

**Word of Peace Executive Team
Meeting Minutes
April 10, 2018**

In Attendance:

Rick Skare, *Senior Pastor*
Kristin Skare, *Pastor of Spiritual Care*
Linda Thomas, *Director of Administration*
Michelle Andersen, *President*
Mike Van De Riet, *Vice President*
Lori Perna, *Secretary*
Mark Walstrom, *Member-At-Large*
Rae Ann Hallberg, *Member-At-Large*
Michael Sahlen, *Minister of Worship and Music*
Mike Sip, *Strategic Planning Team*

Devotion: Pastor Rick - Core Value: "Worship"

Prayer: Pastor Rick

Motion to approve March Minutes: Pastor Rick

Second: Mike Van De Riet

Discussion: None

Motion carried

Agenda Items:

Financial Update – All/Linda Thomas

YTD through March 2018

Regular offerings \$95,529

Regular offerings are behind budgeted offerings by \$(21,466)

Behind last year's offerings by \$(28,334)

Total February Church expense \$131,242

Total February Church expenses are under the budgeted expenses by \$(8,718)

Total February Income against expenses \$(22,989)

Total YTD Income against expenses (\$53,589)

Total YTD Budgeted Income against expenses \$6,127)

General Fund Loan from Dedicated \$20,000

Mortgage Total \$1,545,426

Staff Updates – All/Linda Thomas

- Staffing Updates
 - Monday evening services now supported by Rachel Kurtz
 - Vocalist for 9:45 am service hired
 - Drummer position for 9:45 am and 11:00 am services still pending; candidates identified
 - \$2400 Financial request – 2 focuses: musician talent retention and mailing expense
- Motion to approve:** Mark Walstrom

Second: Rae Ann Hallberg

Discussion: None

Motion carried

Strategic Planning Team Updates – All/Linda Thomas

- Annual Roadmap completed
- Groups identified have many similarities
 - Recognize the importance of small group ministry
 - Raise awareness and increase participation
 - Target those inside and outside the church today
- Streamlined core group of young adults to High School aged individuals
 - Original focus group ages 15-25 changed to High School age
 - Leadership training and ministry with these individuals
- Guided by our core values
 - Deepen people's relationships with God
 - Seek out and use the gifts of people of all ages
 - Be a positive force in the community
- Build strong healthy relationships/ Identify new ways of service
Look back and celebrate what we have accomplished
Look forward for newness and possibilities
- Set goals and timelines
Baseline- example: how many youth are involved today?
How many participate in our small groups today?
- Next steps- cascade information to all teams
 - May 1, 2018 All Team Meeting (re-scheduled)
 - Strategic Planning Team to partner with Pastor Tyler, Lydia and Carrie
 - May, June and August planned for next steps/ activities

Miscellaneous – All/Linda Thomas

- Holy Week/ Easter Updates
14 services/ over 4200 in attendance
6th service added this year
Attendance was down approximately 300 as compared to last year
Spring break for St. Michael and Rogers schools
- Discussion around the importance of small group ministry
Examples: sports, cooking, outdoors in addition to traditional groups such as grief or divorce
Location of small groups may be held outside of church setting
Important to gather feedback around scheduling- time of day/ day of week
- Continued discussion surrounding importance of understanding why individuals may leave our church
- Current statistics: 50% attend weekly/ 35% attend 1-2 times per month/10% attend every few months
3% attend on special occasions such as Christmas or Easter/ 2% seldom attend
Pastor Kristin shared important variables: Theological differences, Individuals' relationships with God, differences of opinion regarding church life
- Emergency response plan updates in progress
Working with Rogers Police Department for assistance

Closing Prayer: Lord's Prayer - Pastor Rick

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Perna, *Secretary*

**ANNUAL ROADMAP
STRATEGIC GOALS FOR 2018-2019**

The following values guide the focus of our congregation in 2018-2019:

- Deepen people's relationships with God
- Seek out and use the gifts of people of all ages
- Be a positive force in the community
- Build strong healthy relationships

We will carry out these values through the following goals:

1. Increase participation among our uninvolved attenders and CYF (Children, Youth, and Family) families by offering at least 12 new small group opportunities during the 2018-2019 program year.
2. Highlight and celebrate different service opportunities each month to increase the number of participants serving Word of Peace and our neighbors through monthly worship announcements, newsletter articles, visual displays, etc., beginning June 2018 and continuing indefinitely.
3. Grow our high school ministry with ongoing gatherings and leadership training beginning in the spring of 2018 for youth already involved in the life of the congregation as confirmation junior guides, church school teachers, ELCA Youth Gathering participants, attendees of the girls leadership class, etc.

