

**St. Michael Lutheran Church  
Congregation Council  
Minutes  
June 28, 2009**

**Present:** Linda Harriz, Robert Miles, Nancy Adair, Wilson Worley, Sally Sizemore, Sue Clarke, Sally Taylor, Dave Cook, Steve Baker, Elise Stringer, Blake Castor, Ruth Howard, Dave Cook

**Absent:** Greg Monn, Miki Wolff, Bill Henry, Peter Strub

**Packets distributed included:** Agenda, Financial Statements

**Open Meeting:** Meeting opened at 1:25. Pastor Robert reflects on how we need to talk to each other about where we have seen God at work. Rachel Harriz was the preacher this morning and she talked about how Jesus took time to make a touch more than just a touch. Pastor Robert asks the group to share how Jesus has touched us. Several stories were shared. The meeting was continued with prayer by Pastor Robert.

**Approval of Minutes from May meeting:** Wilson noted some typos which he will send to Linda. Linda notes that she omitted noting when Miki left the meeting. **With those changes: Sally Sizemore moves to accept the minutes; Steve Baker seconds: the minutes from May 17, 2009 meeting are approved by acclamation.**

### **LIAISON/TEAM PROGRESS REPORTS**

Wilson took a moment to acknowledge the hard work and time commitment of all council members and indicated his and Peter's appreciation.

**Finance** (Miki Wolff - *absent*) – Dave reports that the Finance team has not met since early May. May was a good income month, with some special one-time gifts and gifts of stock. It is unclear whether the stock gifts are over and above or regular giving. Linda indicates her understanding that the smaller gift was a Bridging the Gap gift, while the larger gift was regular pledge.

**Learning** (Steve Baker) – Steve shares with the group the results from last month's Learning ministry survey of Council. Nancy commented that results may be skewed due to the assumption that one has children. Steve passed out "7 Minutes with God," a brief article about spending time with God first thing in the morning, including some helpful tips and suggestions for where to begin reading the Bible. Pastor Robert – live with one verse for a week or a month. There is discussion of the survey results, about what type of classes are desired, about the need for someone to teach those classes. Steve is asked – and agrees - to teach a class on teaching a class.

**Program Development** (Ruth Howard) – Because of vacations and other summer events, Ruth has decided to postpone major work in this area until Fall. She is planning to survey the congregation through bulletins around Rally Day (August 30). Nancy asks Sally Sizemore and Sally Taylor about a singles' group: has there been any indication of interest for such a group? Sally S responds that there was such a group attempted some 30 years ago, without much success. Discussion on this topic includes:

- Some singles don't identify themselves by "single"
- Some singles have found a group here that meets a that need – i.e. Y'All, Choir, Bible Study, etc.
- There are many levels of single-ness – college students, widow/widowers, never marrieds, divorced, etc.
- At St. Michael, we try to be inclusive – labeling a group "Singles" could mean many things and perhaps convey the wrong thing to the person looking for a relationship group.
- What is the real need? Meeting a partner? Relationship building with others in who share similar circumstances? Support?

**Property** (Sue Clarke -) Sue was away for the May Property Team meeting, and no meeting was held in June. Sue received an email from Ralph Wimmer who, along with Mary, has changed his church membership away from St. Michael. This presents a need to find someone to take over inventorying kitchen supplies. Doing this in a different way is under discussion by Peter and Andy. Sue notes also that the entrance and exit arrows on the ground in our large parking lot are no longer visible. The sanctuary lighting question is raised. Wilson relates that Peter is looking for a permanent solution to this problem. Another light is out now. There is some brief discussion of where the responsibility for paper goods, general and kitchen, should fall – under Property, or elsewhere. The all-encompassing budget line is "Kitchen Supplies." Pastor Robert observes that kitchen supplies may be handled differently than bathroom paper goods. Again, this item is under discussion.

**Social Ministry** (Bill Henry - *absent*) – Bill would encourage us to support the Thrivent Builds for Habitat for Humanity. (*Note from Secretary: my error, Bill had sent his report to me earlier and I forgot to include it in the packets. It is included on page 4 of these minutes.*) Ruth asked the question about continuing to host blood drive. Yes, we do want to. Want to get one on the calendar for September, before we begin Sunday lunches.

**Stewardship** (Greg Monn - *absent*) – Wilson commends the work the stewardship team did on the Bridging the Gap campaign. Pastor Robert noted that David Cooke attended the synodical stewardship event, and he shared that he found it to be well worth his while. Copies of the program materials he received were made for others on the Stewardship Team.

