

Hinsdale ECC Council Meeting

August 22, 2011

Present

Chad Burlet
Kevin Barry
Jean Regan
Linda Noonan
Arlene Cheff

Paul Allen
Lars Stromberg
Jim Kramer
Todd Jensen
Jim Brorson

Roger Johnson
Jill Rhiner
Jen Secola
Jim Bell

Chad called the meeting to order. Paul Allen led devotions from Romans 15.

Minutes – Chad Burlet

- *June's meeting minutes were moved, seconded and approved as submitted.*

Mid-Year Congregational Meeting – Chad Burlet

- Chad met with the pastors regarding the upcoming meeting. They emphasized that we should try for more of a town-hall meeting, covering all ministries.
- We'll ask the congregation to approve the preschool budget. Kevin will give a financial update. Paul's committee (regarding the worship schedule) will be discussed.
- Please encourage everyone to attend.
- Paul Allen: if it's more of a town-hall meeting, it behooves ministry leaders to attend to answer questions in their realms.

Pastoral Reports

Paul Allen

- With the power outages this summer, it's good to know and see that the church runs on more than electricity.
- HCS (Hinsdale Community Services) Family Services invited him to be on their board, and he accepted. He considers this part of our witness to the community, and he'll try to fulfill his duties during his personal time.
- There is a care concern for a church member. He notes an escalating disturbance in her being and in her disruptive behavior in the church. A conversation with her husband revealed that there is a growing list of

organizations that have banned her, but we don't want to go that route. We want to love her as Jesus would, with firmness and compassion. Any insights, please let us know.

- People have been ticketed for parking on 4th Street on Sunday mornings, but no one should be getting a ticket. The sign doesn't say "except Sundays," but the law does. More than one council member present indicated that they were ticketed.

Jim Kramer

- He's working with Admin on the building, and on a time-line to get things done (summer's almost over): changing lights in sanctuary; changed all air-conditioning filters; fixed the roof over the old kitchen; working on the sound system in the sanctuary.
- The sanctuary's sound board is on its last leg—fixing it would cost \$2000, more than the original price. Kirke Cushing is bringing his friend in to help. He's from Community Church off 55th, and gets equipment cheap. Hopefully we'll be done before the fall.
- Jim is grateful to the church member who sent his gardener to weed at the church.
- Saturday is PADS at the Lutheran church—if everyone shows we're good (35 people), lots of couples. Roger will elaborate.
- India events are upcoming.
- The strength of this church is caring – a good strength to have. We saw it Sunday morning with Scott Larson, who's really hurting right now.

Lars Stromberg

- About 60 students from this church went to different camps: it has been one of the more successful summers for youth, children, and families.
- The camps send us a follow-up form for each camper: their likes, prayer requests, etc. From the responses on those forms—from students and leaders—this is the best summer yet.
- We're cleaning up loft, getting it ready for another year of hard use. A couple of the oldest couches out, replaced by (slightly) newer ones.
- This year—next summer—is CHIC, the triennial youth gathering. A big part of our year will be about it.
- An Hispanic church (Vida Plana) will send seven students with us to CHIC. Another church from Oak Park will send some, too. We'll assist them as much as we can financially.
- We want each and every student to feel that this is their home, their place to grow.
- Kick off week for the students is the week of 9/11.

Treasurer's Report – Kevin

- Lars' accounts are over-budget because of all the people coming, the needs being met there. A good problem to have.
- The church is doing pretty well, though the summer catches up to us. Expenses are \$30K over our revenue, but a lot better than last year, when we were \$104K over at this point.
- Plate collection shows \$70K better this year than last, at least partly attributed to Arlene and her mission moments.
- Kevin doesn't see any glaring items in the reports.
- He notes in particular the Pensions: we received an invoice and paid it. It was for nine months and we've caught up. Being caught up at this point puts this expense ahead of last year.
- The Outreach account's (3300) gifts to the Covenant: we paid the 1st quarter and we're trying to do a month at a time. Note the asterisk – it's an accrual number. When our account balance is above our 2-month cushion, we're able to pay some of these commitments.
- The Expense Reimbursements account (1002) reflects Glen Bjorkman's work on the government program that reimburses not-for-profits' health care expenses.
- Lars reports that gas prices are what killed them this summer – much more than budgeted at the end of last year.
- ***The Treasurer's Report was moved, seconded and accepted.***

Ministry Reports

Caring Ministry – Linda Noonan

- We met in July, putting together the plan for the fall.
- We're finalizing the bulletin insert.
- Tess will deliver the message.
- We looked at number of caring requests so far this year: we averaged 18 per month through June, and 20 per month through July.

