

**Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church
Congregation Council Retreat
February 18, 2012**

9:00 - Meet and Greet (coffee and pastries)

**9:15-9:30 - Opening Worship - Pastor Eric
Devotions - Mason Carbaugh**

9:30-10:00 - Patty Franz

Christ Lutheran, ELCA and the Virginia Synod, "Graced together for Seeking, Sharing, Caring, Serving."

30 seconds to think of 3 critical ministries of CLC

Lambs Basket, CARITAS, Christian Ed, Music, Worship, Evangelism, fellowship, stewardship, visiting the sick, volunteerism (choirs, altar guild, ushers, tellers, teachers), mission trips, youth, spreading the gospel around the world, community outreach (lambs basket, angel tree, thanksgiving meals, YMCA),

Ministries of VA Synod

Pastoral support, youth events, synod assembly, mission development, candidacy, emergency funding, humanism, world hunger, LDR, stewardship development, ministering to the ministers, continuing education, Christian education, other forms of education, ACTS (Ambassador's Community for Theological Study), Power in the Spirit (PITS 7/12-14, "youth" program for adults), Roanoke College, Caroline Furnace (camps, Hungry Mother, etc), Southern Seminary support. **Bill & Patty's list:** Roots & Wings (Children, family education program, for very young children and their families, day long series of classes, seminars, lectures), Book of Faith initiatives, Healthy Congregation, Virginia Lutheran Home, Campus ministries. Lutheran family services, minister the ministers, prison chaplaincy. Most of these are items that some people in our congregation have participated in.

Patty's sweatshirt is inside out, and why is that? We as a synod and church are turned upside down and inside out by God. He takes our life and does that to us. Ambassadors to Christ. We are ambassadors, we go out; the synod supports us, how do we support the synod. We send leaders to do these activities; planning committees, synod council, chaplaincy, ecumenical officers, and financial support. CLC has nurtured, loved a former pastor that's now our bishop. We should be prayer and paying to help the synod. So, why are we not meeting our synod benevolence? We could do the same thing for the **ELCA** Malaria initiative, World Council of Churches, LDR, Augsburg Fortress, things of greater scope.

3 Expressions. Scope: Congregations < Synods < ELCA.

Discussion: We ran out of cash. So, what do we do? Grow the church or fire people? Hope and prayer are great things, but we also need to do something. We did a lot. Suzanne, Sarah hanging door hangers for Christmas.

How do we share that with the congregation? And how are we going to make up our fair share? Mason: disconnect between these separate entities, we don't think how these things are related, if we took the list, identified which things are dependent on synod, or the elca, so then we can show how the whole, possible bulletin inserts or temple talks. Jim Pickels...we have a chance at a balanced budget for the first time in 6 years, we tried desperately to make more for the synod, but we spent down our reserve, prayer, we need to pray. Joe Santuk: council budget talks; we committed any additional funds we gather go to synod. Patty 35% of money that comes into VA synod goes to ELCA. Mike Rydel; continuing on Mason's discussion, prioritize, allocate how our money goes towards synod events, what doesn't get funded if we don't continue to send our fair share to the synod. What things will get cut? Lines in the budget that will get cut. George Springer: benevolence Sunday? Bill 2012 has 53 Sundays, other years have 52, can we designate a Sunday (even the worst of the year), even the lowest Sunday, if every congregation took their offerings and sent that to Synod? United Lutheran Appeal, we get very low participation, 98% of our donations comes from one family. Some other ideas: (Bill referred to our strategic plan from a few years ago) charge for use of the building, it's a resource, we can use it to fund ministries. We know what the expense side, what about the revenue side? Mason: analogous to the decision to call an associate pastor, the interview process, we looked at the budget and said that if we made the call for a new minister, we needed a financial commitment. Council at the time agreed that funds would be set aside monthly to build up a reserve so we could pay the associate pastor. We could do something similar for benevolence.

