

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
December 16, 2013

Stewardship Committee Mission: *The mission of the Stewardship Committee is to help God's people grow in their relationship with Jesus through the use of time, talents, and finances God has entrusted to them. (Ask, Thank, Tell; Charles R. Lane)*

Committee members Present were Marie Swanson, Tom Espel, Loren Stahl, Mavis Bennett, Bill Parker, Jack Rydell, and Brad Williams. Staff members present were Pastor Corey Bjertness, Terry Yoney, and Christy Schilling.

Chairperson Marie Swanson opened with an invitation for members of the committee to share, in the spirit of Christmas, gifts they recall receiving in their past. There was a wonderful conversation about gifts from family, from ministry, and a genuine focus on thankfulness for what God has done for us in our lives.

Opening devotions and prayer – Mavis Bennett shared two scriptures and commentary followed by prayer.

October Minutes were approved by a motion from Tom Espel, seconded by Mavis Bennett and passed unanimously.

Christy Schilling gave an update on the financials of the church. Much discussion developed around the budget for fiscal year ending 2014 and our current status on giving. The year-to-date giving is up approximately 7% and the budget is for an increase in spending of approximately 10%. Some of the items in the budget have not been implemented and the budget will be reviewed by the Church Council early in 2014 to determine if/where cuts would be necessary to stay within the funds available for the Mission of First Lutheran. An appeal was made to the congregation, noting a potential shortfall to the budget of approximately \$150,000. Pastor Corey commented that a member has put forth a matching contribution of \$50,000. If matched, that would bring in \$100,000 of the shortfall. He further commented that after Pastor Dale Vitalis' retirement, that position would not be filled and the Congregational Care Ministry will be completed by the pastoral staff. Further, it was noted that First Lutheran is well below average on giving compared to the total members and below average on giving per giving member. Pastor Corey commented, in the end, as to how this "financial crisis" is leading new commitments on giving and expanded commitments for some who have given in previous years.

Pastor Corey briefly reminded the Stewardship Committee of the Tactical Stewardship Plan e-mailed to the Committee. It would be good for the committee members to review the document and make comments at the January Stewardship Committee Meeting.

Marie led a discussion on the "Thank God Moments" being conducted in each Worship Service, each week. Tom Espel commented that we are committed to the "Ask, Thank, Tell" discipline of stewardship. He further noted that our continued diligence on the Thank portion will take root and will result in more meaningful Ask and Tell moments; all of that resulting in an ever improving stewardship commitment and culture at First Lutheran Church of Fargo.

Pastor Corey offered a sending prayer and the committee was adjourned.

The next Committee Meeting will be held 20, 2014 in the Gathering Place.

Respectfully presented by Brad Williams.