



Christ Our Shepherd Lutheran Church Council
Meeting of November 18, 2019

Devotion by Robbi Martin: My Spiritual Journey to COS. Robbi spoke of how fear led her to the COSL. Her family moved to Fayetteville when she was a child. The oldest and only girl, she felt responsible for her three brothers. Her parents told her she could do anything. Robbi's dad owned a plant nursery and her mom, a stable. Robbi loved horses. These businesses demanded that her family work seven days a week; church not a priority. When she was young, a retired pastor, Howard Dial, came to the stables and she became involved in their church. He talked with her about Jesus as her Savior. After a year in college, her father was diagnosed with cardiomyopathy. She left school to help her dad. He was one of the first heart transplant patients in Georgia and lived 15 more years. In that time, their nursery business grew to four locations. Tragedy struck again when her little brother committed suicide at 10. Robbi bounced back and then the drought of 2007 brought a water ban. Then the 2008 recession hit, and their bank failed. Their family's nursery business suffered from both. Fear took over. Another brother was diagnosed with Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma. Fear took over again. Robbi heard of a book and bought *The Power of Now, A Guide to Spiritual Enlightenment* by Eckhart Tolle. She read Max Lucado's book, *Fearless*. These books helped her but she still lost confidence. Then she met COSL members, John and Judy Kubitz. She met another member, Sue Memmer, and led a Christmas decorating class at the church. Pastor Miriam married Robbi and Shirley with the full support of the church Council and the church. Robbi has learned to worry less and that out of fear, faith comes. Peter overcame fear of drowning and walked towards Jesus. At the beginning of an act of faith there is a seed of fear. **John 14:27 (NIV)** "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." **Colossians 3:15 (NIV)**. "15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful." Fear is believing what the devil says. Faith is believing what Jesus says.

Opening Comments. Don Livingston: Don went over the night's agenda.

Attendees: Pastor Miriam Beecher, Don Livingston, Bernice Huie, Holly Monahan, Kevin Hawkins, Marty Hagberg, Dewey Patrick, Eric Jakubowski, Robbi Martin, Michael Oliver,

Absent: Pastor Wiese, Molly Breckling, Andrea Williams

Questions from Council on Financial Documents. Kevin Hawkins: (see also, Appendix A.)

On average, finances are pretty good. Offerings in October were \$12,800 less than budget. Total income was \$16,200 less than budget. However, year to date income is still \$19,800 or 6% ahead of budget. On the expense side, we were \$6,900 under budget in October, driven by one staff opening and lower benevolence due to the income shortfall. Year to date, expenses are \$4,500 or 1% lower than budget, driven by the staff opening. Net income for October was a loss of \$15,700, which was \$9,300 worse than budget. Year to date we have a net loss of \$7,200, which is \$24,200 better than budget. At this point, we have closed about a third of the \$64,000 annual deficit in the budget approved by the Congregation in May.

Discussion:

- Don asked Kevin, if attendance is up, is giving up?
- Kevin responded that there is no correlation. It rained during the Palmetto event; attendance for that event was down and as were offerings.
- Pastor Miriam reminded Council that 14 or 15 families have left COSL over the past year.
- Eric asked Kevin about the allocation of Stewardship expenses listed in the line item report. He said he hasn't spent that amount and asked Kevin to check the discrepancy.
- Don discussed examining the budget and expenses. Council consensus was to postpone until December.
 - **Action:** Kevin will reexamine the spreadsheet to insure expenses are listed in the correct location.
 - **Action:** Council will prepare to discuss the budget and expenses at their December meeting.

Pastor Reports

Pastor Miriam Update: Pastor Miriam spoke enthusiastically about the new members and complimented guest minister, Pastor Andrew. She said Eric has done a great job on Stewardship, that he was fun to work with; Eric has done what we had hoped a Stewardship leader and Council liaison would do. New COSL members include Ron and Eunice Shepherd, who moved to PTC. New members Mark, Kendra, and Olivia Milner are young family; Mark works out of his home and he also home schools Olivia. Brenda Adams has returned to the congregation after many years. Ed and Brenda Nusser and Casey and Burt Groover, a SMHS band director, joined. Pastor Miriam spoke of how people have found COS and reminded Council that it is ‘full throttle for the rest of the year.’ She ended by complimenting Bernice on her work with the Nominating Committee.