10:00-10:10 - Suzanne Conway Stewardship Report

Handouts: 2012 Covenants (129 points), and listing of annual from 2008 to 2012 pledges. We have a great committee, we have tried to make and keep it simple (idea came from synod). Stressed cost reduction of the stewardship program. Minimized mailing, only mailed what was absolutely necessary. Tried really hard to minimize expenses. Many on the committee put in extra time and \$. "View from a different pew" was pretty successful, bulletin inserts, all were donated by committee. Celebration meal, tablecloths, decorations, plastic cutlery, main entrée all donated by committee members. Emphasis on covenant, our church ourselves our community. These 129 points have/will go into bulletins and newsletters. 2011 had more pledge cards from children than 2012. Average giving per individual has gone up from 2008. 2008 \$2592 2010 \$3100 2011 \$3088, 2012 \$3624. There are families that could not pledge due to the state of economy. John Jung; are we seeing concentration in that a very small amount of people are giving large amounts of money. This is a cause for concern, but this is not uncommon for churches. But if these families leave the area, leave the church, and then we have problems. We do a great job of supporting lambs basket and the youth. We do a good job of

supporting one another. We need to extend this throughout the congregation, who is missing? Have you called to let them know you are thinking of them. John, the Super Bowl drive was great. We care about what we see and feel. Jim Pickels; of the incoming pledges how many 50 and older have backed down on their pledges? This may continue to be an issue.

10:10-12:15 - Pastor Jim Kniseley

"Expanding Our Resources for doing God's Mission"

Returns from last year. Talked about evangelism and related issues last year. Synod stewardship coordinator. Right now, our congregation is concerned about resources, and how to allocate them. How we compare with other congregations with other congregations of our size. Historical review to colonial times. What resources that we could be using for stewardship, youth, think outside the box, perhaps. Research department form ELCA for some information.

In 2009 CLC 575 baptized members, 10 new members received, 10 members removed, ie we were static. In other years, we've added and subtracted similar numbers.

- Average CLC attendance is
 - ~140 now
 - 167 in 2009
- For similar sized congregations:
 - 10,000 total ELCA congregations, there are
 - 876 congregations of our size.
 - Average 615 baptized members;
 - we are a bit smaller 575.
 - #people at Sunday worship
 - ~28%, of the baptized members
 - CLC are similar.
 - #people at Sunday school
 - CLC 30
 - elca avg 76

Total income

CLC \$406,000 in 2009 (regular + designated).

Average ELCA \$348,000 We are wealthier than most congregations of our size.

Benevolence

2009 CLC benevolence \$26,000,

ELCA avg=\$19,000.

Endowment fund? We (CLC) don't have one, most congregations of our size have an endowment fund. The purpose of the fund is for the future. Direction of distribution is up to the congregation. ELCA Avg endowment = \$180,000.

Take away is that we live in an affluent area, our average income is higher than average. CLC mortgage is ~\$300,000. How do you take care of these expenses and still do the things that we want to do? Jim P. asked about endowment, the \$

goes into an account and do we draw from the interest? Not for current expenses. George Sims helps plan these things. Formula for endowment, 10% goes to synod, 10% to community, etc. Never more than 50% left @ church, for example. Way to deal with estates that donate to the church. Considering resource, think beyond us and our congregation, but how big are God's resources? If council makes the recommendation that we cut back on synod, what the congregation hears is that it's OK to cut back on giving to the lord, not just our pockets and resources, we can be created.

Slides Henry Melchior Muhlenberg is the patron of all Lutherans in America.

Statue of Henry at Seminary in Phila 1742 Men and women worshipped separately before synods, seminaries, colleges, youth groups. Each person and congregation was on their own. Muhlenberg family influenced 125 other churches. Muhlenberg grew up near Wittenberg, German. Muhlenberg served as a bishop as much as a pastor, he helped write constitutions, settle disputes, invited young men to come to his home and use his library and he would ordain and send them out to congregations that needed a pastor. Muhlenberg wasn't a proponent of fighting for independence, his sons disagreed. One became a general. One son was ordained Anglican and Lutheran and served in the legislature (had to be Anglican to serve in VA legislature). Lutherans would have had to pay taxes (which went to the Anglican Church), but weren't used to giving offerings to support their church. Peter Muhlenberg served both Lutheran and Anglican church, commissioned to raise militia, at the end of a sermon, he reveals his military uniform underneath his cleric robes. He enlisted hundreds into the militia. Muhlenberg College in Allentown PA is named after Peter Muhlenberg. Brother Frederick became speaker of the house. How they raised money. In PA they used a lottery. At Hebron, they waited 16 years to get a pastor. Sent delegations to Germany asking for a pastor. They finally found someone in US, Muhlenberg ordained him. John Caspar Stover spent 2 years in Germany raising \$ for the church, raised \$ for a library, found a pastor, who died. But his assistant pastor returned, helped build church. The church then bought a farm (glebe), priest or rector can live on it, and whatever they could sell was their salary. There were also slaves on the property. Back then, they certainly thought outside the box. So now, what happens when there aren't enough offerings? Rent facilities, share space with another group, have a special Sunday emphasis. Look at alternatives to pledging? Do short term special fundraising.

