

**Senior Pastor, Rich Larson, Report to Church Council
Thursday, November 13, 2008**

- 1) KOINONIA NETWORK – The Koinonia fellowship groups have been meeting on Saturday night and Sunday morning. Between the two sessions there have been about 30-35 people involved. There will be two more Koinonia gatherings this month. I hope to start up again in the spring during the season of Lent.
- 2) DECEMBER MEETING - You are all invited to my house, 1904 Oak Street West, Stillwater, for the December council meeting. Come early for hors d'oeuvres at 6:30 pm, meeting will start at 7:00 pm. I am suggesting that we invite those who have just gone off council to attend as well.
- 3) PASTORS VOTE ON COUNCIL - I checked the constitution and it does indeed say that the Senior Pastor has a vote on the Church Council. It does not say anything about the Associate Pastor however. The ELCA model constitution after which our constitution is designed does state that the pastor(s) are voting members. **So perhaps we need to look at a revision of our constitution for this purpose.**
- 4) BENEVOLENCES – I have attached a copy of the guidelines for our benevolence contributions for this fiscal year. Benevolences have been paid for the month of October. However, please note that **we did not pay any benevolences from January to September of 2008.** I would like to suggest that we check our balance and discern whether or not we could try to make up some of our obligations for 2008.

I have instructed Hope to send gifts to the following missions from the designated funds.

- Mission Fund, keep \$163 in the fund to go towards the Image Scholarships.
- World Hunger Fund, send \$100 to Bread for World and \$300 to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal
- Food Shelf Fund, send \$400 to the Emergency Fund

I am also happy to announce that we received \$283.00 for the final “Crossing Bridges” appeal. This amount will be forwarded to the St. Paul Area Synod.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE FOR BENEVOLENCES – 2009

Synod Benevolence for 2009	\$7,000
Non-Synod Benevolence for 2009	\$4,400

Total Benevolence	\$11,400

Valley Outreach, (VO)	\$1,250.00
Lutheran Social Services (LSS)	\$ 500.00
St. Croix Valley Chaplaincy Association (SCVCA)	\$ 800.00
Luther Point Bible Camp (LPBC)	\$1,500.00
Young Life in the St. Croix Valley (YLSCV)	\$ 350.00

TOTAL NON-SYNOD BENEVOLENCES	\$4,400.00

2009	Non-Synod	St. Paul Area Synod
Monthly	VO 104.17	\$583.33
	LSS 41.67	
	SCVCA 66.67	
	LPBC 125.00	
	YLSCV 29.17	

November 2008 Council Report
Associate Pastor, Karen Williams

- **Youth Ministry**: Mission Impossible, Raking, Feed My Starving Children, Bonfire, and Barn Bash have all been a part of the last month's ministry. We have had good attendance.
- **National Youth Gathering**: The Herberger coupon sale went well. All of the proceeds will go towards this trip in July 2009. We will be sharing a coach bus with Our Savior's. Cinnamon Roll sales and Christmas cookie tray sales will be the next fundraiser for our group of 9.
- **Continuing Education**: I am enrolled in a free, on-line course to prepare for the National Youth Gathering. I will be taking one course each of the three semesters this school year in anticipation of the event next summer. This course is offered through the ELCA Youth Ministry Network.
- **Confirmation**: the 9th grade field trip to the St. Paul Cathedral, St. George's Greek Orthodox Church, Temple Israel, the old Muskego Church, & Luther Seminary was a highlight this month. The students are now in a series called Our Neighbor's Faith, which involves learning about other religions. The youth made cards for Lori Kamps.
- **Sunday School**: We have packed 2 dozen shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child. The children made praying hand hugging cards for Lori Kamps. We will begin working on our Christmas program: Christmas Around the World.
- **First Communion class**: There are 5 students preparing for their first communion on Nov. 23.
- **Toddler Time**: Interest is growing and there are a few children each week who attend. This allows their parents time to join the adult forum.
- **Splash Ministry**: We have had a number of babies born into our church family. This ministry keeps in touch with those young parents.
- **Tutoring**: We have 5 tutors at Andersen Elementary each Wednesday. The group goes to lunch after tutoring to debrief.
- **Moms In Touch**: This group of 5 meets each Tuesday morning to pray for Andersen Elementary. We have received prayer requests from the school and have seen our prayers answered.
- **Women's Ministry**: Our women's circles continue to meet monthly. Decorations for the Connection have been made that will be displayed during Advent. This ties in with the Sunday School program theme. The evening circle has packaged two care boxes for our soldiers and plan to pack one more. The Christmas supper will be on Dec. 2 at 6:30 pm. All women are encouraged to attend. I have been rehearsing with a women's ensemble for the entertainment at the Christmas supper.
- **Wednesday morning prayer group**: A group of 4 meets each Wednesday morning at 8:30 am to pray for Bethlehem and concerns. We have been studying the book: Celebration of Discipline.
- **Community**: I have attended the St. Paul Synod Ministerium, a Valley Outreach informational meeting, a women in ministry prayer group which meets monthly, Saturday night musicians' appreciation supper, SCVYMA, and a non-member wedding have been a part of this month's connections.