EXECUTIVE TEAM REPORT
PASTOR RICK SKARE
3/14/18 – 4/10/18

1. I continue to do the **Regular Duties** expected of me on a daily and weekly basis including: preaching, teaching, worship planning and leading, presiding at baptisms, weddings, and funerals, visiting, counseling, communicating, administrating the areas of ministry I oversee, praying, and studying.
2. We concluded our **Wednesday evening Lenten Services**. We were blessed with interesting and engaging speakers from the congregation who expanded our “Messages from the Wilderness” theme. We were also blessed again with our musicians leading us in the Holden Evening Prayer Service.
3. I met with the **ELCA Youth Gathering** leaders and youth from our church for a planning meeting on March 18. I will be attending the Youth Gathering as a chaperone June 26 – July 1.
4. I worked with the Strategic Planning Team and some of the staff in finalizing our **strategic initiatives for 2018-2019**. This is a process that began with the Leadership Retreat in February. These strategic initiatives will now be communicated to the Ministry Teams and congregation.
5. I have continued to coordinate our journey through the Bible series for next September-May, **“Cover to Cover: The Bible in a Year”**, with the CYF staff and pastors. I am excited that worship, adult education/small groups, church school and confirmation can all be focusing on the same Bible readings.
6. As pastors, we also decided on our **summer preaching series**. June 3 – July 9 we are doing a series on Mark, chapters 2-6, and July 15 – August 27 we are doing a series on the book of Ephesians entitled, “No Longer Strangers”. We also plan on offering a Sunday morning Bible study during the summer on both Mark and Ephesians to go along with these series.
7. Linda Thomas, Kari Osmek, Julie Picconatto and I met to begin the revision of our **Emergency Response Plan**. We will be forming an Emergency Response Team and contacting the Rogers Police to work on the plan.
8. We had a wonderful and meaningful **Holy Week and Easter** with 14 worship services and over 4,200 in worship attendance for the week. Adding a sixth worship service for Easter helped spread out the attendance and we will go with the same schedule for next year. Our Easter attendance was down this year by about 300, but that matches the attendance for 2016 when both school districts were on spring break (as they were this year). Next year Easter is later and neither school district will be on spring break so attendance should be up again.
9. Along with the other pastors, I **visited some of the homebound** of our congregation with Holy Communion for Easter. As pastors, we strive to visit the 14 homebound members of our congregation on a quarterly basis.

10. During the month of April, we are offering three adult forums on Mental Health Issues. I attended the forum on April 8 with Pamela Murphy from the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) facilitating.
11. Also on April 8, Pastor Kristin and I participated in the **Eagle Scout Award Ceremony** for Jonathan Tomsche. Again, it is wonderful that our church can host this event, as well as the meetings for Scout Troop 582.
12. I had the opportunity to **read for the preschoolers** on April 9. This is a great way for the staff to participate in the preschool ministry of our congregation.

Pastor Report
Pastor Kristin Skare
March 13-April 9, 2018

The theme for this past month of work was Lent, Holy Week, and Easter. These worship services and events consumed most of my time with planning and execution. I am so grateful for all of our members who volunteered to make all of the worship services and events possible. We are church together and this time of year is a reminder to me how very fortunate we are to have so many people who live out their faith in very active ways.

Preaching – I preached about Hagar on Sunday, March 11 and Monday, March 12.

Lent Worship- I led worship as a music leader for Holden Evening Prayer Service on 3/14, 3/21 and was responsible for planning the Wednesday Lent service on 3/14. I interviewed Mario Olson and Jennifer Harlan regarding their journey through divorce and the Word of Peace Divorce Care ministry.

Bible Study – I led weekly Thursday morning Bible study at 10 am.

Preschool – I read books to preschoolers for their emphasis on, “I love to read” activities.

Pastoral Care – I logged 23 Pastoral Care contacts that include visits, counseling, and phone calls. 85 Easter cards were mailed to people who are ill, hurt, in crisis, or grieving in addition to our regular card ministry.

Sunday Morning Bible Study – I led the Deuteronomy Adult Study on March 18.

Peer group – I met with both of my Peer Groups. These meetings are so important for idea sharing, support, and prayer.