Old Business:

The Minutes were emailed November 6 and approved November 8.

New Business Top 8 Priorities + Facilities

FMT – COS Main Campus & Palmetto. Holly Monahan: FMT requests that Council allow the creation of a Veterans Memorial Garden at Palmetto Road. FMT member Tom Conrad already insures the upkeep of and compliance with Federal guidelines for the appropriate display of the American flag at the main campus. Tom will also be responsible for the flag at Palmetto Road. The Veterans Memorial cost will come out of the Facilities budget.

Motion: The Facilities Management Team is authorized to create a Veterans Memorial Garden at the Palmetto Road location.

Discussion:

- General concerns were raised about the location, the possible need to relocate it if the property is developed, and the expense of new concrete and mulch if it were moved.
- Don asked if we had the money to do this. Holly reported that it would come out of the Facilities budget.
- Mike and others thought it was a very good idea to honor Veterans. He asked about the flag area at the main campus. Holly said that it is overlooked and not in an ideal location. When asked if this area would remain, she said yes.

Decision: The motion was made by Don and seconded by Marty. There was a unanimous vote to amend the motion.

(New) Motion: The Facilities Management Team is authorized to create a Veterans Memorial Garden at the Palmetto Road location with the condition that it can be moved to another area within the property if needed, given the potential for development.

Decision: The motion to amend was made by Don and seconded by Bernice. The motion passed unanimously.

Church van rules. Holly Monahan: Wes Saunders, COS sextant and a retired school bus driver with a current CDL, was asked to revise the current Church Van Policy rules. FMT recommends adoption of these rules.

Motion: The Council accepts and approves the adoption of the Church Van Rules Revised, November 13, 2019.

Discussion.

- A general discussion was held on the need to protect church property, past incidents, driver requirements, and uniform enforcement of the van use policy.
- Holly said that keys are not returned in a timely manner and that this includes, at times, the spare key.

Decision: The motion was made by Bernice and seconded by Robbi. The motion passed unanimously.

Emergency evacuation rules. Holly Monahan: COS has not been compliant with safety rules: i.e., Fire Drills. It has been nearly three years since the last church fire drill was held. Therefore, ‘In Case of Emergency Announcements’ signs need to be placed by the pulpits, lecterns, Sunday School rooms, and for Logos and Loft volunteers.

Discussion:

- There was general concern over this.
- Council agreed that “In case of Emergency” cards should be placed in those specified areas.
- Council also saw the need to have written emergency exit directions posted in rooms. Currently, there is only a color-coded map.

- Mandating drills was discussed but not acted on.
- Don encourages the Director of Operations and the pastors to hold drills.
- Mike thanked FMT for bringing this to Council.

Decision: The Council encourages church staff to hold an annual fire drill.

- **Action:** Holly will inform FMT of this and that written directions are needed in the appropriate rooms and classrooms.

Palmetto Road Policy Revised. Holly Monahan: FMT recommends the adoption of the revised Palmetto Road Policy. After a review of past events, the committee believes these policies are necessary for the safety of COS members and for the continued maintenance of the property.

Discussion:

Council recommends that FMT increase clarity around exceptions by adding a third column to the document.

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3
• <u>Daily Activities Allowed</u>	• <u>Activities Not Allowed</u>	• <u>Activities requesting exemption, require written approval*</u>
• Fishing with a license	• Swimming	• Staying past sunset
• Meditation	• Hunting	• Fires of any kind
• Prayer Walk	• Climbing trees	• Overnight camping
• Birding	• Smoking	• Alcoholic beverage consumption
• Kite Flying	• Driving or Parking off road	
• Picnic	• Staying past sunset	
• Gardening	• Fires of any kind	
• Sporting Activities	• Overnight camping	
• Adopt a spot project	• Alcoholic beverage consumption	
• Small Group Meeting		

* Activities requesting exemption will be review by *the Director of Operations/Facility Management Team. Review.* Approval must be provided in advance of the activity.

- **Action:** Holly will inform FMT of this request.