- **Red Cross Psychological Training:** I am now certified to provide specialized care in trauma situations through the Red Cross. I could be called upon to provide ministry in disasters such as a tornado (think Hugo) or flood (think southern Mn.) or other emergencies (think bridge collapse or accidents). Many of our SCVYMA members participated in this training so if there is an emergency situation at any of the Stillwater area schools, we will be prepared to respond.
- **Facebook:** My facebook site is up and running. This is an excellent communication tool for young people as well as older people. Many youth ministers use this as a method of keeping a connection with their youth. I am also looking into a web blog. I also have an account on My Space, but have not yet developed it very well. Further, I often text with youth and adults.
- **Young Adult Outreach Team:** This group has worked very diligently to connect with our young adults by finding contact information. The group will be baking and sending care packages later this month.
- **Liturgical Dance:** The girls danced this past Sunday and are preparing for Advent Vespers and the Sunday School Christmas Program.
- **Thanksgiving Eve Service:** The planning is nearly complete. We will have an ecumenical service with People's Congregational Church. Pastor Beth Faeth will be preaching. Dessert will follow the service which will be held on Wed., Nov. 26, at 7 pm.

Ministries Coordinator, MPR November 2008

Web Site

- Sometime in mid-October, all of the electronic files which hold the documents of BethlehemStar.org were deleted. I rebuilt the home page only to give minimal information until a new site can be built.
- In the past 2 weeks I have attended a webmaster's evening course (12 hours) and spent approximately 10 hours on my own working on the new site. Part of the tuition of the class is to be able to attend an on-going classes (users' group) every 2nd Wednesday of the month – which I will begin to attend this Wednesday.
- I purchased new software, a methods book and tuition to the class using my own resources.
- If all goes well, I plan to publish (launch) the new website by December 1st.

Sunday Morning Hospitality Volunteers

The new Hospitality Team met the evening of Monday, Nov. 10.

At the meeting: Michelle Atkins, Sabrina Bell, Val Boettcher, Jean Groppoli, Russ Havir, Jenny Schoolman, Helen Strong, and Pam Wohlers. Kristy Koukal submitted her comments via email.

The minutes to the meeting will be circulated to the team for comments and changes. A copy of the final will be available at the council meeting.

Audio/Video

In the past two months, we have provided A/V in the Connection for overflow for two funerals at Bethlehem. But we have used personal and make shift equipment. The Music&Worship Team has asked our team to look into what it would take to:

1. get permanent A/V equipment at church
2. acquire better methods of recording sermons for use on the internet
3. improve the overall sound quality in church.

Along with these three needs we also need a few more people on the team to take a rotation in mixing the sound on Sunday mornings. If we have 8-10 people willing to do this, then each of us need only volunteer once every other month. For training purposes, about a year ago, I purchased training DVD's, and a workbook to train volunteers to use the mix sound.

Mike Knox and I met with Craig Richards of Audio Logics, Eagan, MN and requested an assessment of Bethlehem's sound current sound equipment and audio needs. We have received a proposal from Audio Logic Systems. Our team will have its first meeting this weekend to review the proposals, and prepare recommendations to the Worship & Music Team. The recommendations to Worship & Music would include what we, as an A/V team, see as the objectives and needs of the A/V services.

Member Pictorial Directory

With Cynthia Huhnke's training and support, we were able to learn how to create a member pictorial directory in house. However, what we also discovered is the amount of volunteer hours it would take to create such a directory, both in computer time and in manual labor.

Council Action:

1. *I ask members of council to give their opinion of my searching for a company who specializes in taking photos and creating a directory for us.*
2. *If we choose to use an outside company, what is the opinion of council to put the 'password protected' directory on-line?*

If I am given approval to proceed with hiring an outside company, I will organize volunteers to call to schedule photos, to assist families who come in for photos, and to distribute packages of photos purchased by families.

Facilities Team report to be given by John Dahl. However, we should acknowledge all the work done by Dennis White in building yet more shelves in the building. This time he has created storage and work space for the Sunday School teachers and replaced the faucet in the Connection Kitchenette.

