

## **Pastor Mark's Council Report**

### WORSHIP

- Nov 5 Led CWT AT 8:30, Presided at 11:00
- Nov 12 Presided at 8:30, led CWT at 11:00
- Nov 19 Preached at both services
- Nov 26 Preached & Presided at both services (Hoffmans on vacation)
- Dec 3 Presided at 8:30, led CWT at 11:00
- Dec 10 Preached at 11:00 (snow day)
- Dec 17 Vacation
- Dec 24 Led CWT at 10:00, Presided at 5:00, Preached at 10:00 PM
- Dec 31 Preached & Presided at both services (Hoffmans on vacation)

### LEARN

- Facilitated Adult Forum on Sunday mornings Nov 12, 19 & Dec 3 (taught one).
- Led Adult Bible Study on Wednesdays Nov 15 & Dec 6
- Hosted & led The Way on Nov 1 and 15

### CARE

- Visits at Mission, Parkridge, Care Partners, Brian Center, Brookdale, Aston Park
- Hospice Care for four members
- Calls, texts, emails, office hours
- Supper, Nov 29, Dec 6 & 20 Advent Midweek

### GIVE

- Delivered food to ABCCM twice (Advent suppers)

November & December 2017

- Led workshop at NC Synod Candidacy Retreat, Nov 18

#### LEADERSHIP

- Met with Executive Committee & Council, coordinating study time for Nov meeting
- Preparations and set up for Nov 5 Congregational Meeting
- Led weekly staff meetings
- Hosted 10th Anniversary recognition/celebration for Bookkeeper
- Shoveled snow :)

#### CONTINUING ED/SABBATICAL

- Taught five sessions MIN 660 at Southern Seminary

#### REFLECTIONS

Two deaths, Arvin Hahn (Nov 1) & Cherie Merrick (Dec 27) framed my work for these past two months. We passed through one snow weekend with strong attendance at the one service for the day.

Teaching at the seminary concluded the first week of December. Again, I thank you for this opportunity. It is good, though, to now have that behind me.

**Worship**

- Preached four times (Nov. 5, and Dec. 3, 24, 25)
- Led worship in 12 Sunday morning worship services (presiding, CWT, etc.)
- Led or facilitated Advent Midweek Holden Evening Prayer (Nov. 29 and Dec 6, 13, 20)
- Led a family memorial service for the family of Arvin Hahn (Dec. 11)
- Rehearsed and sang with the Nativity Choir (Nov. 5, 12, 19 and Dec. 3, 10, 17, 24)
- Rehearsed and rang with the Handbell Choir (Nov. 19)
- Facilitated special instrumental parts for All Saints Sunday (Nov. 5)
- Assisted with Liturgical Arts events (Dec. 2, 23)

**Learn**

- Taught Confirmed Youth Faith Formation Class (Nov. 12, 19 and Dec. 3, 10, 17)
- Taught Adult Bible Study (Nov. 1, 29)
- Led Luther Movie Night for Confirmed Youth (Nov. 10)
- Participated in Youth Group (Nov. 12, 19 (taught/led), Dec. 10)
- Participated in Youth Gathering Meetings (Nov. 12 and Dec. 10)
- Participated in Parents' Night Out Gathering Fundraiser (Dec. 15)

**Care**

- Pastoral care contacts on a daily basis throughout November and December. One pre-surgery visit in that span of time.
- Hosted Pub Theology at the Parsonage (Nov. 16 and Dec. 7)
- Youth Mentor meeting with Social Media Intern (Nov. 15)
- Facilitated one conflict resolution meeting with parishioners (Nov. 29)

**Give**

- MELC assistance when people come by the office (1 or 2 per week)
- Peter Mayer concert (Dec. 1)
- Stewardship for All Seasons Pastors' Meeting (Nov. 1 and informally)

## **Administration**

- Oversaw production of bulletins and Weekly Nativity Notes
- Met with Toshiba representative for new copier lease options (Nov. 1, 14, 28)
- Executed payroll with Parish Administrator, working towards goal of concretizing instructions for the process

## **Music Director Search Committee**

- Met with Search Committee to finalize candidates for formal interviews, selecting five (Nov. 14)
- Conducted formal interviews with four candidates for the position (2 on Nov. 26 and 2 on Nov. 27)
- Facilitated numerous communications from committee to candidates, candidates to committee, and within committee itself
- Facilitated three final candidates' visits to Nativity, including travel, hotel accommodations, one-on-one, group meals, and demonstrations (Dec. 4-6, 11-13, 16)
- Conducted final meeting of Music Director Search on Dec. 16, resulting in a recommendation for Personnel Committee and Congregation Council
- Estimated of average hours spent on search per week: 10-30, depending on the week