Stewardship Update. Eric Jakubowski: Eric said there is not a final tally of pledge amounts at this time. People still need to be reminded to turn their pledge cards in. Reminders will be placed in the December newsletter. Eric also mentioned that data management/entry is an ongoing concern. ACS, the current provider, has not been as reliable as hoped. “Thank you” postcards and a review of non-responses will be held with Pastor Miriam. Follow-ups may include phone calls. The campaign will then continue the year-long timeline.

Discussion:

- Miriam hopes to engage more people in presenting opportunities to give through gifts and talents through the year.
- Eric said that more people are needed to make this year-long commitment work. Robbi agreed and will speak with Sue about an email.
 - **Action:** Robbi will contact Sue.

Assessment on Past Year. Bernice Huie: Council members were responsible for Vision 2020 objectives as they participated as church committees. This was an effective way of supporting committee work and connecting with their members. Outstanding worship services, outreach to young adults, tracking attendance, website development, and the survey connected the council to the congregation.

- 1- **FMT.** Holly Monahan: Three of six goals were attained. A furnace was replaced, new staff computers were purchased, and church inventory was completed. Due to finance and time constraints, the Refreshment, Renewal, Replacement Policy, a maintenance log, and security at Palmetto were not introduced.
- 2- **Worship and Music Traditional Service Goal. Creating Worship Experiences that uplift the spirit of all by engaging the Presence of The Living God. Objective: Minister to existing members to help them grow as Disciples of Christ and feel like they are growing in Faith.** Mike Oliver: Mike mentioned the last survey results include highly satisfactory results for sermons and Communion. His group has not had regular meetings for special services. Mike commends David Beecher on his work; music is a great strength for the church. Children’s tables

were a concern; also lighting and sound. Mike said that Molly Breckling's husband is a lighting expert. David plans to meet with him for ideas or help. A hearing loop to help with sound was not viable. Mike said progress was made on Livestreaming; three iPhones are needed; funding would come from outside of the budget.

- Don asked if we still need to have this as a goal. Mike said yes, as we always hope to improve and do better.
- Discussion followed on attendance leading to increased evangelism outreach and on doing a better job advertising.
- Dewey said there is energy within the council. There is hope, energy, and excitement on what can be done. It extends out from here. Coming into the year, there was a sense of the Council doing what they want to do with no integration or conversation, but this changed. Sending council reps out to the Committees has been good. It has helped the committees in doing what the congregation wants. Integration of Vision 2020 into the Council and committees has been good. He asked Council to consider sending periodic updates to members.
- Don reported that Pastor Miriam has had two Connect classes and is planning another.
- Pastor Miriam discussed accepting new members in the service they regularly attend.
- Don mentioned how we welcome people into the church.

3- Local Service(s) Assessment-Identify Local Service Program(s) that engages a large portion on the Congregation and create a communication plan to both internal and external audiences, so that more people know what we do. Don Livingston: Don hopes COSL's local service programs will continue to increase engagement of members.

- Participation increased in the three programs: Easter baskets: from 120 (2018) to 155 (2019); Summer Lunch Program: 2019 increase over 2018 with 50 high schoolers participating in June; Joshua's Back Pack: 2019 increase over 2018.
- The internal communication plan is solid, and the challenge is that there is so much information, that opportunities to participate get lost.
- We need to be better aligned between staff and council on which programs to communicate
- External communication is good and is clear and easy to understand on our Website

Evangelism and External Communication about COS Don Livingston:

- COSL is moving up on Google's organic searches.
- Don share the results from our monthly purchase of Google display ads and paid search campaign.
 - The number of clicks to our website is steadily going up each week.
 - A recent visitor moving from California found our church by going online and searched for Churches in the area.
- Follow-up from last meeting. COS has the opportunity to apply for Google Grants, which is a program where non-profit organizations get up to \$10k/ month in google display advertising for FREE. Shelley Casey spoke with Reach Right and ask them for help in applying for Google Grants and in managing our monthly display ads.
- Don also spoke with Ian Hyatt at Reach right to understand their proposed set of services. Below is list of 5 services that Reach Right is willing to provide and the associated fees for those services. This is separate from COS paying Reach Right for hosting our website.

