

First Lutheran Church Special Flood Information Meeting

July 26, 2011

Members Present from the Council and various Church Committees: Loraine Haugen, Pam Schmidt, Ona Gandrud, Milford Gandrud, Dave Pankow, JoAnn Linrud, Marvel Helgeson, Bonnie Brekke, Severin Brekke, Bill Blore, Ben Lauf, Joylea Knutson, Jeanne Wolla, Pastor Kari Pancoast, Charles Anderson, Duane Peterson, Michael Smith, Rich Solberg, Ron LaCount, Bill Mowbray, Doug Mattson, Brad Hoffarth, Deb Hoffarth, Barb Solberg, Jack Nybakken, Mark Westereng, Darwin Langseth, Reggie Morelli, Dan Langemo, Wendy Keller, Pastor Ken Nelson, Pastor Mike Pancoast, Duane Brekke, Jeanne Brekke, and Karen Krebsbach.

Doug Mattson called the meeting to order at 7 pm. Pastor Ken led the group in a scripture reading and a prayer. Doug and Barb Solberg then showed photos of the damage to the church from our Facebook page, while Pastor Mike narrated. We then watched a slide show put together by Doug and Barb, which showed the walk-through of four of the properties on July 25.

There was a great deal of discussion regarding the flooding issues affecting the church. Ron LaCount, project manager, reported that groundwater can be handled. The main problem has been the storm sewer backup due to the recent heavy rains. There was another close call today (the 26th) after the thunderstorm which caused 600 gallons to back up. The sewer system is still questionable and Pastor Kari asked whether or not we are able to use the bathrooms at the church. Pastor Kari also asked whether anything can be done to remove the glue which is causing the bumpy floors in the basement. Loraine Haugen suggested that we purchase some cheap carpet from Menards that can be easily rolled up if need be.

It was reported that all three of the main buildings are dried out and that there is a musty smell in the parsonage basement. Maintenance Plus is now using a large blower system that is continuing to dry and reduce the humidity within the buildings. Once the humidity level reaches 20%, they will remove this system.

Ron reported that all tiles are connected to the floor within the buildings, but Pastor Kari mentioned that there were a few loose tiles in the quilters' room. It was also reported that there is asbestos in the tile and in the mechanical room in the church. Bill Mowbray informed the group that we will need to convert our heating system from steam to hot water heating. He said that we could retrofit the old system, but felt this was a waste of money. If we convert now to hot water heat, it will tie into the new proposed building project.

Reggie Morelli, co-chairman of the Capital Campaign Committee, informed the group that this campaign will be difficult to continue, what with the serious flooding throughout the city. He feels that everyone attending the meeting needs to be part of the team and that we are on the right track with this campaign. We need to keep working on the campaign; the flooding is a stumbling block that we can overcome. Barb noted that we are approximately halfway there in terms of dollars. Darwin Langseth, co-chair of the committee with Reggie, feels that we need to pull back and reorganize, but continue to work towards our goal. He shared that our church has been built on adversity and that all of us in attendance need to give what we had originally planned. The ultimate goal should be that we accomplish this project without having to set up a mortgage.

Doug then asked the group how we plan to pay the bill for the mitigation and restoration project. Ron has fronted part of the fee to the church and needs to be paid, along with the remaining portion of the Maintenance Plus bill. The total cost for this service will be between \$110,000 and \$125,000. The church has been approved for a \$250,000 loan from Bremer Bank. It was also discussed that the church needs to complete an SBA loan application. Deb Hoffarth is helping with this process.

Darwin Langseth stated that the asbestos problem needs to be taken care of. He feels it's cheaper to do it now. Darwin reported that the area with the asbestos is sealed off while it's being worked on, so the upper levels may be used at the same time. Tim Blessum of the Weathermen, Inc. did an initial investigation and will be contacted to see if he is available to correct the problem. It was also noted that Tim's initial report was only on the church and parish center and that the parsonage needs to be checked out also.

Pastor Ken asked two questions: When can we reoccupy the church and when will we formally resume the capital campaign project? Regarding reoccupying the church buildings, Ron stated that we need flood protection. He feels it's hard to build and not know what will happen in the future. Until the city makes final decisions regarding what areas will be greenways, it's difficult to answer that question. Pastor Ken would like to see us get back into the church first and begin services as soon as possible. Ron voiced concerns regarding the elevator and the blower for the organ if we begin to hold services in the church. No decisions were made regarding the resumption of the capital campaign drive.

Both Ron and Bill discussed that they hope that the current electrical system will be fine for now. Bill noted that a new boiler system that needs to be installed will be compatible with the new proposed new geothermal system.

Deb asked if the church has purchased flood insurance and, if not, should do so soon, as she has heard that it may triple in cost.

Loraine asked about the condition of the three rentals. Rental #1 (closest to the parking lot) has been provided as housing for the relief workers for an indefinite period of time. Rental #2 is being used by the current tenant, while the status of Rental #3 is uncertain at the time. There were some issues with the renters before the flood situation and it was discussed as to whether or not to continue to rent to them. Pastor Mike asked that the church choose to not renew the lease, rather than to evict, which could lead to bad publicity. Darwin asked whether the rentals had been inspected, while Pam Schmidt asked whether or not we should consider selling the rentals now and then have them moved out if the structures have been compromised. Ron isn't concerned about the structures, but wouldn't put any money into the rentals at this time.

Bill Blore asked that we provide communication to the congregation as to what has been happening. He feels that this information needs to be consistent. Doug stated that the informational meetings after the church services have been very helpful.

Ron expressed parsonage concerns and whether or not the church needs to consider doing some renovations. The main floor hardwood needs to be refinished so it's all the same and Pastor Kari mentioned that it would be nice to have this taken care of. The possibility of replacing windows was also discussed. Charles Anderson stated that we should try to do all projects in the parsonage at once and that we need to make sure that we have the money to do this.

The general meeting was adjourned at 8:45 with the council meeting shortly after.

Doug called the meeting to order and noted that there was a quorum.

There was a motion by Mark with a second from Barb to approve increasing the Bremer Bank loan from \$250,000 to \$275,000. Part of that money will be used to pay back Ron LaCount and to pay the balance of the bill to Maintenance Plus. Motion carried.

The insurance adjuster will be at the church on Wednesday, July 27, so we will know more after that visit.

Pastor Mike reported that unsolicited donations have been given to numerous Lutheran congregations and that each individual church will keep its own gifts.

All communication regarding decisions facing the church will be placed on the Facebook page and on the church website.

Doug asked who will contact the city regarding the storm sewer situation. It was decided to ask Darwin Langseth to be involved in this process.

It was decided to possibly try to move back into the church offices next week and bring in portable toilets with Ron LaCount's approval.

The church custodians will be leaving the end of August, but Jerry said that he could stay on for a while until someone else has been hired. After some discussion, it was decided to check into the use of a janitorial service in the meantime.

Meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Larson, Secretary