

## SPECIAL CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING NOVEMBER 4, 2009

Members present: Jennifer Bolton, Don Peterson, Diane Ziehl, Virgil Norris, Charles Niemann, Ken Gerardy, Melba Bangert, Chuck Wanamaker, Bob Harger, Shirley Kirchner, Jim Kennedy, Kathy Spaulding, and Pastor Dave.

Jennifer Bolton, Council President, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and gave a devotion from Portals of Prayer, with the message that “the church is our family, and we are joined in unity.”

- Pastor Dave shared copies of an article from St. Paul’s Church in Cole Camp, which explores how Lutherans interpret the Bible. Pastor Dave also attended the Area 9 Meeting last week, and he shared how each of the 13 congregations represented are responding to the Human Sexuality Policy that was passed at the ELCA Churchwide Assembly in August. Some local congregations, such as Stover, are having meetings on the subject; others, such as Cole Camp, are searching for answers through Bible study; and many other congregations have chosen to move on and get on with the mission of sharing Christ with the community.
- Pastor Dave stressed the importance of embracing the process of change and to declare to the community that we have a Savior who unites us, and even though we may disagree, we should trust that God knows what God is doing with the church.
- The results of the Kent congregational survey were reviewed. There were a good number of responses and comments. Of the 165 surveys returned, the results were as follows:

*Question #1: Do you agree with the Policy# CA09.05.26 pertaining to rostered clergy who are in committed, monogamous, same gender long-term relationships? 37 members answered “yes”, and 128 responded “no.”*

*Question #2: Can you live with this policy knowing it will not affect you here at Kent? 77 members answered “yes”, and 63 responded “no.”*

Many commented that the survey was “confusing and needed more explanation” and also felt that they are unsure how the policy will affect them or our church. In addition to the surveys, several congregation members also sent letters stating that even if they don’t agree with the way the ELCA is changing policy and customs, they are praying that it won’t divide our church.

- The council’s consensus and plan of action will involve patience, study, and prayer. There will be no immediate decisions made, and time will be taken to explore what the ELCA means, and to separate fact from fiction. Options will be evaluated and each of the four church affiliations, including the ELCA, will be studied, information will be shared with the congregation, and prayerful consideration should be part of the process and protocol.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m., followed by the Lord’s Prayer.

-- Respectfully submitted by Stacey O’Neal, Substitute Secretary.