1. Assist with applying for Google Grants (get up to \$10K/ month in advertising from Google) and building all of the different ads. \$1000 one time fee
 - The Google Grants is a program providing up to \$10K/ month in free online display advertising
 - Reach Right will help with the application Process
 - Reach right will create 10-20 initial display ads to advertise and drive traffic to COS Website
 - Reach right to set up metrics (impressions, clicks, time spent on key COS website pages) for every ad
 - Reach right will create any key landing pages for events/ services (think: - summer lunch program, Easter, Moravian Love Feast, etc.)
2. Search Engine Optimization Audit of our website - \$500 one time
 - They install Yoast plug-in and do a key word set-up per page and focus on that key word on each of our main website pages.
 - They recommend which words and phrases need to change.
 - We will need to approve this.
 - This is a one-time service.
 - This moves us up in the organic search engine rankings

3. Web site Speed Optimization - \$500 one-time fee
 - Uncovers deficiencies that can hinder how fast our pages load on people's mobile phones and desktops.
 - Set-up time required.
 - They recommend changes and with our approval, they make changes to our website to help it load faster.
 - This moves us up faster in the organic search engine rankings.
4. Maintain \$200/month
 - Reach right will manage/change/ create 30-50 display ads with the objective to drive clicks to our website where people stay 2-5 minutes
 - Reach right to provide monthly metrics (impressions, clicks, time spent on key COS website pages) for every ad
 - Reach right will create any key landing pages for events/ services (think: - summer lunch program, Easter, Moravian Love Feast, Bells with Sarah J, etc)
5. Set up listing service- Reach right will push our name and address and phone to all of the major online listing services and create back links to our site which helps with Organic search and moves us up in the list \$50/month

Total of the 5 services is \$2,000 one time and \$250/ month ongoing (we can stop at any time)

Motion: COSL will contract with Reach Right to Help with Google Grants Application, manage our online display advertising campaigns to drive traffic to website and time spent on the website, provide monthly metrics and improve our organic search listing position at a cost of \$2000 upfront and \$250/ month.

Discussion:

- Marty asked what the average giving per member is. Eric said that it is around \$200 a month.
- Discussion on the cost effectiveness of Internet advertising continued.
- Mike asked Don about what we would get for the approximate cost of \$10K/ month in display advertising each month. Don said Google Search and Display will create display ads and variations of ads. These ads drive clicks to our website. The effectiveness of the ads is measured by traffic and how much time is spent on our website. Reminder, 85% of all people search for churches go to the internet to find them.
- Eric asked if we could be rejected for the Google grant. Don did not think so.
- Marty asked which staff member would be responsible for overseeing this. Shelley Casey. Miriam and Fritz will talk with Shelley. If Shelley does not have time, Shirley or Don will help.

Decision: The motion was made by Don and seconded by Robbi. The motion passed unanimously.

Survey Results (Summary).

Bernice shared a few highlights, on Willing to recommend, how many invited a friend, effectiveness in each service, priorities and Palmetto Road feedback.

We will review results in the next meeting.

Discussion:

- Marty said it doesn't make sense that detractors and neutral responders invited people.
- Don said that results will be discussed with staff and at future Council meetings.

TSV Update. Don Livingston: The Sunday, Nov 16 meeting on TSV went well. Discussion included how the property will be used and how much of the land will be used.

- Mike mentioned that the land was purchased 10 years ago.
- Lisa Manthey owns property on the northside of Palmetto and will be involved with TSV and any development plans they may have.

The Council's Christmas party will be Tuesday, Dec. 17, 6:30 pm at Eric's home.

The next Congregational Meeting will be Sunday, January 26, 2020. Elections for new Council representatives will be held.

Closing Prayer: The Lord's Prayer

Meeting Adjourned

Next meeting agenda items:

Budget and Expenses,

Continuation of Council member end of year reviews,

Review key metrics: Monthly Attendance and change in church membership

Review Results from the Survey

January Congregational Meeting and the need of the year Committee Reports for that meeting

Next Council Meeting- Dec. 16, 2019

Offering Count Schedule

DATE	COUNT SUPERVISOR	DATE	COUNT SUPERVISOR
November 24	Huie	December 22	Patrick
December 1	Hagberg	January 5	Breckling
December 8	Williams	January 12	Huie
December 15	Martin	January 19	Oliver