

President's Report to our St Mark Congregation

August 2017

Below is another report on monthly council and board activities. I hope you find it useful in keeping you an informed member of our church.

Pastors are reporting nearing the end of another BIC class effort. The summer was a busy class session - with Pastor working classes in whenever and wherever needed for our members and others. Pastor Naumann attended the Synod convention. Check out <http://wels.net> for more information concerning our synod convention and proceedings. Both pastors are continuing to work on job divisions going into next year as the pastoral load ramps into advent/lent, bible class offerings, services, and other pastoral duties.

The Elders are looking into renting a bus for the 500 year anniversary of the reformation. Again, this promises to be a very memorable and uplifting experience. Making it more convenient for our members to attend this event in Madison is the end goal. Watch for more details as the event approaches.

The Stewardship board continues to refine our tuition assistance policies in order to utilize a matching gifts program from MLC. The policy will continue to be refined and brought to council, and then voters, for approvals.

The Board of Education has completed the selection and approvals (council and voters) for our new hot lunch coordinator position and a teacher's assistant. As the school year starts up, they report our new TADS online software management is being put to the test. They're ironing out the wrinkles and learning as the system is put to use. They report that things are going smoothly as we ramp into use of this new system. The board also reports continued accreditation work. They continue to march forward making continued progress on accreditation goals and improvements.

Our principal, Peter Micheel, has had a very busy summer. As I listen and read his reports over this past summer, I realize that he didn't allow much time off over summery for himself or his family! As August 23rd approaches, the school year will begin. Our current enrollment varies, but it currently at 103 students. Because of our reduced teaching staff, our staffing will be monitored throughout the year. Peter reports that they are well prepared to assume their teaching responsibilities going forward. Also noteworthy is a Synod-mandated testing, called MAP testing. This will be an online-based test. As for accreditation, the 2019/20 school year is our next scheduled review by an accreditation review team.

Buildings and Grounds reports the end of a busy summer. The team reports that they will be coordinating the replacement of our Ash trees through a free program being offered by the City of Eau Claire. The team is also investigating replacement options for our building lighting. LED-based replacements are a great energy efficient option - complete with energy rebates from our electrical company. The board estimates that replacement to LED-based lighting could cost \$8000-\$10000 but actually pay for itself within 3 years of use just from electricity savings.

The Technology Board reports work on mounting the speaker in the Shaker Center. Work is completing on this item. They also report that our new bell system is being completed and tuned for use during the school year. A member donation was also recently used to update our smart board software and mount a smart board projector for use in our large meeting room. They continue to fine tune our projector system in the sanctuary. There are minor connectivity issues they are continuing to track down on an otherwise working system.

Our Anniversary Committee is ramping up their meeting times in order to work plans for our upcoming event on October 1st, 2017 at the Eau Claire Indoor Sports Center. Three “sons of the congregation” who are pastors have returned to us (Christopher Goelzer in June and Steve Prah and Tony Hansen in July) and served as guest preachers at St Mark. Much effort and planning is being put into this Anniversary Weekend event as the October 1st approaches. The team hopes you make time to attend this event! Our theme is our focus: *Fifty Years of God's Grace and Blessing*.

Another note to point out is the culmination of a nearly two year effort to pursue tax exemption for our corner property. As pointed out in the bulletin and several inserts, the Trustees have attempted to keep us all informed on the proceedings. In the ending of this effort, St Mark has reached an agreement with our City Attorney to pay only 2016 property taxes. Exemption was granted going forward. Also an item to note was the expense of a \$10,000 legal bill incurred during these events. The Trustees wish to state that this is the best possible outcome of these events. Being that our Synod was also involved with these proceedings, another outcome was working with our state representatives to rectify this from happening again in the future.

I'll include my standard closing statement with you: If you ever need more information on any of the work the boards are performing, let me know. I'll work to find the answer or raise a suggestion for discussion. Contact information for me: Email (fischerfull@gmail.com), Cell (715.497.5264) - feel free to give me a call if you want to discuss anything we're working on, if you have ideas, can help, or just want to chat. Your council values your ideas and support.

In God's service,
Eric Fischer, President

Please note: Upcoming quarterly voter's meeting date: 10/22 @ 06:30PM
<http://www.stmark-wels.org>