Easter Egg Hunt – I was asked to do the welcome and opening prayer for this event. I also served at the Garden of Prayer station where people could tie ribbons that represented a particular kind of prayer to a prayer wall. This was hung in the south CYF entry during Easter. 500 people attended this event. It was a great outreach opportunity!

Palm Sunday/Monday – I prepared two stations for this worship service alongside Pastor Tyler and Pastor Rick.

Engel House Worship – I led a Holy Week/Easter worship service for residents of Engel House on March 28.

Maundy Thursday – I completed the script, purchased Seder items for the service, rehearsed the service with worship leaders, communicated with First Communion families, worked with 18 confirmation students and parents who volunteered their time for set-up and take-down, and set-up for the event. This worship service was a highlight of my Holy Week experience for me because I was able to be commune First Communion students in a very special space on a very special night and see so many people work towards a common goal in order to try something new for worship.

Good Friday – In addition to helping lead two worship services, I set-up three of the four prayer stations and was present until midnight on Good Friday for the people attending the Good Friday prayer vigil.

Easter – I assisted leading six Easter services alongside Pastor Rick and Pastor Tyler.

Holy Week Review – The worship leaders reviewed all Lent, Holy Week, and Easter worship services and events in order to review what went well and what we can tweak for next year.

Planning New Member Reunion – I am working with the CARE Team
I am working with three couples for a July, September, and October 2018 wedding.

Book Study – I am re-reading and writing curriculum for a three-week book study on Brene Brown's book, *The Gifts of Imperfection*, that begins April 22 at 6:30 pm. We are doing this study in response to city of Buffalo's Bounce Back Project. We already have 12 women signed-up for this event with very little advertising.

ELCA Gathering – Dawn Saxton and I completed travel arrangements for our final training and execution of our responsibilities for the 2018 ELCA Youth Gathering.

May 6 Youth Service – We have set the date for a youth service in order to develop youth leadership skills and to raise awareness of the youth attending the 2018 ELCA Youth Gathering. This Gathering occurs every three years and includes worship, service, learning, and fellowship from a Wednesday night through a Sunday morning.

General Pastoral Duties – In addition to the above activities, I served my general ministry duties in meetings, worship preparations, team support, and CYF team support.

Executive Team Monthly Report
Pastor Tyler Strom, Faith in Action
Feb-Mar 2018

Global Mission

1. The mission trip to Jamaica was another huge success this year due to the tremendous support of the congregation. Many stepped forward with donations, words of encouragement, and prayers that empowered our missionaries to do Christ's work in Jamaica. The ten-member team from Word of Peace joined forces with twenty others from Zion Lutheran Church in Buffalo, and we were amazed by the important ministry that happens in one week.
 - o The mobile medical clinic visited three locations and brought medical treatment to those who would otherwise be unable to afford this life-giving care.
 - o In three short days, a construction team built a home for an incredible woman who would otherwise have been homeless.
 - o Much needed affection and love was shared with disabled children at a rural orphanage as missionaries helped with feeding meals, playing, and building painting projects.
2. To encourage the ongoing support of our global missionaries service on short-term trip; three baskets from Jamaica are being raffled. The winners will be drawn on April 8 when the Mission Jamaica team will be sharing more of their experiences in worship.

Local Mission

3. March is Minnesota Food Share month. Word of Peace has consistently ranked among the top gives for this food drive, and we hope to do so again this year. Shopping lists and paper bags were distributed after worship on March 3 and collection goes through the end of the month.

Communications

4. In an effort to heighten communication with the congregation, the April newsletter will be mailed to all members. In addition to news and events happening in the following month, this newsletter will also include important information about Holy Week and Easter, continued giving over the summer months, and provides a preview of new programming coming this fall. Thanks to Jennie Priebe for tackling this project.

Congregational Life

5. Preparations are underway for April's Peace Market. Our new Event Coordinator, Jill Smith, has taken initiative in recruiting volunteers, preparing signup materials and marketing, and bringing new ideas to streamline this congregational fundraiser.

Adult Education

6. I have been leading a Lenten class, A Renewed Spirit, on Sunday evenings that experiments with different ways for people to enter into prayer and meditation. Methods have included *lectio divina*, prayer labyrinths, embodied prayer, music and song, and contemplative prayer. It has been a great way for people to center themselves before beginning a new week and finding some intimate connections with God.
7. The Sunday morning adult education class on the Book of Numbers has been well received. The class room is filled each week with people excited to dive deep into God's word. This study is

connected to the Wilderness theme also being explored in worship each week. The class is being taught by the pastors on a rotational basis.

