

President's Report to St Mark Congregation

November 2016

Below is my report to the congregation concerning activities of your board members:

Pastor Naumann reports a very successful campus event at Beaver Creek Reserve. Attendance was 37 college students and 4 pastors. Some thought was given to expanding the event into more than just one overnight stay. Pastors also discussed the use and possible purchase of a Paschal Candle with the Elders. Additional discussion is needed regarding space and use logistics. Our window to have the stand for the candle made is narrow. A possible special voter's meeting may be needed in order to request congregational approval for a Paschal Candle incorporation into our altar area. However, more discussion is needed by pastors and our Elders prior to calling this meeting and decision request to the voters. Pastor Prahm discussed the ending of a successful Bible information class to where several students were recently accepted into membership. He continues to work hard to reach out to those needing to attend this class. He is currently holding two simultaneous classes to accommodate student schedules.

Elders report that they are continuing to discuss holding Saturday evening services and the related benefit (or harm) to our congregation. The intent is only good - mainly focused on maintaining unification in our congregation and making the best use of our pastoral staff. Stay tuned for more discussion on this as Elders are working hard to fully consider our service schedules for the best of our congregational needs and operation.

Stewardship is working on ways to promote supporting your commitment to supporting our St Mark ministry. I'll speak more to where we are at in terms of congregational support of our mission here at St Mark and our operations later in this report.

Buildings and Grounds continues to investigate storage options around our facilities. They plan to bring a proposal to council soon in order to start working storage needed for various activities at St Mark. I appreciate everyone's patience on this topic as we work out a plan and work to support getting storage in place.

Quite a bit of time was spent during our meeting discussing our finances by our Treasurer. Kyle reports that our checkbook balance, which is what we use to pay our operating expenses (salaries, health insurance, CMO, utilities, etc), is now below what is needed to pay salaries. Because offerings have been consistently below what is needed to pay basic operational costs, we have now dispersed any funding that has been contained in various fund accounts. We needed to do this in order to pay for operating costs. Remember, our weekly operating costs are around \$16,200. You and I can note in the bulletin that we are rarely at or over this amount on a weekly basis. The Treasurer also reports that health insurance costs are rising 9.9% in 2017. This will add roughly \$1000 to our weekly operational costs and put our new need at around \$17,200 per week.

In order to operate within our current weekly offering averages, alternatives were discussed. They included items that seemed drastic - and not yet ready for wider discussion. Your council will be ready to bring actions to the voters, if necessary. For now, it was decided that a clear and concise report was

needed to be given to the congregation on this issue. It was thought that our congregation does not widely know of our current financial status. If our congregation knows our status, the hope is that our thankfulness of God's gifts and his grace shown towards us and our families will guide us to provide for supporting our mission here at St Mark. I will be responsible to gather this information and present it verbally to the congregation - probably within the next several days and weeks. Depending on our response to this information, it is hoped that our thankfulness to God for St Mark will lead us to support our mission and move ahead. I will work with our Treasurer to gather a factual report that I will verbally submit to our congregation as soon as possible. Again, the hope is that we will all prayerfully consider what God has done for us and move us to support St Mark and the mission God has set before us.

Other side items include a status report from our Constitution/Bylaw review committee: The team has finished a "legal" review of our constitution and bylaw wording. Updates to these documents are now in flight and will be ready for voter approval probably in the January 2017 timeframe. The next steps this team will be working will be to update Board responsibilities and tasks - to streamline and update our board operations to a congregation of our size.

The Vision Committee is also underway. They are working to best understand what the congregation as a whole would like to support as a long term vision. This team's current direction is to gather that type of information and work to prioritize this list as to how to best move ahead. Look for more contact and information from this team as they work to gather this type of information from you.

Our Anniversary Committee is also meeting and working to plan our anniversary event. They have tentatively picked several dates and are now working logistics. Holding an event that would house our congregation and invited congregations will be no easy task for them to plan. Please give all the above teams your support and ideas as they move ahead and work through this planning work.

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