



St. Paul Lutheran Church  
**CONGREGATION MEETING MINUTES • November 18, 2014**

**Call to Order:** President Mark Buffington called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

**Opening Prayer:** Pastor Tom Gudmundson

**Secretary's Report - Minutes of June 17, 2014 Congregation Meeting:** *A motion was made by Marv TerMaat and second by Paul W Ten Pas to approve the Secretary's Report from the June 17, 2014 Congregation Meeting. Motion carried unanimously.*

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Donna Felch presented the Financial Report ending September 30, 2014. *A motion was made by Brad Vollbrecht, second by Shelly Johnson to approve the Financial Report as presented. Motion carried unanimously.*

**Correction of 2014-15 Budget Error:** In June 2014 the Congregation approved a budget of \$953,241, which was a 4.3% decrease over last year. In September we discovered a clerical error, which underestimated the budget by \$60,946. The corrected budget should be \$1,014,188, which is a 2.2% increase over last year.

*A motion was made by Ron Kalk, second by Mike Dahlke to approve the 2014-15 Budget Correction as presented. Motion carried unanimously.*

**Same Sex Union Policy:** Pastor Tom walked everyone through the policy proposed by the Church Council as recommended by Synod. Discussion occurred as follows:

A member mentioned that other states have given fines for churches not following the law, so it was questioned if we should budget for a potential fine. At this point the church council will not budget for this as it has not occurred in Wisconsin at this point. If we were to be sued, we would need to find a lawyer. Synod may have suggestions, but they would not provide a lawyer for us. It was noted that the American Center for Law & Justice would be a good resource if this were to occur.

It was asked if we could be considered discriminating because we are open to the public. At this point the government has respected churches and hasn't filed suits, however that is why we are proposing this policy. It gives us something to fall back on that could help to support us.

Homosexuals would not be excluded from attending worship services. We welcome anyone to come and hear God's Word.

It was asked if a homosexual could receive Holy Communion. Pastor Tom's response was that they cannot, as the purpose of Holy Communion is to repent, which means to change the way you think and act. If someone is homosexual, they are not willing to listen to what God says, and therefore they don't belong at the communion rail. However, in the end we leave it up to the individual to determine if they should take Holy Communion. A portion of the Confessional is that we ask publically if you repent and sincerely intend to repent with the help of God after communion. A Pastor cannot judge someone's heart, only God can. This may be something the individual is trying to change and wants to repent.

It was asked why we wouldn't allow a homosexual to take communion but we do allow those living together that are not married to. This issue was tabled.

*A motion was made by Paul W Ten Pas, seconded by Rosalie Miller to approve the Same Sex Union Policy as presented. Motion carried unanimously.*

#### **Congregation Concerns:**

***Is anything being done regarding low attendance at Congregation Meetings?*** The Church Council has tried to be consistent on the meeting times, being the third Tuesday of the month at 6pm. They also publish the agenda at least two weeks in advance and the Pastors encourage it during worship services. The Council would be happy to take any other suggestions members have.

***Could we coordinate what the ushers do with the Confirmation students so that it is more consistent amongst the teams?*** Nicole Dollevoet (Confirmation) will work with Pastor Mark (ushers) to develop a procedure for this.

***Faith@Home is a wonderful concept.*** Helping kids stay grounded to attempt to prevent them from finding other avenues to find purpose, such as Islam. We need to keep our young people focusing on Jesus.

***Adjournment:*** *A motion was made by Brad Vollbrecht second by Gary Weckwerth to adjourn the Congregation Meeting at 6:40 pm. Motion carried unanimously.*

**Closing Prayer:** Pastor Don Hasse

Attendance: 42