8. The Mental Health Task Force is finalizing plans for their three-week series of Mental Health Forums.

Small Groups

9. This fall we will begin offering a new way for adults at Word of Peace to connect with one another. These small groups called Life Groups will be rooted in fellowship, discipleship, and service. People connect through authentic relationships, navigating together the different paths and points we are at in our faith, and in the discovery of our spiritual gifts which empower us to serve our neighbors near and far. Lydia Svendsen is spearheading this project. Our hope is to engage members in deeper ways, especially those members who are not connected in other ways.

General Pastoral Duties – in addition to preaching, planning and leading worship, teaching, presiding at baptisms, weddings, and funerals, pastoral care and visitation, communication, and administration, noteworthy activities from the past month include:

10. Leading worship at Wellstead and Diamond Crest, preschool chapel, and Holden Evening Prayer services on Wednesdays.
11. Marriage preparation and baptism classes.
12. New member class on March 2 in which we welcomed a dozen new members into the life of the congregation.

In Christ,

Pastor Tyler Strom

EXECUTIVE TEAM UPDATE MARCH/APRIL 2018

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY, Dawn Saxton

Church School continues to meet every week. The kids sang Joy and Hosanna during three services on Palm Sunday and the Monday night worship the next day. Bible Blast brought in over \$1400 to purchase bibles for Word of Peace kids.

CONFIRMATION, Megan Moen

Confirmation is gearing up for the 2018-19 school year. Registration opens 4/22 and, new this year, we will have an online registration option. Confirmation will welcome all 5th graders and their parents to an Open House on 4/25 so they can see what confirmation is all about and have a time to ask questions. Rite of Passage and Affirmation of Baptism planning is also well underway. We will host an 8th grade night on 5/9 where the 8th graders will meet Christina and participate in a "bridging" event to give them a glimpse of what is waiting for them in high school ministry. During this time there will be a parent meeting to go over what is coming up between now and January when their child is confirmed. Calendar planning is well underway with service events already being booked for 2018-19.

YOUTH MINISTRY, Christina Verbick

I just started a few weeks ago and am diving into all sorts of planning for the upcoming months. Just finished the Easter Breakfast fundraising event, currently working on Plant Sale fundraiser, summer stretch plans, Youth Gathering details, along with the ending of the program year with the final confirmation nights, MSM.AM and 5th grade bridging events.

FAMILY MINISTRY, Rachel Smith

We had record attendance at the Easter Egg Hunt. 230! We usually average around 200. That is WITH switching 4th graders over to a new, bridging-style event for older kiddos in 4th & 5th grade. Needless to say, Rachel was sweating buckets as she was trying to kick-off the event and kids JUST. KEPT. COMING. Hahaha. 😊 Confirmation kiddos rocked it by filling 3,820 eggs! 😊

Our busy bag revamp is in full swing. Ruth Twito and Amy Haag are hard at work creating new bags that will complement the new rebrand & color scheme that Jennie Priebe has worked so hard on. Our bag count will more than double and bags will be available for children in Preschool & Early Elementary as well as some clip boards for older children and worship bulletins for all age groups.

GENERAL, Kari Osmek, CYF Director

- Christina Verbick has begun as our Director of Youth Ministry. Her first day, March 18, was filled with MSM.AM, Church School, her installation, and a Houston meeting. In her first week, she also experienced 5th grade bridging, the Egg Hunt, the Easter Breakfast, and Plant Sale prep. She has handled it all with competence and enthusiasm.
- We continue to make plans for summer trips and camps. We currently have two possible openings on our Houston trip, so feel free to send possibilities our way.
- Vacation Bible School is right around the corner! Plans are progressing well.
- We have distributed summer offering envelopes and reminders to our church school families. We will also be sending a bi-weekly email blast to all of our CYF families over the summer to keep our ministries in the forefront of their thoughts and encourage giving and participation.
- In conjunction with the pastors, we are coordinating our Confirmation and Church School lessons to match the Narrative Lectionary schedule for 2018-2019.

- As anticipated, we have already discovered times when having one less person in the Youth Ministry department makes it difficult for us to schedule programming. We know that this will especially be an issue with Summer Stretch, so will begin looking for Summer Interns soon.
- I am thankful to have a highly competent and enthusiastic CYF staff in place. We are now in a position to look forward intentionally. To that end, we will be taking a day to plan and clarify goals for our upcoming ministries on Monday, April 23.