## **Building / Cleaning**

- Took bids on a new cleaning contract from three franchises, including two that were new to Nativity (Nov. 16, 30, and Dec. 6)
- Facilitated building use by the Peter Mayer group during the week leading up to their concert on Dec. 1
- Participated in Property Committee Meeting (Dec. 19)
- Beginning supervisory conversations regarding building maintenance
- Shoveling and salting when necessary
- Officially assumed responsibility for building (including maintenance, repairs, cleaning, and associated staff members) as of Dec. 17

## **Staff / Other Committees**

- Attended weekly staff meetings
- Participated in Mutual Ministry Committee Meeting (Dec. 6)
- Participated in Personnel Committee Meeting (Dec. 19)
- Participated in Council Meetings (Nov. 13 and Dec. 17, 20)

- Participated in Congregational Meeting (Nov. 5)

### **Pastor's Remarks**

I've been at Nativity during the holidays for three years now (one as your Vicar), and some characteristics remain constant. This time of year is exciting, often beautiful, and perhaps a little exhausting. These traits were most clearly evident this November and December, as we pursued together a successful stewardship drive and finding our next Music Director. With God's guidance, both endeavors appear to have been wonderfully successful. The stewardship drive resulted in unprecedented levels of pledged giving for our ministries and future. The Music Director search produced a phenomenal candidate, whom the Search Committee, Personnel Committee, and Council all have identified as the right person for the job. If the details can be finalized, Nativity will be fully-staffed for the first time in years! These two highlights are excellent reasons for all of us to be thankful for what God is doing in this place.

There are other changes on the horizon, too, which we hope will position our congregation to be ready for growth. We are in the process of contracting a new cleaning service, which will provide a high standard of excellence for the foreseeable future. Also, we have made a change in our printing technology, which enables us to do more while costing less. We made these advances together, while continuing to pursue excellence in ministry at Nativity. None of this would have been possible without the patience, support, and prayers of a faithful congregation. I thank you all for your participation, especially when we experience the 'growing pains' that often accompany improvement.

I have also experienced a little change in my responsibilities in these last two months. At the pastors' request, Mutual Ministry Committee recommended that the responsibility for pastoral visitation be shifted to Pr. Mark, while I receive responsibility for the building (cleaning, maintenance, repairs, and supervision of associated staff/contractors). Council approved this change and so far the result has been really positive. Admittedly, it was difficult for me to give up responsibility for visitation during the week, but most of my work requires me to be in the office, which makes regular visitation very difficult to do. It only made sense that this responsibility go to Pr. Mark, whose schedule has him on the road more, and positions him better to do the majority of our pastoral visitation. Additionally, it made more sense that I should take on responsibilities associated with the building, as I'm physically here more often. After all, if there is an issue with the building that requires pastoral attention, a pastor who lives on the property is probably best-suited for the task. I will continue to be the lead pastor for Care and will visit parishioners whenever I'm on-call; that much will not change.

Thank you all for the opportunity to continue to serve as your pastor. I look forward to continuing to lead alongside you in *Making Christ Known*, growing together as God's people in this place.

Yours in Christ,

Pr. Gregg

**WORSHIP**

- Preached twice (Nov 12, Dec 17)
- Participated in 12 Sunday morning worship services (Nov 5, 12, 19, Dec 3, 10, 17, 24)
  - Participation indicates preaching, presiding, and/or leading Children's Word Time
- Created Children's Word Time (Nov 12, 19, Dec 10)
- Attended Advent Wednesday worship (helped lead Dec 6)
- Participated in 2 Christmas Eve worship services (Dec 24)
- Participated in Christmas Day worship service (Dec 25)

**Christmas Pageant**

- Wrote "Through the Animals' Eyes" pageant for 2017
- Recruited & cast participants
- Led 4 rehearsals (Nov 29, Dec 6, 13, 20)
- Made costumes
- Led pageant at Christmas Eve worship (Dec 24)

**LEARN**

- Led the "For All the Saints" Confirmation Event (Nov 4)
- Led "The Bible" Confirmation Event (Dec 2)
- Led two Adult Bible Studies (Nov 8, Dec 13)
- Supported Sunday morning Faith Formation classes
- Participated in Pastor Gregg's Luther Movie Night for confirmed youth
- Created Faith 5 handouts for Advent Wednesdays and Advent Weeks

**Youth**

- Led 4 Young Youth meetings (Nov 5, 19, Dec 3, 17)
- Led 6 Youth meetings (Nov 5, 12, 19, Dec 3, 10, 17)
- Service project as part of Christmas Parties – Cards for Trinity View Residents
- Youth Gathering
  - Led 2 prep meetings (Nov 12, Dec 10)
  - Led Parents' Night Out Fundraiser (Dec 15)

**CARE**

- Attended Card Ministry (Nov 9)
- Hosted Pub Theology (Nov 16 & Dec 7)
- Parishioner visit (Dec 21)

