

President's Report to our St Mark Congregation

November 2018

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.

Fairly recent news: The Divine Call to Pastor Vanderhoof was returned. Pastor Vanderhoof was clear about his excitement of St Mark and our future. However, the timing of the Call, his family, and his current responsibilities led him to return the Call to St Mark. I trust this process was best for Pastor Vanderhoof and for St Mark. Going forward, the voters have met this past Monday (11/26) for another Call meeting. St Mark has issued another Divine Call for Pastor Oakland. Pastor Oakland currently serves at Martin Luther Lutheran Church in Neenah, WI. I've made my initial phone call to deliver our Call to Pastor Oakland. I'm expecting to have more detailed conversations with him as he deliberates. Please keep both St Mark and Pastor Oakland in your prayers.

At our last council meeting, Pastors report that the campus ministry retreat had a good turnout - about 30 students were in attendance. As I reported last month, there is continued focus on the Synod's C18 effort - to work to bring our friends and neighbors to a Christmas service.

Elders report that they are evaluating a replacement for one of their members. The team is also looking over and approving an update to our church and school web pages. Expect the new design to be live sometime in Q1 of 2019. The team has narrowed things down to a specific format that strives to simply explain a Bible-based message on what we believe. Communion coverage has been formalized. Note that the common cup may not always be offered. Another date to remember would be November 27 for our new member inductions. Please be sure to introduce yourself and keep our church feeling "small" and close.

Stewardship reports continued efforts to promote electronic/automated giving. They urge our members to consider utilizing this benefit for our offerings. The team also considered doing a fund drive for our balloon payment for our remaining outstanding loan. Our loan will be due in full in July 2019. Considering interest rates, we will be consuming a new loan at probable higher interest rates. The Trustees asked Stewardship to consider a fund drive for our congregation to support pay down on this loan to minimize our debt and associated interest payments. Stewardship considered and decided to not support that type of fund drive due to historical data that shows this type of fund drive will remove support of our general fund.

Board of Education requested feedback from the Council on staffing recommendations they have proposed in the coming school year. The Council felt that staffing to higher levels was not justified based on current enrollment and responsibilities. Also reported were hand book reviews with the St Mark staff were taking place. The goal would be to gain approvals/edits from our staff as they will be following these policies going forward. The board is also looking to employ an external audit of the school and church. The Trustees are seeking feedback from

our previous audit prior to moving ahead with another one. Another note - the board is looking to replace a member lost in a transfer.

Our Principal, Peter Micheel, reports that our Veteran's Day was a huge success. It was extremely well attended. Peter also reports that he's spending time for our Synod on a training/mentoring program for other WELS Principals.

Buildings and Grounds report they are considering work bids for our security door upgrades. I believe work done on these doors will occur sometime next year. They are also involved with our security camera installations. These are scheduled to be installed sometime in Q1 2019. The team is also continuing to work the Patton Street property. The next major job will be the downstairs bathroom remodel. The team reports that the announced Fall cleanup was a huge success. They wish to thank all that helped to make a bunch of work happen quickly.

Board of Technology is completing the updated website for our church and school. They will be reviewing the site changes with the Elders for approval and eventual approval by our voters. They also are deploying some replacement of some well-used laptops for our staff.

Finance reported our monthly numbers. They report that 35 families have enrolled in our electronic giving, Simply Giving.

Our Treasurer went over his operational budget charts. The trend is inline with current years, but to be noted was a below average line compared to previous years. The council discussed concern over the trend numbers and will return to this discussion, if needed.

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

<http://www.stmark-wels.org>