

## Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church Council Retreat Saturday, February 16, 2013

**Present:** Pastor Eric Moehring; Pastor Kristin Hunsinger; Council President Heather Heckel; Vice President Tinky Keen; Treasurer Paul Quel; Financial Secretary Cindy Williamson; Secretary, Stephanie Feaser; Music Director Linda Keener; Council Members - Dennis Burns, Chad Foltz, Ernie Foltz, John Jung, Diane Kellogg, Bruce Matson, Ferrell Newman, George Springer, Sarah Vaughan

Chad Foltz opened the retreat with devotions at 8:50 am.

### **Rev. Mike Poole, Hatcher Baptist & Lakeside Clergy Group – “Reaching Out Our Hand”**

- Defined the physical boundaries of the Lakeside Community
- Listed all of the community programs already in place at CLC (liked our website)
- Gave a brief history of Lakeside (heyday of the 50’s and 60’s)
- Many churches are struggling now with membership, attendance, budget, etc
- Question: How to maintain gospel study, stewardship, Lutheranism but present it in a new way?
- Success is not measured in just attendance or membership or pledges but also in quality of life, moving membership, community, and the world closer to the Kingdom of God.
- We have excellent relations with other Lakeside Churches, but can also reach out to area schools, businesses, service organizations, Lewis Ginter, etc.
- Story by Jim Somerville – “When the Sand Castle Crumbles” – Father and daughter build a wonderful sand castle, but the tide is coming in. Daughter says, “Daddy do something!” Dad builds a moat and a flood wall, but the waves keep crashing at the castle and eventually washed it away. Daughter says, “Now what?” Dad says, “Let’s go swimming.” Moral – Churches can’t keep hiding behind a floodwall, doing the status quo. Times are changing and it is better just to dive into something new – a new way of thinking and doing.
- “Can’t Stop Laughing” video on-line – Keep your sense of humor
- Encouraged prayer walking events in the community
- Goals for churches – 1) Spiritual connection, 2) Personal connections and 3) Practical service within the community
- Video – Walter Brogerman “Time to Die and Be Raised” – The bible tells us to rise up to newness through stories like Abraham and Sarah, Good Friday and Easter Sunday – break out of old patterns into new birth, hope, and joy

### **Dr. Phyllis Milton, VA Synod – “Faith Formation in the Congregation”**

- Presentation based on the book “The Disciple Making Church” by Bill Hull
- The Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) – Job of disciples is to go make disciples, to baptize, to teach the commandments.
- All baptized believers are disciples and should share what they know about Jesus and how he has impacted our lives, invite, grow and nurture believers, train them to go out and share and serve.
- We are to be Christ’s presence in the world through word and deed.
- Jesus’ Model = Follow Me!
- Discipling is the Heart of the Church – Priorities: 1) Commitment to scripture  
2) Commitment to one another  
3) Commitment to prayer  
4) Commitment to praise and worship

## 5) Commitment to outreach

### **Ellen Hinlicky, VA Synod – “The Bigger Picture – Engaging the Synod”**

- VA Synod: Connects Christians worldwide and Lutherans around the world
- VA Synod provides Educational Resources, Leadership Services, and Theological Resources
- Your benevolence supports the work of the VA Synod and the wider ministries
- Benevolence is down, especially since the 2009 decision to allow gay members and pastors
- Question from the floor – How to get churches back on track? How to regain member and funding losses? Difficult question.
- Ellen asked, “What do churches need from the Synod that it isn’t providing? Response: Best Management Practices from churches that have maintained or even grown in past years. What are they doing right? What do we need to do/change to thrive and grow again? What churches/leaders can we talk to who have weathered the storm?”
- Missouri Synod churches are being hit with losses too.
- 4-6% losses in protestant churches annually
- Some Lutheran Churches have changed to a more contemporary, up-beat, relaxed Christian format and been successful.
- “Fundraising Presentation” – 10 Key Points
  - 1) Volunteers make the best givers. (Get people involved and they will give more.)
  - 2) Make it easy to give. (Set-up on-line payment systems.)
  - 3) Ask often and in creative ways.
  - 4) Thank every donor seven times.
  - 5) Share stories of what worked and what didn’t.
  - 6) Identify special projects with specific goals and track progress toward goals.
  - 7) Create a Heritage or Legacy Society. (Provisions in will for gift to church.)
  - 8) Be cautious with Endowment Funds. (Purpose should be very specific and long-term.)
  - 9) Define your Gift Acceptance Policy. (Provisions for large, unexpected and unusual gifts.)
  - 10) Lead by example. (Give your time and money and encourage others.)

Retreat Presentations ended, followed by the regular church council meeting for February.