**Worship & Music** (Sally Sizemore) – The Worship & Music Team is not meeting during the summer. All going as it needs to. The team is in process of choosing new white paraments using Bessie Foster's memorial funds, as they were designated. On the schedule is a joint (Lutheran) choir event in May 2010, presenting Haydn's Creation at Daniel Chapel at Furman University.

As a sidebar: Sally was asked to bring to the Council the question of having one service again in the summer. The discussion of this item includes:

We will not grow if we do not have two services. We cannot grow if we take opportunities away, which was a defining argument when the decision was made to keep two services in Spring 2008.

Our current average attendance now regularly exceeds 200; this would be a tight squeeze for one service, both in the sanctuary and the parking lot.

Churches exclude 29% of potential membership by having services *only* on Sunday because that percentage of the population must work on Sunday.

**WOW** (Blake Castor & Sally Taylor) – This team met on June 14. Bryson Bailey and Irvalee Fisher are contacting worship visitors. Discussion at the meeting included creating a generic mailer to replace our current tri-fold which contains specific information, then provide an insert with specific information. Connie Umberger in charge of calling photographers, with Carol Cooke notifying Connie of need. Wilson asks if we are getting any feedback from visitors regarding calls. Pastor Elise notes that she suggested to Bryson and Irvalee to keep records of his calls – when, did he talk to someone, response, how they came to church, family, etc. Pastor Robert notes that a visitor notebook with that type of information is kept in the office. It would be well for Bryson and Irvalee to send their call notes to the office so that the pastors don't call visitors and repeat the same conversation.

**Youth & Athletics** (Nancy Adair) – Nancy reports that in 4.5 weeks 9 youth and leaders leave for the National Youth Gathering. Pastor Elise is meeting with Young Youth once a month through the summer. We had so many for softball that there were enough players for two teams. Pastor Robert passed out an article by Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson regarding the National Youth Gathering.

## **Energy Assessment**

Dave Cook received positive energy by willing volunteers to help with grass cutting while Hans is away.

Pastor Robert received positive energy upon returning from his vacation to find VBS running well without him. Great job done by Lisa Allen, Sandi Nelsen, Jahnna Reck and Pastor Elise – and all their volunteers. Wilson related that his visit to VBS was also positive energy.

Steve Baker gets positive energy from comments like Pastor Elise's regarding Dave enjoying the CD. Feels as though he is visiting by taping. (Pastor Elise had earlier related to the group Dave McRee's comments about his enjoyment of the CD when he could not be at worship, so much so that he had his CD player with him at the hospital.)

Ruth Howard received positive energy by St. Michael's family helping get Daniel and Benjamin to church to help with VBS.

Sue Clarke received positive energy from Rachel's presence, composure, and message in the pulpit today. Others agreed and added their comments. Blake notes that it was clear that Rachel wasn't just reading a manuscript.

Nancy Adair notes that we spend a lot of time and energy discussing finances, especially lately, and she received positive energy when we didn't do so today.

## **New Business –**

Pastor Robert – handed out copy of ELCA news service piece by Bishop Hanson calling the church to 50 days of prayer. He notes that he does not wish to inundate the Council with endless emails (ELCA news, SC Synod news, etc.) about things that you may not be interested in; he doesn't feel that is the job he is called here to do. It is his job to give you the websites where you can access that information should you so desire. If he is not holding up his end of the responsibility, please say so.

Pastor Robert shares several celebration items: received a \$50 check in support of VBS from a woman in memory of her daughter – this woman is a member at a Lutheran church elsewhere in Greenville, but was significantly supported by our grief support group. We received a \$200 check from parents of Sid Eargle in celebration of Sid's wife's and son's baptisms in May to be used for our baptism ministry. An email was received by Linda and shared with the church office staff from a former member expressing gratitude "to the people of Saint Michaels for defining what church family truly is and doing so on so many levels that words describe it so inadequately." The email is included as page 5 of these minutes.

The SC Synod has offered to congregations a program "Renewing Congregations." This program is led by resource person from ELCA, Dave Daubert – 12-18 month process beginning in the fall. How can we do church better? Info on SC Lutheran.

Pastor Robert was at SC Synod Assembly elected to SC Synod Council. He expressed his strong feelings about being called to serve, and notes that this position will take him away from here on occasion. His position on the Synod Council will give him information before the general church public gets it. His position will not put him in a position to "fix" thing.