Engaging Members

- **Koinonia Academy** and “**Sharing God’s Presence Box**”- These two programs will start up in January.
- Sampson Davis will be hosting the 4th movie night on Nov. 15th. This month the movie is The Incredibles. Movie Night will be geared towards our younger members as the adults will be engaged with the Koinonia discussions in the Fellowship Hall at that time. Popcorn will be provided/bring your own soda. December will not have a Movie Night due to the additional holiday activities. We plan to resume in January.

Other Areas of service:

- **Hanging of the Greens.** Monday, Dec. 1, 2-9pm Ann Johnson will be cooking and serving a supper at 5:30. I will be organizing and directing volunteers. ***COUNCIL MEMBERS AND FAMILIES ARE WELCOME TO JOIN IN THE FUN!!!!***
- **Bethlehem Cookbook Updates.** Julie Grams, Shelly White and myself are working with other volunteer to type recipes submitted by members of the congregation. The pages will be photocopied, 3-hole punched and collated in-house and sold at the boutique.
- **Cookie Sales.** Judy Smith, Ginny Peulen, Brenda Oseland, Jane Henkel and Pastor Karen are organizing this fundraiser for youth.
- **YAO – Young Adult Outreach Group.** Jane Henkel, Jackie Pedersen, Kristi Mahnke, and myself, have started an outreach to those post H.S. members up to age 21. Our first project is a holiday care package of cookies and handmade cards.
- **Culture & Development Team** – Chaired by Andree Aronson. The last meeting was attended by Shelly White and myself. Report to be sent by Andree.
- **Volunteer Database** the new version of Membership Plus allows us to printout each member and the areas of volunteering. I will work with a volunteer to update the volunteer data in Membership Plus.

Special Thanks:

- To our funeral volunteers as we held a funeral and luncheon for over 200 people. Mike Knox set up audio/video for worship overflow in the Connection. Thank you to luncheon servers: Karen McCloud, Renee LeQue, Kris Jelberg, Marilyn Nelsen, Rosie Asmus, Diane White, Donna Hogberg, Dennis & Mary Trenda, Rick Beberg, Bob & Mary Olson, Darleen Linabauer, Dave Goulette, Jody Miranda, Inkee Noreen, Dorothy McCloud, Marion Thompson, Tippi Beberg, Wilma McGowan and Debbie Sawyer.
- Boy Scout Troop 113 for hosting the Halloween Bonfire & Treats in the parking lot.

Newsletter

- Jordan and Jared Stow published the October BethlehemStar newsletter
DEADLINE FOR THE NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER IS: NOVEMBER 21ST.
We will want to distribute the newsletter before Thanksgiving

Respectfully submitted by Jean Groppoli

Worship & Music Task Force Meeting
Thursday, November 9, 2008
Minutes
Chairperson: Charles Davis

PRESENT: Rich Larson, Wilma McGowan, Mary Olson, Hope Pederson, Chuck Davis

1. Organ Repair

- Hope cut a check for \$3600 and gave to Jane Henkel to send to Ferris. \$3600 is the down payment Ferris required to start the organ repair.
- **To Do:** Roy to follow-up with Ferris and determine repair start date. Our understanding is that the repairs will not begin until early 2009.
- Now that there is a BLC action team concentrating on fundraising and stewardship, it was suggested the W&MAT contact and coordinating fundraising efforts with that action team.
- **To Do:** Chuck to contact fundraising action team to coordinating fundraising efforts.
- **To Do:** Roy to write a summary of the organ repair initiative for the December newsletter (similar to what was written in the Annual Report).

2. Alter Guild update

- Donna Hogberg has offered to pay for the purchase of an additional votive candle screen.
- **To Do:** Mary Olson to shop for and purchase votive candle screen.

3. Advent

- “Hanging of the Greens” is on Monday December 1st from 2pm-9pm. Dinner will be served at 5:30pm.
- Votive screens to be used during Advent services. We are looking for alternatives to lighting the candle. Currently, a candle is used; however, candle wax drips on the carpet in the Sanctuary and is difficult to clean.
- **To Do:** Chuck to research where to purchase “punks” and if they can be used to light candles.
- Pastor Rich to introduce new songs during midweek services. Rich hopes to use additional musicians for these songs.
- Christmas program will be Sunday December 21st. Pastor Karen is working on an international theme for this year’s program.
- Roger Knuteson is working on an effort to bring the flame from the “International Peace Candle” here to Bethlehem Lutheran Church. This flame will originate from the traditional home of Jesus.
- Bridge of Harmony playing 10:30pm service Christmas Eve.
- Lessons & Carols weekend after Christmas at both Saturday and Sunday services.
- **To Do:** Chuck to ask Pastor Karen to contact college students to do readings during Lessons & Carols.

