

Spirit of Christ Community Lutheran Church  
5801 Minnetonka Blvd.  
St. Louis Park, Minn. 55416

**Spirit of Christ Community Lutheran Church  
Church Council Minutes for Oct. 13, 2011**

Attendance: Sara Blood, Dave Latvala, Bruce Wuollet, Nancy Malone, Anne Kraft, Rod Gulbro, Jeanne Worm, Carolee Cohen, Nicole Goerges, Kevin Roetzer, Kristina Fruge, Karla Larson, Steve Solmonson

**I. Devotions**

Council President Anne Kraft called the meeting to order at 6:55 p.m. Carolee Cohen led in devotions. Secretary Sara Blood gave the opening prayer.

**II. Approval of Agenda**

**Motion:** to approve the Oct. 13, 2011 agenda.

**Vote:** Approved. M/S/C

**III. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

**Motion:** to approve the Sept. 8, 2011 minutes with the following corrections: remove Nicole Goerges' name from Old Business, section B; add Karla Larson to attendance.

**Vote:** Approved. M/S/C

**IV. Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Dave Latvala reported that the general fund balance is -\$2639.88 for the month of September. Mission & Social Action Lead Jeanne Worm suggested that the budget be included in the congregational newsletter to keep members informed. Latvala suggested he could write a short article on the budget. Blood asked if Latvala could include the steps the council has taken to reduce expenses, including reducing insurance costs. Kraft suggested writing a letter to be mailed out to the congregation. Blood also suggested reactivating a stewardship committee as part of 2012 planning.

**V. Pastor's Report**

Pastor Wes Syverson shared his report via e-mail. A copy is included at the end of these minutes.

**VI. Ministry Team Reports**

**A. Other Reports**

**i. Mission Outreach Coordinator**

Mission Outreach Coordinator Kristina Fruge is proposing a 20 hour a week position that she would staff that would be split between Spirit of Christ (SOC) and Wooddale Lutheran Church. The position would serve as a liaison to build bridges in the community, empowering at risk youth by providing support and hope through

community partnerships. Both churches have been requested to fund the church for \$11,500 – Wooddale’s council approved its portion of the funding during its September council meeting.

Kraft supported the position because the position covers off on tasks the church hasn’t been able to get to and while the church is facing a general fund deficit, she believed the money would come. Women of Spirit Lead Karla Larson asked about what the position would cover versus what TreeHouse already covers and how the position would be funded if the church doesn’t have enough money to pay its bills now.

Früge explained that TreeHouse has been a key partner and the goal is to create a partnership united around youth, addressing many issues that cannot be covered by TreeHouse currently because there is so much need.

Blood said she has met many people at Luther Seminary and nearby pastors since starting seminary and that the community of St. Louis Park is not known for individual churches but for SPARK. She would like to see something that would unify area churches and that this was an opportunity to step up because there is a need identified by the listening project to support the youth in the community. Churches can no longer wait for people to come to them – they must build bridges out to the community.

Fellowship Lead Nicole Goerges asked what the difference would be between this position and SPARK. Kraft said the goal was to build bridges beyond the ELCA. Früge said there needed to be a specific rallying point to work together.

Larson asked if there was any more grant money beyond what is left in the EOCM grant. Latvala said no one is currently applying for grants. Früge confirmed once she has the support of the congregations in place, they will work on fundraising.

Member-at-Large Bruce Wuollet expressed his concern in how the church’s financial position could impact the transition plan for hiring a new pastor next year.

Worm said she wasn’t concerned about how to support the position financially. Instead she feared the church would be satisfied with its comfortable rut in community service and that this was a new way for the church to explore. Worship & Music Lead Rod Gulbro asked about benchmarks for the role. Früge said a much larger committee would work on developing goals for the program.

Kraft said the council can reexamine funding for the position after the first year and that the church needs to be more aggressive with stewardship.

Fruge acknowledged it was a difficult time to ask the churches for money but, after her work on the listening project, she felt called by the community in the last two years and that she wouldn't be faithful to where she was being led if she didn't ask.

Vice President Carolee Cohen said the new position was a way to pass the torch, as many people and community organizations will now have a place to go after Pastor Syverson retires.

**Motion:**

To hire Kristina Fruge in a contract position to serve as a liaison to build bridges in the community, empowering at risk youth by providing support and hope through community partnerships. SOC will fund 50 percent of the position (up to but no more than \$11,500) with \$3,500 coming from the existing EOCM grant. The remainder could come from existing sources such as the trust fund. Wooddale Lutheran Church will be responsible and has committed to cover the remaining 50 percent of the position as voted by the Wooddale Council in its September 2011 meeting.