### **Calendar items**

- Isle of Palms Beach Retreat – July 5-12
- LCY National Youth Gathering – July 22-26
- Confirmation Camp – August 2-8
- Sunday School Rally Day – August 30

**Next meeting: August 16, 2009 , 1:15 pm**

Meeting adjourned 3:15 pm, with prayer by Pastor Elise.

Respectfully submitted  
Linda Harriz  
Council Secretary

## **Report of the Social Ministry Team to the Congregation Council, St Michael Lutheran Church**

Meeting held May 31, 2009, 1:15pm.

Present: Bill Henry (Liaison), Jean Gayle, Smitty Holland

Each of those present reviewed their experience with Operation InasMuch, held on May 2. Pastor Elise had a count of 116 members who participated. From the four Lutheran churches with which St. Michael collaborated, over 300 volunteers were out on that Saturday. Trinity also had over 100 volunteers participating.

Smitty Holland, who has volunteered to be the St. Michael 'Champion' for the Thrivent/Habitat for Humanity home building to begin in August, reviewed the program for members and solicited support from the Social Ministry Team. The build will aim at a home dedication to take place in November. Eight area Lutheran congregations are committed to participate and support this effort with volunteer manpower, and other resources, financial and goods-in-kind. In addition to St. Michael, Trinity, Messiah, Christ the King, Redeemer, East Side Apostolic, Good Shepherd, and Our Savior are participating. These eight congregations are challenged to contribute \$11,000 in funding or gifts-in-kind to the effort. Only professional volunteer builders will work the first week. Other volunteers will be needed for 8/29, 9/12, 9/26, 10/3, 10/10, and 10/17. Other weekday opportunities will be 8/31, 9/1, 9/2, 9/14, 9/28, 9/29, and 9/30 Smitty will be coordinating sign-up for volunteers in July. Jean Gayle volunteered to coordinate the supply of lunches to volunteers on one of the Saturdays.

No plan was made to meet in June, unless circumstances arose to call for a meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Henry (Liaison)

Hi Linda!

Our (former) St. Michael's Church Family has been much on my mind lately and I feel I have to share a little and convey a heartfelt note of thanks. I am eternally grateful to the people of Saint Michaels for defining what church family truly is and doing so on so many levels that words describe it so inadequately. ...Having said that, I'm going to try to put it into words anyway.

You haven't lived until you've seen Smitty Holland crawling through some teenagers legs at a picnic at Lutheridge, or been the fortunate member of a congregation blessed with Charlie Jones' manipulation of the pipe organ and all the other musical talent he brings to your worship experience Sunday after Sunday - year after year; your child experiences a relationship with an all-American, adorable boy named Matthew who knows how to be a loyal friend because he has parents committed to teaching him about life's richest blessings; you've witnessed numerous amateur Christmas plays put together by Luci Floyd and Diane Carnes that could easily draw a crowd and a respectable revenue if performed in a public setting, you listen to Pastor Robert conscientiously explain the Lutheran expression of Christianity on a specific concept, you tasted some of the awesome things people bring to potluck events at St Michaels, Kara Huff reaches out to you in a way that is so pure and simple and reflects a spirit only God can mold, you enjoy a weekend at Lutheridge giggling until your stomach aches in a horribly uncomfortable cot with Hannelore Schuetterle about absolutely nothing memorable or significant, the McHale's show you all their bird feeders and shamelessly feed your child gobs of candy, an older board member in the Women's organization brings you flower bulbs she dug up that afternoon for you to plant in your own yard, and you have one very special lady like Linda Harriz who makes hundreds of kind, thoughtful and generous efforts towards meeting your needs - never thinking, much less asking for anything in return.

I could go on and on about all the wonderful memories floating through my mind and heart in the last couple of months. I think you get the picture.

I just wanted to thank you Linda, and St Michaels, for showing us & teaching us what church family is. It has molded and shaped me in positive ways I find hard to describe. God uses our experience and history at St Michaels in numerous ways - even now - years after having been a part there. It's difficult for me to reflect too much on mistakes I've made or poor decisions I made in my life. At the same time, it slays me to reflect upon how faithful our St Michaels church family was throughout our time with you. I am deeply grateful for God's magnanimous forgiving spirit that prevails in the hearts of the people of St Michaels. Thank you!

Love,

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