

St. Mark's Congregation Fall Meeting  
November 19, 2017

Our Fall Congregation Meeting began with noisy fellowship over a meal served by the Youth of St. Mark's, who are raising funds for the 2018 ELCA Youth Gathering to be held in Houston.

Pastor Varinia opened the meeting with prayer. The first order of business was presentation of new candidates for Council (three-year term) and the Nominating Committee (one-year term). Nominees for Council were Cheryl Dwyer, Paul Palm, Rodney Pendleton, and Kerri Westburg. The candidates for Nominating Committee were Hugh Linnemann and Trudy Stellar. As there were no additional nominations, the slate of nominees was declared elected by acclamation.

A request was made for volunteers to attend the Metro DC Synod Assembly to be held at Lord of Life Lutheran Church on June 16, 2018. St. Mark's can send up to five voting attendees as well as the rostered staff. Please talk with the Pastors or Paul Palm if you are interested in being a voting attendee.

Treasurer Steve Carlson presented the Proposed 2018 Budget. There has been a significant decrease in giving during 2017, and a deficit of approximately \$9,000 is expected. As a result, the Council and Finance Committee put together a balanced budget for 2018 that is austere. An amendment was made to give a 1% cost-of-living salary increase to rostered staff. A majority approved that amendment. The Council proposed a second amendment that would give Council authority to make a 2% cost-of-living increase to 2018 salary and benefits if giving income in November and December of 2017 exceeded \$150,000. This amendment was approved.

Bob Akers, Chair of the Stewardship Committee, encouraged members to return their 2018 Pledge Cards as a sign of their enthusiasm and commitment. He invited the congregation to offer suggestions for how we can best utilize our time, talents, and treasures at St. Mark's. A handout entitled "Stewardship Education Action Plan for 2018" was distributed. It listed monthly activities that will focus on some aspect of giving in the new year.

Pastor Triolo spoke about the New Connections Campaign. How can we engage others and build relationships?

On January 27, 2018, St. Mark's will host "The Isaac Ishmael Initiative." This group seeks to build relationships between Muslims, Jews, and Christians.

Pastor Triolo asked the congregation to consider how we see St. Mark's. Much is based on our individual perspectives. Beginning early next year, we will hold Town Hall Meetings to encourage congregational conversations about who we are as a congregation and where we want to focus our energy and resources in the short and long term.

An Action Grant from Thrivent provided funds for the up-front costs of the meal. All donations by the congregation (\$1,200) will help with the cost of sending the youth and their adult chaperones to the Youth Gathering in Houston in 2018.

Pastor Albert led the closing prayer.