**Discussion:** Council members confirmed they would like to see a scope of work and confirmation on who will serve as the volunteers for SOC on the committee.

**Vote:** Approved. M/S/C

**ii. Women of Spirit**

Larson said the salad and chili supper was held earlier in the month and enough money was raised to cover the expenses for one attendee to go to the national gathering. She said many members remarked how nice it was to see the youth serve. Nov. 5 will be the craft day and that a business meeting will be held that day to discuss what to do with the money raised at the bazaar, which is slated for Nov. 12. They are also working on a calendar for 2012.

**B. Mission & Social Action**

Worm said the next Families Moving Forward is scheduled for Oct. 17, with a second one slated for November. A benefit for STEP will be held at the West End Oct. 29. A shelter benefit will be held Nov. 3. The blanket box is back out and blankets received will go to STEP and area shelters. They are working on the Great Thanksgiving, which is a push for food for the area shelters and for families that the schools identify for Pastor Syverson. They also met their goal for a Blood drive held at SOC 10.6. Close to \$1,800 was raised for the church's inaugural Walk for Water, which the team plans to hold again next year. Worm thanked the Worship & Music team for coordinating a music theme on water for the worship service held before the walk.

**C. Fellowship**

Goerges reported that the hayride was a success and although nothing is on the radar right now for Fellowship, they are looking at doing a fundraiser for the church.

**D. Worship & Music**

Gulbro said the committee is reconvening Sunday, Oct. 16 to discuss some of the changes that have been made to the worship service. The cabinet is up for the choir folders, the banners have been moved and he is working right now on the Christmas Cantata. Blood asked if they could consider adding back the prelude music or some sort of transition, such as a church bell or chime played by the organ, so parishioners know that the service is about to start. She also asked that they mark the choir folder cabinet somehow or put something under it so people don't accidentally run into it. Kraft asked that the team look at the ushering teams for next year.

**E. Children, Youth & Families**

Malone said they are registered for the 2012 national youth gathering, with four chaperones and seven youth attending. Sunday school is going well, and the families will gather in November at Wendi Harmsen's house. The Advent Festival is scheduled for Dec. 4. Christmas pageant rehearsal will begin in November, and a youth bake sale will be held Dec. 11.

**VII. Old Business**

**A. Oak Tree Removal**

The city has given SOC an additional week to remove the dead oak in the front yard. Steve Nordahl is hiring another group to top off the tree because it's so close to the power lines. Kraft said she'll keep the council in the loop via e-mail.

**B. Ministry Site Profile**

Kraft said the ministry site profile is moving along with information being collected from the congregation during Rally Sunday as well as the council. She has asked the council members to submit the answers to the form she passed out at September's meeting if they haven't done so already. The team plans to gather more at Donut Sunday. Pastor Syverson will work on the referral contacts. The goal is to complete the profile by early November.

**C. Other Old Business**

Blood apologized for the delay with the building use forms and plans to complete them by November.

**VIII. New Business**

**A. Succession Planning**

Due to a scheduling conflict, Blood will be unable to attend the November, December and possibly the January council meetings. While the vice president, secretary and treasurer positions remain open, Carolee Cohen has been identified for council president. Blood will resubmit the call for nominations brief for November's newsletter. It was also suggested that all the ministry teams also identify leads for 2012 if they haven't done so already.

**B. Other New Business**

Kraft asked for someone to help cover the minutes in November and that she'll cover December. The December council meeting will also be moved to Dec. 15.

**IX. Next Council Meeting:**

The next council meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 10, in Fellowship Hall. Member-at-Large Kevin Roetzer will provide treats and the devotion.

**X. Adjourn**

The Council meeting adjourned at 9:14 with the Lord's Prayer.

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Following is the e-mail Pastor Wes Syverson provided for the pastor's report:

I will be on the North Shore relaxing as you meet (hopefully). All the services are done through November. Reformation Sunday will be Oct. 30. Thanksgiving Eve service 7 PM Nov. 23rd. The last Sunday in November Advent begins. I think we will have 3 to 4 new members joining in Oct. We will give out Bibles this month to first graders. The sound equipment in the balcony is now on the cities churches e-mail letter. The organ will be tuned next Friday. I have received good feedback about confirmation here. A reminder is in the newsletter for the Thanksgiving meals for Wayside and Sojourners. I have not heard from our schools.