Against Expenses in 2016: \$49,002.77

Discussion:

Liz Pearson: What happens to the end-of-year profit?

Linda Thomas: It rolls over into 2018 income.

Andy Berndt: Is our budgeting to not have any savings for us at the end of the year, and is that normal?

Linda Thomas: Yes, that's correct and yes, that is what we do since we are a non-profit organization.

Andy Berndt: So, we don't budget to save, we just budget to take in what we put out? If we make a capital buy we just build that into the operations?

Linda Thomas: We have a building fund for that.

An explanation of the Building Fund vs. Operations & Ministry Fund was given by Linda Thomas.

Building Fund Update

Pastor Rick Skare

In 2017 the church leadership decided to hold off on any plans for the building, but we are still working on the building appeal. We continued to meet with architect and building committee. A master site plan was established in 2009 and the next move was to create a permanent sanctuary. There was discussion amongst our leadership & it was determined that the best thing would be to increase fellowship space. The building plans are still on hold but we are in a process of discerning what God is calling us to do next. Should we rethink the worship space? Should we build more fellowship space? This is an exciting time of growth.

Discussion: None

Presentation of the 2018 Budget

Michelle Andersen, Vice President

Last year at this time the Executive Team brought a negative budget to the budget meeting and that did not go over well. They worked for hours and hours and hours to find room to cut to bring back a balanced budget.

Throughout this past year, the entire staff worked very hard on keeping expenses down and by the goodness of God and the generosity of the people of this church, the Executive Team brings not only a balanced budget, but we were also able to add back in many of the line items that were cut last year. Thank you so much for your donations of not only money, but of your time and talents as well. We would not be the wonderful church that we are and be able to do the ministry that we are able to do without you!

This past year, we have tried to educate the congregation (especially the young families and new members) that our church is run 100% on your donations. Many people do not realize this.

In 2017, our budgeted Income was \$1.4M with a \$37,000 debt (carried over from 2016).

Details of the 2018 Budget:

- 2% cost of living increase for staff, plus an increase for those who have fallen behind synod guidelines
- Pastor Tyler and Pastor Kristin will be full-time beginning in February.

- The hiring of paid musicians at all services.
- Small Group education leader – Lydia Svendsen
- Increase in communications budget, including more advertising and website enhancements
- Youth and volunteer ministries, including 2 interns to help during summer youth programs
- New database (current software is 17 years old)
- +3.5% historical increase in offerings
- The total budgeted Operations & Ministry Fund expenses for 2018 is \$1,540,044.00.

Some time was given for members to look over the financial information.

Discussion:

Liz Pearson: In 2017 there was a debt reduction but there's nothing budgeted for this year. Why?

Michelle Andersen: Last year we went into 2017 with \$37,000 in debt. This year we are going into the year with a 0 balance so that's why it is not in the budget.

Heather Swanson: Staffing is a large portion of the budget. We are planning to combine hs and ms into one position. Express my concern that that is a large growth in ministry and it seems like there won't be enough staff energy behind that growing ministry.

Michelle Andersen deferred the question to Pastor Rick: We combined 2 youth ministry positions into 1 youth position, the Director of Youth Ministry. The move was motivated by the numbers. We now have quite a few Children, Youth and Family staff members that work with confirmation, so we have enough staff for confirmation ministry. Outside of that, especially the high school ministry, we need one person to focus on that. Nationally, churches are losing numbers of high schoolers engaged in youth ministry. Because we are looking at new candidates, we have made that position more enticing by having a full-time position. We added a Director of Middle School Ministry about 10 years ago, and we are now at a point where we're back to growing that ministry. As growth continues, we can break that out into 2 positions again. It makes better economic sense to have 1 staff person now. This summer we will hire 2 summer interns to help during the busy time of year for youth ministry.

Paul Kennedy: There was a 3.5% increase in offerings compared to 2016. How do this year's pledges compare to last year's?