What in the presentation would be helpful for CLC? Things have really changed over time, but same problems different era? The price of religious freedom is that the members have to support the church.

Don't pledge to a budget. Do we ask for commitment before budget is put together?

Yes, we do. Some congregations put up the budget and ask members to pledge to it.

Why is that bad? Because people will pledge to that point. Don't put budget and pledges together. What is your commitment to the lord? Shouldn't be about budgets. None of us are permanent here. It's not about us; it's about the church and looking toward the future. What is our responsibility? What is god's part? What about the future?

Resources: What's available to get talking about youth, year round stewardship?

? How do children/ youth participate in offerings, stewardship commitment at CLC?

Program called **10-10-80**. Of whatever comes in. 10% goes to the work of the lord, 10% goes to savings (rainy day fund), then live off of the 80%. Applies to individuals

and congregations. You must live within your means. How you move towards where you want to be? One suggestion is to move 1% per year to meet the goals. You won't make it every year. How can we move towards 10-10-80 each month. For January, we had \$1000 surplus (which was unusual), so take that \$1000 and send 10% to the synod and 10% to elca. And let the congregation know that.

Free will offerings are as close as we come to "renting" the building.

Thrivent does parents children, money matters program that they will teach. It has a clear blue piggy bank used to teach children, it has different segment for share save and spend. Ways to teach youth and adults. Mason remembered that they always took up an offering at Sunday school. Make it easier to donate. Automatic transfers, online banking, paypal donations. 20 Practices for Growing Stewards in your Congregation. Practices, reflections, resources & activities.

Point #2, Define clear congregational vision, mission and purpose that includes a visible role for stewardship ministry. Look into the resource "Discerning Your Congregation's future". Currently, CLC is 0-2-98 (of the 10-10-80), historically we've been at 0-8-92. #13 we have done (separate pledge from budget), we do stewardship in Sept, October, celebration Sunday in early November. Mason, what evidence is there to support that separation? Your giving is done in thanksgiving in the lord; there are no budgets in scripture.

For stewardship campaigns, whatever you've been doing, don't do it for more than 3 years in a row. #5 practice of "firstfruits", the first thing we do is make our own commitment and put it into the offering plates. Example: Average % income for ELCA has dropped from 3% to about 1.5%. Why has the % dropped? Has dropped across denominations, not just Lutherans. Workshop offered through synod (Bencher's? Ventures?), 6-8 congregations—stewardship committees, and council members; workshops that teach the stewardship resources for elca. Hear what other congregations are doing, cross fertilization of ideas. \$500 for workshops, financial aid available.

Program by United Methodist church: 5 practices of fruitful living. Doesn't talk about money much, but tries to get people to witness the healthy church life practices. "Radical hospitality"—what people see and hear when they come. "Passionate worship", "intentional faith development", "extravagant generosity".

Response method. People responded at worship, we've done various things. Best response method; sitting down and talking face to face 2x2 people go to a home, a little bit of sharing and witnessing about what we like about CLC, then hand over something.

We did do that years ago. But it's not all positive; there can be resentment in the congregation. Statistically the response is higher when the response is a personal thing. So, take \$ out of it. Let's just talk about the church, not money. You could target a subset, the ones that with a big of encouragement might choose to give. Cottage meetings. More stats: Giving per confirmed members vs those who attend regularly.

Avg=\$571, regular worshippers \$1500/year.

When we build a budget: Separate from commitment. Is it built completely on the pledges? It's a parallel process. We could put out a program budget with general amounts. Pledges, historic giving, other resources we might have, combined with faith offerings. Call parks & rec, other organizations looking for buildings to use. Another idea: when your building is used by another group, and offers to do things like the YMCA doing our floors, make sure that members of the congregation also participate in whatever it is that's going on. Stories of faith in action. Where our benevolence funds

actually go. Heather, trying to create value of the church to our members. Sunday school numbers, ours are really low, youth especially. How do people get people to come to Sunday school? Wouldn't increase involvement (=value) go along with increased contributions. Why don't parents of young kids want to come for a Sunday School class? Why are they uncomfortable with the adult class? Demographics of the classes don't make them feel welcome. Some of it is perception.

