

President's Report to our St Mark Congregation

May 2019

The latest status on our pastoral Call: As you are aware, Pastor Kassulke has returned our Call. This automatically put in effect our voter's decision to Call a graduate. On May 23rd, our congregation was assigned a graduate from the seminary! This now ends our nearly year-long Call process. The council thanks the voters for their attendance to the various Call meetings and their thoughtfulness on their voting during these meetings.

Pastor Prahm continues to visit our shut-ins and is very involved with our Call process. His experience in this area is greatly appreciated by the council. We also have one graduate from Martin Luther College this year: Hannah Carter. Hannah was called to serve as an Early Childhood teacher in Valentine, NB. Shelby Pitt, daughter of Pastor Phillip and Sharon Pitt was called to serve as a seventh grade teacher in Saginaw, MI. Please keep them both in your prayers as they begin their Call service to our Synod congregations and schools. Pastor Naumann reports that he is finishing up a BIC (Bible Information Class) session and winding down the year on campus ministry with a barbeque!

Elders now have our new website in operation and online: <http://www.stmark-wels.org>. There are a few minor details being ironed out as the website goes into operation and receives postings from our church, school, and the newly attached social media. We hope the congregation finds the site useful and the community finds it informative as a form of outreach and evangelism.

Elders are working on our website updates. The main focus is on the website content of "what we believe" and how best to explain that to the outside world. The team has made some great progress and should soon be ready to "turn on" our updated website. The team also continues focus on encouraging our less active members. They are considering formation of a small team to maintain contact with these members and encourage them to attend - before these members completely lose touch with our congregation and church. Elders also continue to reach our less active members by forming an Encouragement Committee. The hope is that this committee can work to stay in touch with our less active members before too much time passes without seeing them in our church services. The proactive approach may prove the best approach before waiting too long and we completely lose touch with these members.

Stewardship has been tasked by our voters to consider a fund raising awareness for our upcoming roundabout at State and Hamilton. I'm told that the City of Eau Claire will be doing this repair last as the Hamilton/State Street route will be used as detours for earlier construction plans. Please keep this in mind as Stewardship works to publicize the needs for covering this cost of an estimated \$17,000 in assessments.

The Board of Education is considering filling a role of a school secretary in order to cover some of the work of the Athletic Director and other items that Phil Gustafson is covering. The thought here is that Phil will most likely be offered a Principal Call as he is training for that position. Since the Synod is short on these positions, it is anticipated that Phil will be accepting one of these positions in the near future. Planning to cover and staff his current role is underway now by the Board of Education.

Our school faculty is working to update our Math curriculum for K-5 next year. The school book companies are now moving towards a consumable curriculum that has a renewal on a yearly basis. The most cost-effective approach seems to be a 6 year program at an estimated cost of \$12K. We continue to investigate and present our best options in this area.

Buildings and Grounds report that the Patton Street home is nearly complete. Final clean up is the only thing that remains. We may want to have a team of people perform a "deep clean" as our new pastor and family will be planning to occupy this home soon! Please see one of the pastors/secretary to volunteer and help out. The team is also investigating necessary drainage in the northwest corner of the sanctuary - and possible tie in to the city storm sewer system.

Board of Technology reports that the website is now live. The team continues to ask to utilize the time and talent surveys to involve our youth. If you're a new confirmand, this team needs your help! Our website is being driven by quite a bit of social media. The team also continues to ask for our youth to help in video recording - a key item in reaching our members and potential future members. Please see a pastor, send me an email/text - if you're interested in helping. We need your help!

Finance reports that they continue to see substantial donations to our debt retirement effort. They have provided input to our Treasurer for our debt payoff options for our voters.

Our Treasurer reports that alignment of our funds will make it possible to pay off our property debt in June by using our internal funds. As the voters decided, internal funds will be borrowed against - and our funds will be low - nearly exhausted - to pay off our property debt. We will continue our "loan amount" payment, but divert it to pay back on our internal funds. Please keep your support in mind as we'll need several months to regain our comfort on our cash-at-hand. The council is hoping for no major expenses to be incurred during this time!

In closing, this will be my last report as President of the congregation. I truly enjoyed my time serving this position. My hope is that you found these reports useful - and keeping you informed also meant keeping you involved with the decisions and operation of the church and school. Thank you all again for your patience with me and please welcome your newly elected President, Mark Roekle, as he assumes this role going forward. Thank you!

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>