Worship – Jim Brorson

- *Intinction* (via Paul): Frank Peard finds communion preparation and clean-up is challenging, but finds value in the practice of intinction (dipping the bread in the cup). It's a way the church's members actively participate in communion. We'll try it for the next six months in the first service, providing assistance for those with mobility problems. Second and third services already do this. We hope those not accustomed will accept it.
- Plans for the Christmas program are being considered. We need to give Ruth time to plan for a choir concert, or try a different approach as we did in 09

(Journey to Bethlehem). We didn't reach a decision. A suggestion was made in the past for an alternating plan.

- How to handle the crowds at Christmas eve – we'll try to anticipate and strategize on getting people in and out of the sanctuary.
- We think the services are going well at present. We have no immediate changes planned.
- Todd mentioned the Star of Bethlehem video – a lawyer goes through scripture and the *Starry Nights* software (that displays the night sky at any point on earth, at any time in history). You see God's power and Scripture's reliability. The author tours with the presentation. Lars mentions that the Christmas season is a series of programs for the whole family, so we could make a place for this a number of ways. Todd says that his 9-year-old can understand the presentation.
- Note that Christmas and New Years are on a Sunday, and we're planning a single service.

Outreach – Roger Johnson

- We didn't meet in July, but will meet this week.
- We had 55 at FMSC (Feed My Starving Children); another such event is planned for October 8th.
- End of June – Craig Wright and the Wendell family served on the Mountain T.O.P. Mission trip in the Cumberland Mountains of Tennessee.
- Hospital Sisters Mission outreach.
- Food runs continue on a regular basis.
- PADS is coming up at the Lutheran church.
- We will serve breakfast at ACBC church in the Austin Ave area. We're doing it this year on 9/17, with Yogi leading.
- Our focus is on community, making local connections. We're partnering with a local organization, HCS (Hinsdale Community Services, as Paul mentioned). How can we parlay that? It could be an entree for us. We'll meet to see what kinds of things we can do. Jim, Paul, Todd, Roger.

Administration – Arlene

- We recognize the need for a paid handyman. Filters, roof, gutters, etc., all need more attention than we can give them. It's not easy work, and probably shouldn't be done by seniors. Gary Kutay is volunteering, but we thought we could offer him some pay to do some of that too.
- We leased a high-capacity copy machine. It's the same basic machine as before, but we brought the price down from \$144 to \$98 per month, and the new contract includes maintenance.
- On-line donations: Laura Marth and Kevin are working on allowing donations via the web site. There's an expense per transaction, but it's not ongoing. You pay with paypal or major credit card. The fees are 2.9% up to \$3K, then go down from there for higher amounts. As a not-for-profit, we get a better

rate, so we're going through that application.

- Electric & gas alternatives: we're looking into it and have lots of material. We found a couple good sites on the web. IGS is one: 12% savings, but only on supply, not the entire bill. It might be a \$300/year savings. Another one only does large industrial/commercial, but referred us to another that does small businesses. There's some hesitation to switch, but Jean mentioned she's done it for her business and it's fine. IGS also does gas, but Nicor gives a better rate now.
- We intend to re-stripe the parking lot.
- Jill mentioned that a church can cap out its attendance by limiting parking. We should ask everyone who's able to park out of the lot. Doug Morey intentionally parks two blocks away.

Education – Jill Rhiner & Jen Secola

- The church nursery is still looking for “full-time” (i.e., every Sunday) helpers, and we have two part-time people now. We hope to have it all in place by the Sunday after Labor Day.
- BLAST – the more we can support Heidi and get new teachers, the better. We're short on volunteers.
- The preschool's new playground is here. All the details went well. Todd Jensen and others volunteered to remove the old equipment. Chad and his son worked the perimeter to prepare for mulch, which will be delivered on Wednesday.
- Jill distributed two preschool budget hand-outs: *Profit & Loss Budget Performance* and *Profit & Loss Budget Overview*. Enrollment is very much in flux. People are waiting until the last minute. The final budget will be presented in September at the mid-year meeting. Though it appears that we're \$33K ahead, much of that is actually spoken for via August expenses.
- We don't need to amortize the playground, which is a great thing.
- The board is not recommending a pay increase for the teachers, but will reconsider it as enrollment changes. We will give Christmas bonuses.
- The numbers are very similar to last year. We've stemmed the decline we've seen over the last few years.
- Jill will repackage the budget numbers for the congregational meeting.
- Addendum: capital improvements budget will be \$5K.
- ***The Preschool budget as amended, was moved, seconded, and accepted.***

New/Old Business – Chad Burlet

- None to report.

Kevin closed the meeting with prayer.