4. 5:01 update

- Pastor Rich voiced concerned about the low attendance at the 5:01 service the last 5 or 6 weeks. One thought is the unseasonably pleasant weather during October and early November might have kept people away. He is not looking to make any changes. We will monitor and address at future W&MAT meetings as necessary.
- Ways to advertise? Sandwich boards on corners during the day on Saturday? Ad on public access tv?
- **To Do:** Chuck to contact Pastor Karen about phone call made to potential target families.

5. Audio/Visual update

- Jean is working with a local audio/visual company (Audio Logic) to address to of the audio/visual issues at BLC. Using instructions from Audio Logic and equipment already available Jean was able to setup

an “overflow” area in the Connection for 2 recent funerals held at BLC. Each funeral had about 25 in the “overflow” area.

- Jean is working on getting an estimate for a permanent audio/visual solution in the Connection.
- Jean is forming and training a group of dedicated audio/visual technicians. She current has 3 or 4. She would like this to grow to 6 or 7.
- Our current recording setup does not produce a consistently clear and loud recording of our Sunday Service. The service is recorded to be put on compact disc and sent to local shut-ins. Currently, the recording is not in a usable format for these folks.
- **To Do:** Chuck to ask Jean to ask Audio Logic about issues with recording the Sunday service.

6. Other

- Order more hymnals? During a few recent funerals held at BLC, there were not enough of the new cranberry hymnals to go around.
- **To Do:** Mary to work with Jean to do hymnal inventory in Sanctuary to accurate count of hymnals available in Sanctuary. Once we have number, determine if more hymnals are needed. If more are needed, Mary to check with Bob Olson to see if there is memorial money available. If there is, Mary has permission to order 25 more hymnals.
- During the hymnal discussion, it was mentioned that we may not have enough bibles for the Sanctuary. It may be difficult to acquire additional copies of the same version of the Bible (“Good News” version) we have in the Sanctuary.
- **To Do:** Pastor Rich to ask Jane to determine if additional copies of the “Good News” Bible can be acquired. No purchases should be made at this time.
- Because of his new responsibilities as council president, Chuck asked if he should continue to chair this action team. Those in attendance said “YES!” and quickly closed the subject ;). However, it was agreed that we should look for additional members.

NEXT MEETING: January 22th, 2009 7pm

Meeting adjourned
Chairperson, Charles Davis

**Bethlehem Lutheran Church
Financial Score Card
2008-2009 Fiscal Year**




INCOME STATEMENT

	October 2008				October YTD			
	Revenue / Expense		Variance		Revenue / Expense		Variance	
	Actual	Plan	\$	%	Actual	Plan	\$	%
INCOME								
Giving to the General Fund	22,725	25,265	(2,541)	-10%	22,725	25,265	(2,541)	-10%
Designated Giving	(200)	950	(1,150)	-121%	(200)	950	(1,150)	-121%
Draw on Equity	-	-	-		-	-	-	
Shining Star Rent	3,128	2,000	1,128	56%	3,128	2,000	1,128	56%
Gifts to Dane's Place	50	2,150	(2,100)	-98%	50	2,150	(2,100)	-98%
TOTAL INCOME	25,703	30,365	(4,663)	-15%	25,703	30,365	(4,663)	-15%
EXPENSE								
Stewardship	1,126	1,425	299	21%	1,126	1,425	299	21%
Business	7,679	8,695	1,016	12%	7,679	8,695	1,016	12%
Staff	21,584	21,835	251	1%	21,584	21,835	251	1%
TOTAL EXPENSE	30,390	31,955	1,565	5%	30,390	31,955	1,565	5%
NET INCOME / (LOSS)	(4,687)	(1,590)	(3,097)	-12%	(4,687)	(1,590)	(3,097)	-12%

BALANCE SHEET - Selected Key Accounts

	Aug	Sept	Oct	3 Month Average
Current Assets				
Cash	34,775	36,489	29,033	33,432
Accounts Recievable	14,000	-	-	4,667
Liabilities				
Line of Credit	47,000	33,000	33,000	37,667
Connection - Mortgage	251,758	251,758	311,416	271,644
Shining Star Consolidation Loan	61,775	61,775	89,711	71,087
Dane's Place - Mortgage	57,410	52,410	48,467	52,762
Monthly Attendance	477	547	567	530

BLC's Financial Report Card

Key	Favorable	Neutral	Unfavorable
			

Revenue



Expense



Net Income



Liabilities



Attendance



Eboard Action Items

Council Action Items