**GIVE**

- Met with ABCCM representative (Nov 14)
- Noisy Offerings facilitated (Nov-Card Ministry, Dec-ABCCM Heating Fund)
- Attended Peter Mayer Concert (Dec 1)
- Endowment Committee

- Supported committee through e-news announcements and application collection, among other things
- Attended EC meeting (Dec 17)
- Submitted applications for 5 community ministries as requested by Committee
- Finance Committee Meeting (Dec 10)
- Mailed 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2018 Offering Envelopes

#### **MELC**

- 38 contacts personally, more through Pr. Gregg and Michele (This is for Nov 1-Dec 5. After Dec 5<sup>th</sup>, MELC contacts for December were not recorded due to time constraints)
- MELC closed from Dec 22 – Jan 2

#### **Stewardship for All Seasons**

- Pastors' meeting regarding giving (Nov 1)
- Third bulletin insert printed and Temple Talk facilitated (Nov 5)
- Second appeal letters (asks) composed, printed, mailed (individualized by household), including brochures & Commitment Cards (week of Nov 5)
- Commitment Sunday (Nov 12)
- Collected & recorded commitments as they came in
- Celebration Sunday – announcement made
- Facilitated follow-up calls to secure final commitments & reach our challenge goal
- Follow-up letter written to congregation for e-news (Dec 14)
- Thank-you and commitment confirmation letters composed, printed, mailed (individualized by household) (last week of Dec)

#### **NPK**

- Read in Little Angels (Monday mornings) (Nov 6, 13, 20, Dec 4)
- Attended NPK Chapel (most Thursday mornings)
- Spoke at & attended NPK Christmas Program (Dec 14)

#### **Finances**

- NPK November finance review with Janine (Nov 28)  
(December review will happen Jan 9, once the books are closed)

#### **SYNOD**

- First Call Theological Education meeting (Dec 4)

#### **COUNCIL**

- Congregational Meeting (Nov 5)
- Council Meetings (Nov 13, Dec 17, Dec 20)

#### **STAFF**

- Participated in 5 staff meetings (Nov 6, 13, 20, Dec 6, 20)
- Personnel Meeting (Dec 19)
- Mutual Ministry meeting (Dec 6)

November and December were a flurry of activity as we closed out 2017. While I can hardly believe how much we fit into these two months, I am delighted by how they point to the energy and enthusiasm of our congregation for ministry together.

Two large projects dominated my schedule in these months – finishing out our Stewardship for All Seasons fall drive and leading the children’s Christmas Pageant. Our SAS fall drive was quite successful, both by our standards and according to the assessment of our consultant. The level of participation was great – we reached our challenge goal, with a total of 136 households making commitments for 2018. The amount committed was much higher than the commitments we had for 2017 (2017’s commitments were for about \$288,000, and 2018’s commitments are for about \$460,000). We also saw several households who had not been giving make a commitment to give, and a number of households were able to commit to a higher level of giving for this coming year. All of these commitments will be helpful as we plan for this coming year, and in addition to the good financial news they bring, these commitments indicate that our congregation is invested in and supportive of the goals we’ve set for 2018.

Our children’s Christmas Pageant (both preparation and production) was a great mix of fellowship, learning, and proclamation. I enjoyed having the opportunity to write our pageant this year, and was glad to create something that worked well for our context. It was especially neat to see some participants from last year’s pageant come back this year, more confident and self-possessed as they took the stage. I was glad to see so many of our children involved, and this year we were able to cast several of our Youth as members of the pageant, as well. The younger children enjoyed acting alongside their older friends, and I was proud of our Youth for the guidance and help they gave our children. This was even an opportunity of fellowship for the parents of our actors, as they sat together during practice and got to know one another better. On Christmas Eve, we proclaimed the Gospel of Christ’s birth. One of the reasons I like having a Christmas Pageant on Christmas Eve is the engagement it offers our children – they are active in proclaiming the Good News, and they are focused on the reason for Christmas. As we celebrate the birth of the Holy Child, I think it’s special to have that message proclaimed by children.

We were able to record the pageant this year, and send it out with some subtitles to help viewers catch the quieter lines. I’m happy that we could supplement the sound in this way, but it also points to a challenge for us in the coming year. Our current sound system is not equipped to adequately support another Christmas Pageant like this, simply because the congregation is not all able to hear the proclamation made by small voices. As we have improving audio technology set as one of our goals for 2018, I am hopeful that we’ll find ways to adjust our system to support future proclamations like this, so as to make similar services accessible for everyone.

With the goals we’ve set for 2018, and the support we’re seeing from the congregation, I am hopeful that this coming year will bring with it many opportunities for Making Christ Known through our ministries and for growing our faith together.

-Pastor Rachel