

December 2016 Council Corner

Hope Lutheran has experienced quite a year. At our last council meeting, members were quite pleased to see that our church remains on track to finish under budget for the first time in a number of years. We were not forced to borrow from our savings accounts at any time during 2016 in order to pay for any of our basic operational expenses. For this, the council owes a huge debt of gratitude to our congregation for increasing their amount of giving throughout the entire year even during tough economic times in our region and to Pastor Evelyn for proposing to move from a full-time call to a part-time call in light of our past budgetary concerns.

The council also held a joint executive council meeting with with representative from the Babbitt Evangelical Church on Saturday, December 17, here at Hope Lutheran. At this meeting, we discussed Pastor Evelyn's compensation package for the 2017 budget year. Members looked at a few different options before coming to a decision. I will save the exact figures of the compensation package until the publication of our proposed 2017 budget. However, I want to thank all members involved in the meeting for taking into account the realities of operating a small church in northeastern Minnesota. This does not always represent an easy process.

At our next meeting in January 2017, the council will put together the proposed budget for 2017. We will continue to abide by the same principles that allowed us to meet our 2016 budget and kept us from dipping into our savings. Members would love to hear from our congregation regarding any part of this this process. However, in order to continue our current path of towing the budget line, we need to remind our members that they were the main reason why our church avoided a budget crunch during 2016. Our congregation needs to continue at their current rate of giving during 2017. Otherwise, tough budgetary decisions will abound.

In closing, I would like to send out a number of thank you's to the following members and/or groups:

- To all of our members who helped out and/or participated in our Christmas program.
- To everyone who helped in the hanging of the greens. The church looks great!
- To all of our members who gave to our church during 2016. Your contributions helped us to finish within our church budget for the first time in years.

The council and all the members of church appreciate your efforts. Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedules to lend a hand. Our church could not function without great, caring people like you.

May God grant you peace until we meet again next month.....

Lance Kupka
Council President
Hope Lutheran Church