

## **Common Table Meeting, February 8, 2016**

Steve Rummel led the meeting, which opened in prayer.

### Kitchen Update

Jon Tucker announced that the new kitchen is underway, as of February 1, and it's progressing well. Some additional clearing out of storage areas was done as a safety measure. The hump in the flooring, which we feared would be a problematic issue, turned out to be easier to fix than expected. We are getting a lighter, aluminum rolling door, which will cost a bit more, but will be more useful and easier to manage in the long run. We are also saving a bit on permits, because we don't need as many as we thought. There might be a bit of overage on cost, but it shouldn't be bad.

Lori Wilson and Patty Ferguson did a great job of planning out our temporary kitchen in Friendship Hall, and Jon expressed thanks for their hard work.

And one more important note: if anyone has any questions, suggestions, or concerns regarding the kitchen, please don't interrupt the contractor. Talk to Jon Tucker or Rich Detering, and they'll take care of it.

### Finances

Melinda Lilley gave us an update on church finances.

The kitchen will cost about \$155,000. We've paid a \$35,000 deposit; we'll make another payment at the end of February and a final payment upon completion. Our funding campaign last fall left us \$40,000 short, so we'll be doing some follow-up work to encourage giving.

Someone asked if our building fund reserve is being used to pay for the kitchen. It is not. We have a loan from the district and are in a good position to pay it off.

In other news, we not only had a balanced budget in 2015, but ended up with a \$20,000 carryover, because we have a very generous congregation and a staff that works hard to come in under budget when they can. This is, of course, very good news.

The Finance Committee has a balanced budget plan for 2016 that Melinda will present to the Core Leadership at a meeting directly after the Common Table (minutes are included here). Pledges and expected income for the year (\$510,000 in all) are about \$14,000 short of our desired budget, so the Finance Committee recommended holds on some funds in order to present a balanced budget.

We also hope to start moving towards a 3-year budget process and more year-round budget planning in the near future.

Melinda encouraged everyone to consider giving electronically, which is very easy and would be good for the church. She is happy to help anyone who wants to explore this option.

A concern was raised that the budget under consideration would not commit as much of the cell tower funds to missions as was originally intended when the cell tower was placed on the property (at the time it was one cell tower; now we have three). It seemed as if very little was committed to missions. Melinda pointed out that the budget for Outreach doesn't account for all of the resources and work we provide for missions. She also explained that the budget would be presented to Core Leadership, and they could make changes (Core Leadership did, in fact, vote to take a hold off some outreach funding to increase that part of the budget; see below).

Someone also asked if we could increase our pledges if we wanted to; Melinda said that they certainly could, either by filling out a new form or just letting the church know.

Someone asked if there was anything in the budget for high-speed Internet access at church, perhaps so we could have video streaming on our site. Rich investigated this some time ago and discovered that the cost was prohibitive, but he said he would take another look and see what he could find out.

#### Outreach Update

Colleen expressed thanks for everyone's generous donations on "Souper Bowl" Sunday. She also announced that we will be doing another mission trip at Lazy F over Memorial Day weekend (May 27-29). That is Friday through Sunday, so we'll all have Monday to soak in a warm tub and nurse our sore muscles!

Another outreach opportunity is coming up in June, when we will once again partner with Christ the King Lutheran Church in the Congregations for the Homeless program. Christ the King offers a space for homeless men to stay, and we provide meals. Colleen will be out of town during part of this program and is looking for someone who would like to help organize things. Please let her know if you are able to be a part of this very worthwhile endeavor.

#### Youth and Family Services Update

Jen is trying to get the Sunday school divided into three age groups, which will require more volunteers, but will provide a much better church education experience for the children.

We will also be doing 3 Easter egg hunts this year, one on Saturday for the larger community, one that evening after dark for the tweens and teens, and one on Sunday morning. I'm sure she would love to hear from lots of volunteers for the egg hunts, and for the larger Sunday school need.

#### Church Website

Daniel Flahiff has built a new church website, and he gave us a preview on the big screens in the sanctuary. It will be ready to go as soon as we have content, which will be provided by staff and committee heads. We'll be using it to reach out to the larger community and as an information resource for the congregation. There will also be a tech team whose job will be to maintain the site after some training by Daniel. Anyone interested in being part of the tech team should let the church know.

Someone asked if there would be video archives of sermons, and someone also asked if there was a back side to the website for internal communication that would be password protected. Daniel pointed out that websites are always evolving and that anything we want could be developed over time. We all look forward to seeing the site up and running!

#### Nick: Celebration and Farewell

Brad led us all in an appreciation of Nick Laasanen, who has contributed so much as our Youth Director and through his work with the praise band. After a lively question and answer session organized by Brad and the youth (if you need to say goodbye in Korean or "get out!" in Finnish, check with Nick), we prayed for Nick and wished him all the best in his future ministries.

The Common Table ended in prayer and very tasty treats in honor of Nick. It was followed by...

#### **Core Leadership Meeting, February 8, 2016**

In attendance: Jenny Andrews, Rick Wilson, Colleen Olleman, Jack Morrison, Brad Beeman, Melinda Lilley, Rich Detering, Steve Rummel, Harris Atkins, Stan McKenzie, Candace McKenzie, Patty Ferguson, Janice Zahn, Jen Hoeber, Robbin Price

Core Leadership met after the Common Table to approve the budget. Discussion led to two proposed amendments.

First, Colleen made a motion to take the \$5000.00 hold off of the Mission funds in order to honor the cell tower commitment. This motion would lead to a deficit budget, but after some discussion, we decided that we could step forward in faith and expect that we will be able to make up the deficit over the course of the year. We have a history of ending up with more income than expected. The motion passed unanimously.

There was a question about the original intent of the cell tower mission commitment, and Colleen will look for the minutes from that meeting to clarify that we are fulfilling the decision the church made then. We will also be looking at Outreach funding at our next meeting so that we can make sure all of our missions are consistently and adequately funded.

A second amendment to the budget was then proposed by Harris Atkins, Chair of the Staff Parish Relations committee. His motion was to remove the \$2500 hold on merit pay funds for staff. Harris pointed out that not all staff had gotten a pay increase last year, and that the pay increase was merely a 2% cost of living increase, and didn't adequately recognize the immense work our staff does. Again, this budget amendment would be a slight increase in the budget deficit, but we felt it was achievable, given our past record. The motion passed unanimously.

So the amended budget was 518,084.15. It passed unanimously.

Two agenda items were put forward for the next meeting:

Adequately and Amply Funding Outreach

Meaningful Movies: Several churches in our neighborhood are doing a meaningful movies series, and have invited us to join them in this endeavor. We will discuss this opportunity.

The next Core Leadership meeting will be on Monday, March 7, at 7:00 pm.

These minutes respectfully submitted by Robbin Price. All errors and omissions are mine, and corrections are welcome.