

University Lutheran Church of Hope's Mission is:

***To Know Christ and Make Christ Known
by proclaiming God's saving word
in worship, community, and service.***

Board of Commissioners' Meeting

December 13, 2006

Present: Pastor Kwanza Yu, Facilities' Fred Kreider, Education Director Diane Shallue, President-Elect Karmi Mattson, Outreach's James Hlavka, Administrator Craig Wiester, Stewardship's Karen Westwood, Past President Joan Campbell, Treasurer Norris Waalen, Education's Lisa Morse, Outreach's Marty Lewis-Hunstiger, Pastor Craig Shirley, President Garvin Davenport, Worship's Diane Greve.

Absent: Care & Nurture's Sharla Aaseng, Congregational Life's Valerie Sayre.

President Garvin Davenport started the meeting just after 6:30pm. He also provided the treats and devotions, for which we thank him.

Mission Renewal Task Force Recommendations

President Garvin Davenport mentioned the Mission Renewal Task Force, thinking John Hustad would make a report on the Youth sub-team. As he is not here, Lisa Morse made a brief explanation that they are seeking funds outside the budget to allow us to keep Youth Director Audrey Keller on staff through 2008. Garvin related that the Executive Committee consented for John to go ahead with the proposal to this Board. As few of those around this table have had an opportunity to read the report, we will not take action on it now. Pastor Craig Shirley filled in some further details on the proposal. He will get an electronic copy of the proposal to members of this Board. Treasurer Norris Waalen reminded us that we have a commitment to Audrey through the end of May, 2007.

Lisa Morse distributed a sheet with a status report entitled Phase II – Defining New Directions. With the departure of one key member of the Mission Renewal Task Force, they will be re-defining roles to some extent. Lisa went on to discuss briefly this one-page report.

Personnel Committee Report

Past President Joan Campbell reported on the Personnel Committee meeting last week. They took 2 actions. First, they moved to approve carry-over of 2 weeks' of Pastor Kwanza Yu's vacation to next year provided she clears her plans with Pastor Craig Shirley. This was moved, seconded, and carried. Second, they recommended compensation increases of 3% for the staff, plus a \$250 each allowance for both Administrator Craig Wiester and Cantor Timothy Strand for educational reimbursement. (Professional staff is already covered by this benefit.) President Garvin Davenport acknowledged that the Personnel Committee has strongly made these recommendations, although we'll have to certainly have to look at budgeting before enacting this.

Performance evaluations are on-going, Joan reported.

2007 Budget Update

President Garvin Davenport led off with the discussion of the seriousness of the current financial situation. The new Finance Committee has held meetings on this topic, meetings that have revealed significant information about finances. One area for discussion is that 2006 has been marked by extraordinary contributions, but an extraordinary deficit as well. We will have to have an extraordinary giving effort to break even.

The next topic is the 2007 budget. We have, Garvin reminded us, 3 sources of revenue, general giving, seasonal giving, and rentals; and 2 major expenses, people and facilities. Our options are two; increasing revenue, mainly through congregational giving; or reduce expenses, which would involve cuts in people or facility costs. He reminded us of the Personnel Committee's 3% increase recommendation. He charged us to think of these proposed increases not as contradictory, but as parts of a very complex situation.

Pastor Craig Shirley took over the discussion. He indicated his awareness of the situation that some members of the congregation feel our staff is too large for this church. However, when you understand this congregation and the demands it makes on the staff, it makes sense to have the staff we do. He reminded us we had a full-time secretary several years ago, a very expensive position. Craig acknowledged that this congregation does well by their staff, making sure salaries are fair and competitive, and looking after benefits.

Pastor Craig Shirley said we have an obligation to the staff. Called people are in a status in which they cannot be let go without mutual consent; this makes pastors hard to discharge. Education Director Diane Shallue could only be let go with a 2/3 vote of the Board of Commissioners. He also asked people to consider the extraordinary work the staff has done, getting through a difficult summer. He reminded us that these are real people depending upon these salaries, doing good work. He also charged us to give a long lead time warning to any people we may wish to discharge.

