

Minutes  
Little Home Church Council Meeting  
September 13, 2011

**In Attendance:** Carol Berger, John Berger (guest), Nancy Dorr, Peter Gatsch, Bob Kaska, Jan Marchese, Ann McLaughlin, Marilyn Poole, Ron Purser, Nancy Schatzeder, Jane Shelton, Art Zwemke

**Absent:** Gianna Marchese, Anne Bouchard, Suzanne Setlock, Wally Setlock

Ann began the meeting at 7:15 after council members finished writing notes to selected church members listed in the church directory. Ron opened the meeting with a prayer.

**Approval of minutes:** July and August minutes were reviewed. Bob Kaska moved approval of the July minutes, seconded by Nancy Schatzeder. July minutes were approved unanimously. Bob Kaska moved approval of the August minutes, seconded by Nancy Schatzeder. August minutes were approved unanimously.

Ann announced Nancy Dorr was joining the Council as chair of Christian Education and that both Jane Shelton and Anne Bouchard would jointly chair Congregational Life. Kathy Haben will be joining Council as a Member-at-Large and John Berger was joining us tonight as a guest.

**Church Action/Focus Items:** Ann announced that a church friend has made available a \$15,000 matching gift. The church needs to raise \$15,000 in contributions in order to receive the funds which would result in revenue of \$30,000. Art recommended a letter to the congregation and friends of the church to inform them of the matching gift. Ann will draft a letter and email to Council Members for review notifying of the match gift available hoping to raise \$15,000 by Sunday, October 16 through a pledge or a check.

Bob informed the council that currently the response for the Cottage Meetings or Sunday Dinner Conversation Program on September 18 is currently at 32. Another 25 have been called by Kathleen Kaska to get commitments by September 14<sup>th</sup>. At this time there are six hosts for a total of 48 people. Nancy Alex is also making calls. We are hoping for a total of 60 participants and would like to have enough interest to make this an annual event. At this time, the hosts and respective Council member facilitators are: Bob & Kathleen Kaska, Bob Kaska; Mark & Susannah Lesswing, Nancy Schatzeder; Jan & Jerry Marchese, Nancy Dorr; Ric and Nancy Alex, Marilyn Poole; Bob and Mary Jean Schless, Anne Bouchard; Ann McLaughlin, Ann McLaughlin.

Bob will get the facilitators a handout with the four topics for discussion. 1) The \$15,000 matching gift and the pledge/donation deadline. 2) Review the strategic goals through June, 2012. One of the goals is the best use of church properties and we have made a decision that it would be best to sell them. 3) Define the next strategic goal when the properties are sold. Start a discussion on what it should be. 4) Discuss SWOT: the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats facing the Little Home Church. This would be a way to frame a discussion and get people to talk. A possible fifth topic would be changing "membership pledge" to "evangelism pledge". What realistic goals should we have? Can we get 15 to 30 individuals to invite someone to our Little Home Church. Have the members invite friends to at least 2 events. What

is the best way to attract friends to LHC? What can we do activity wise to attract new members? The desired result would be to capture information about people so we can invite them to events with a mailing list. A suggestion was to send out an email blast every week on events and happenings at our church. We can possibly get additional names from Art League, the Concert Series attendees and Larry's music email list.

Signage was discussed to identify Little Home Church as an active church. We need to get our 'temporary signs' out such as the Blessing of the Hounds Sign and investigate the possibility of blue signs with the street signs at the intersections with stoplights east and west of the church.

Ann discussed the music for the New Year and stated that Larry will be attending our October meeting.

Ann also discussed the next steps for the sale of the properties. Realtors will be assessing the houses. Ann spoke to the Peterson house renters. There is currently no signed lease in effect. The Dixon house has a new 2 year lease. A motion was made for Ann and Wally to form a Peterson House Sales Committee to enter into a real estate agreement as they see appropriate as soon as possible in order to sell the Peterson property. Bob moved for approval and Marilyn seconded. Motion approved with 1 Nay.

Art discussed the banking situation. Four banks have declined working capital loans based on real estate as collateral. John Berger has another bank for Art to contact.

**Treasurer's Report:** Art discussed the August report. A budgeted (\$30,000) operating deficit created by projected revenues of \$256,000 and expenses of \$286,000 began our year. At the end of August we had an actual deficit of (\$40,454) versus last year's (\$21,840) deficit. Our year to date budget is \$176,652 for August and our actual YTD income is \$146,371. Art stated the \$15,000 match gift is a 'God Send' to cover our current YTD deficit of (\$30,000). All the bills are paid, there are no debts and there are \$2 million in assets. The endowments are in process but will be the focus again after year end. Carol Berger moved to accept the Treasurer's Report with a second by Jane Shelton. Report approved.

Marilyn as chair of Outreach informed the Council that Crop Walk will take place on Sunday, October 16. Gianna Marchese will be assisting and recruiting 20 volunteers to walk and collect donations. Crop Walk is by Church World Services and 25% goes to the local area. There is a DVD Available on the use of Crop Walk funds and they will do a program for Christian Ed.

**Pastor's Report:** Ron reported that the Fox Valley Hospice is scheduled to have a representative speak on September 25<sup>th</sup> during service as a 'Mission Moment'. The Blessing of the Hounds and World Communion Sunday is October 2<sup>nd</sup>. There will be a wedding during the church service on October 9<sup>th</sup>. The Fall Sermons Series will be on UCC themes and Church School starts on September 18<sup>th</sup>. Ron is in the process of obtaining a speaker for Stewardship Sunday on November 13<sup>th</sup>. Bible Study has an average of 12 people attending and discussions of evening studies are in progress with Nancy Schatzeder. Ron will be speaking in Del Webb on Sunday on evangelism and a series on comparative religions.

**Moderator's Report:** Items previously discussed.

**Moderator Elect:** None

**Long Range Plan Report:** Items were previously discussed.

**Ministry Reports:**

**Christian Education:** Nancy reported Sunday School is starting September 18<sup>th</sup> and asked if anyone has suggestions for Adult Education topics, please let her know.

**Congregational Life:** None

**Evangelism:** Items were previously discussed.

**Facilities:** Peter stated Saturday afternoon he is painting the outside of the church near the kitchen door (the wall and the back porch). Hopefully, before the Blessings of the Hounds, the downspouts will go back up. Bob mentioned the plan is for the bells to go into the chair closet once the shelves are removed.

**Outreach:** Items were previously discussed.

**Stewardship:** Items were previously discussed.

**Worship and Spiritual Growth;** Items were previously discussed.

**Members-at-large:** No Report

Next Meeting: October 13<sup>th</sup> with discussion items to include signage and dinner conversation reports and feedback.

Ron closed the meeting with a prayer at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Marchese  
Church Clerk