Linda Thomas: In 2017 our pledges were about ½ of our estimated income. For 2018, the pledges are less; maybe 1/3 of our overall offering income. We didn't get in as many pledges this year as last year.

Paul Kennedy: Is that a concern?

Linda Thomas: No. People just give, they don't necessarily pledge. Many of those in the younger demographic don't understand the importance of pledging.

Michelle Andersen: we will continue to try and educate people that we rely 100% on their donations.

Pastor Rick: we will do another pledge campaign for those who did not pledge this year.

Tom Bergeson: Did you find the \$9,000 error from last year?

Linda Thomas: Yes! We found the error and corrected it.

A motion to approve the 2018 budget was given by Jennie Priebe and seconded by Liz Pearson.

Discussion: None

Renewal of the Line of Credit from the Bank

Jim Peterson, President

Jim Peterson explained the reason to keep the line of credit open, that there is no cost unless it is used. He also noted that we have a dedicated fund that we have had to use each year to meet budget, especially during summer months.

Discussion: None

A motion to approve the renewal of the line of credit was given by Floyd Broman and seconded by Mark Walstrom.

A motion to vote for the approval of the proposed 2018 Operations & Ministry budget, the renewal of the line of credit, and the 2018 Building Fund budget was made by Paul Kennedy and seconded by Susen Kay.

Ballots were collected and counted.

Elections

Jim Peterson, President

Pastor Rick introduced the candidates for officers of the 2018 Executive Team:

President: Michelle Andersen

Vice President: Mike Van De Riet

Secretary: Lori Perna

Treasurer: Josh Holland

Member at Large: Rae Ann Hallberg

Member at Large: Mark Walstrom

Pastor Rick requested volunteers to be Lay Voting Members to the Minnesota Area Synod Assembly at Lord of Life Lutheran Church in Ramsey. It is especially important to attend this year because we will be voting on a new bishop. Bishop Ann Svennungsen is up for re-election but it could be others. Word of Peace can send up to 7 voting members plus 1 youth voting member. If interested, please let one of the pastors know. Married couples welcome as we need both male and female representatives.

A motion to call new officers to the 2018 Executive Team was given by Paul Kennedy and seconded by Susen Kay.

Vote by roll call: 0 opposed. Motion passed.

Congregation Report
Pastor Rick Skare

A video outlining the mission and vision of Word of Peace was shown and will be sent to the congregation in an email later in the week.

Pastor Rick gave a recap of 2017, pointing out the key events of the year, the financial challenges and the faithful giving and leadership of the congregation to meet those challenges. He also referred to the Vision & Mission 2018 booklet and his sermon from that morning.

In addition, Pastor Rick mentioned that a leadership retreat will be held off-site on February 9 & 10 to develop four strategic initiatives for the next couple of years.

Pastor Rick thanked the congregation for coming to the forum and thanked those who served or will serve on a ministry and/or leadership team. A special thanks and gift was given to outgoing President, Jim Peterson.

Thank you - your presence here shows that you care about the mission of WOPLC. Especially if you have served on a ministry team or will be in 2018. Acknowledge our 2017 Exec. Team. (Gift for Jim Peterson)

“The Church Office” (a humorous look behind-the-scenes at church) video was shown.

Reading of the Results
Jim Peterson, President

- Motion to approve the 2018 Operations & Ministry Fund Budget: 67 yes; 1 abstain. Motion passed.
- Motion to continue the open line of credit at the bank: 67 yes; 1 abstain. Motion passed.
- Motion to approve the 2018 Building Fund Budget: 67 yes; 1 no. Motion passed.

New Business
Michelle Andersen

None.

Closing Prayer (Pastor Tyler Strom), Song (“Make a Difference”), and Meeting Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was given by Megan Moen and seconded by Tom Burgeson.

Vote by roll call: 0 opposed. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Perna, 2018 Executive Team Secretary
Jennie Priebe, Communications Specialist