Pastor Craig Shirley then proceeded to read a draft letter to the congregation, a letter outlining the severity of the situation and asking for more generous support. This letter is from both the lead pastor and the president of the congregation, emphasizing the team effort aspect of this effort. Craig is proposing sending this letter out to the congregation, along with a return envelope, by the end of this week. We had some discussion, suggesting some minor changes. Diane Greve, adding to the discussion, asked a very basic question; would this neighborhood be adversely affected if we simply dissolved, sending our members to other congregations elsewhere? This question is a key part of the purpose of the Mission Renewal Task Force. The sense of the meeting is that this is a very well-written letter. We will get it copied and mailed with dispatch. Pastor Craig Shirley affirmed that this is a single-point letter, focusing on 2006; we'll worry about 2007 later.

By-Law Change Proposal

President-Elect Karmi Mattson distributed copies of her by-laws change proposals. There are three proposed changes:

The first proposed change is to allow officers other than the President to have signing authority on mortgages, contracts, and deeds. The proposal would add language to the bylaws that would allow the President to deputize others to sign in his or her stead. Karmi moved acceptance of this proposal, submitting it to the annual meeting for ratification. After a brief discussion, this was seconded and carried.

The second proposed change would change the titles of the officers of the congregation: "President-Elect" would change to "Vice President"; "Secretary/Treasurer" would change to "Treasurer"; and "Past President" would change to "Secretary." Duties wouldn't change, just the titles, making the make-up of our Board more understandable to people outside our congregation. Karmi moved that this proposal be submitted to the annual meeting for ratification. Again, this was moved, seconded, and carried.

The third change is a proposal to eliminate references to the Conference of Commissions, a concept that has been moribund for many years. Some people mentioned that it might be a good idea to reactivate this concept. It was also suggested that we can hold such meetings, whether or not it is in the by-laws. Acceptance of her proposal was moved and seconded. There was some additional discussion. It was suggested, as an alternative, to refer this issue to the Staffing & Governance sub-team of the Mission Renewal Task Force. Past President Joan Campbell suggested this as an alternative motion, encouraging the sub-team to look at other issues as well, with recommendations for the congregation at the Annual Meeting. After discussion, she withdrew her motion. Back to Karmi's motion, we voted. By show of hands, the motion carried by split vote and will be referred to the annual meeting for ratification.

Administrator Craig M. Wiester asked everyone to look for previous copies of the by-laws, seeking to understand some language that is garbled in the current copies.

Proposal for recommendations from Commissions re 2007 nominations

President Garvin Davenport brought up concerns about nominations in 2007, expected to be a very challenging year. We need to find the very best people to take on the burdens of the year ahead. He solicited thoughts from the people around this table about good people to take on roles serving on Commissions. President-Elect Karmi Mattson distributed a sheet outlining interests and skills needed for various Commissions. Pastor Craig Shirley emphasized the need to have relatively new members participating in church government. Diane Greve mentioned, on the other hand, that it is a challenge for new people to have the informal power needed to get things done. This is an important new insight.

Karmi asked everyone to take the sheet back to their Commissions and complete it with recommendations, not only for their own Commissions. Education Director Diane Shallue reminded us that we need to involve new members, call them up.

November Financials

Treasurer Norris Waalen led us through the financial reports.

Turning to the 2007 budget, we had no strong feeling that we needed to work through it at this meeting. Treasurer Norris Waalen, however, made some preliminary comments. We had some discussion about stewardship techniques, ways to encourage pledging and giving. We had some discussion about rentals, property or parking space. Garvin mentioned that the finance committee is looking at this.

Other Business

President Garvin Davenport wrapped it up that the letter is approved and will be sent out soon.

We adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

Pastor Craig Shirley mentioned how well this meeting ran, how it exemplifies the role of the Board of Commissioners.