12:15-12:45 - lunch

12:45-1:30 - Pastor Eric

"Club Membership"

Handout: Recovering Vital Parts of Who we Used to Be
 Presbyterian Ecology of Nurturing the Faith—Things that have historically been part of Presbyterian Congregations.

()=things that are no longer relevant to Presbyterians,

"?"=things that are declining

We are not the same society as we were in the 1950's and 1960's

Handout What do we Expect of our Members? Listing

X="operational norm", things that most people in our church do, in your opinion, "Y"= what we wish was the norm (X,Y)

	Question	X	Y
1	To support the congregation financially?	13	12
2	To tithe?	0	8
3	To give a % of their income?	4	10
4	To regularly attend on Sunday?	11	14
5	To intentionally pursue spiritual growth through Bible Study?	4	12
6	To conform to our congregation's culture?	11	0
7	To discover, develop and exercise their talents in the life of the church?	4	12
8	To exercise their god given gifts in the community	7	14
9	To discover in what they are doing all week long a calling and not just a job?	0	7
10	To talk about the work of god in their lives and share their faith with others?	1	13
11	To invite their friends and family members to church?	1	11
12	To accept the norm of the congregation as to how we deal with our differences?	4	2
13	To serve on a committee?	4	14
14	To participate in a small group that will provide nurture and pastoral care?	1	9
15	To show up on Christmas and Easter?	13	11

What we see is important that we're doing.
 Helping financially
 Attend regularly, not every Sunday but regular
 Conform to the culture
 Show up on Christmas and Easter
 Ideally:
 We'd like them to think out of the box

Discover the idea of calling

Desire to think outside the box; Accept the norms of the congregation, rated low.

X="membership club mentality", where you Participate, pay membership, serve on committees, and follow the rules—conform to the culture.

Y=Discipleship making. We would like to see the disciples' aspects of our congregation, taking tithing seriously, sharing the good news, rather than becoming members of a club.

1:30-2:15 - "Relevance"

How can we strengthen our membership club? Not so much a membership club, but saving lives, or discipleship-making. Which of these are going to create the desired aspects that we want? First we start with The Word. What areas can we be relevant to people? Music, learning, the service, fellowship, outreach. This can be a two way street. When you go to church you go for the music, etc, or do you pick a church based on the music, learning, service, fellowship, etc.

Trenton:

5 groups based on commonality

1. Education
2. Youth
3. Stewardship/financial,
4. music,
5. evangelism

Worship, Education what the group chose to focus on first. The group included council and staff and Trenton Hizer. What do we do?

Worship and Learning Task Force Discussion

Worship, Education are what the group chose to focus on first. What do we do? Attendance is down. How do we make the services more relevant so people choose to come? What are our resources to do this? What about people's talents that haven't been tapped into (examples are Sarah Vaughan being asked to serve on evangelism, and pastor Eric going to Connie Jung and saying fellowship hall looks bad, Building renewal was born). Susan Nepomuceno suggested temple talks, like the one Lainey Riddell gave recently. Not just talking about money in temple talks. Temple talks can include someone who talks about what the upcoming programs are, and what help they need. Make a personal connection (the person leading the group or involved in the group).

What other aspects can we touch on?

Elements of worship

Resources for worship

What other churches are doing.

It looks like one thing that works is seeing the church outside doing things that are relevant is a way to bring people into the church. Example/brainstorm idea: offer free financial advising to people who are struggling, where they are meeting.

Fellowship, anything that brings people together.

Pastor Eric proposes this group is charged is to help increase community involvement in all the ministries. The ministries and ministry teams, look at areas to reach out into the community. Examples VBS--bringing neighbor kids in, CARITAS,--ask neighbors to help with meals, ASP-- include people from the community, do a community music event. So, how do we do that?

Word/Worship

Music,
Education/Christian learning
Evangelism/Outreach/New Community based programs
Youth
Fellowship/Stewardship (thus ensuring that stewardship isn't all about money).

Think of a circle. The word is in the middle, the people & ministries are the spokes
We will focus on this in the next council meeting.

2:15-2:45 - Council Meeting with staff

2:45-3:00 - Closing Worship with Holy Communion – Pastor Kristin

***"Let your light so shine before others, that they may see your good works
and glorify your Father in heaven."
Mathew 5:13***