

First Lutheran Church
Congregational Council Meeting Minutes
March 15, 2022, 6:30 p.m. FLC Dining Room

“Renewed by Christ in Word, water, bread, and wine, we serve our community and the world”

Members present: Pastor Chris Culuris, Michelle Doose, Steve Erickson, Bill Kautt, Garrett Paul, Raina Roemhildt, Mary Spear, Jim Stenson, Nancy Timm, Michelle Twait

Members absent: Sarah Chambers, Dave Kennedy, Randy Stuckey, John Sylvester, Callie Voeltz

1. Call to Order: President, Garrett Paul at 6:32 p.m.
2. Devotions: Michelle Doose
3. Approval of the agenda: M/S motion to amend 9. Unfinished Business to include the request of the Social Justice Committee regarding Afghan refugee sponsorship. Carried with amendment.
4. Approval of the February 15, 2022 minutes: M/S, motion to amend 11. New Business, fourth bullet point from “these amendments” to “the proposed constitutional amendment regarding electronic participation in meetings”. Carried with amendment.
5. **Pastor’s Report:** Pastor Chris Culuris
 - a. Participated in the following activities: Green committee meeting, Social Justice committee meeting, youth tech training, Cemetery advisors meeting, Staff Support meeting, Council retreat, Cemetery committee meeting, Altar Guild, meeting, Executive committee meeting, Worship & Arts committee meeting, Stewardship committee meeting, Worship service at Benedictine Living, CCM committee meeting, MN Valley Conference meeting at Zion in Arlington, Fellowship committee meeting, Acolyte training with 5th & 6th graders, Worship services at Ecumen Sand Prairie, Ecumen Prairie Hill & Benedictine Living, MN Valley Conference Assembly at Christ in Glencoe, safety presentation by officer John Hughes, SW MN Synod boundaries training, LLL committee meeting, Bob Ross painting, Confirmation classes with 9th graders in person.
6. **President’s Report:** Garrett Paul
 - a. Expressed gratitude to Michelle Doose for filling in as Council President during his absence and all of the council for their work.
 - b. Attended Finance and Stewardship committee meetings
 - c. Stewardship committee is planning for the annual estimate of giving pledge cards and also for the upcoming building fund pledges for the next three years.
7. **Treasurer’s Report:** Jim Stenson
 - a. Total receipts/donations for the building fund for 2022: \$24,370
 - b. Building fund envelope money is used to pay off the mortgage.
 - c. Financial Analysis shows we are \$9,360 ahead of our projections through February 2022.
 - d. A question was raised about how many pledges to the building fund remain unpaid for this current 3 year period. Jim will get the data from Karen and bring the issue to the Finance committee for further discussion.

8. Committee Reports

- a. **Worship and Arts** motion to request approval to have the piano in the basement removed because it is not being used. The committee found a home for the basement piano and the person who will take the piano will make a donation to the church. M/C
- b. **Stewardship** will plan and schedule a First Forum on Will information.
- c. **Staff Support** motion to modify the use of flex time from “flex time used must be made up the same day” to read “flex time used must be made up during the pay period in which it is used”. M/C
- d. **Staff Support** motion to modify PTO may be used in half day or full day increments to PTO may be used in any time increment. M/C
- e. John Sylvester will bring **Funeral, Facilities Use, Wedding, and Inclement Weather** documents with revisions to the April council meeting for approval.
- f. **Health Advisory**
 - i. Masks will be required through Easter Sunday
 - ii. After Easter Sunday masks will be recommended but not required
 - iii. Encourage use of outdoor spaces for fellowship as weather warms
 - iv. May 8 Communion will be at the front of the Sanctuary where Pr. Chris will distribute bread and several feet away, wine/grape juice will be in cups for people to take.

9. Unfinished Business

- a. Safety and Security
 - i. Michelle Twait talked with the Technology committee about securing the equipment in the balcony of the Sanctuary. The Technology committee will discuss this at their meeting in late March.
 - ii. Officer John Hughes was contacted about conducting a training at First Lutheran about safety and security but he is unable to be here on Sundays. Michelle Doose has a request in to St. Peter police chief Matt Grochow and is waiting to hear back.
- b. The Social Justice committee received a request from Lutheran Social Services that the money we originally designated for an Afghan refugee family be used to sponsor a Somali refugee family. They requested this because the only Afghan refugee families left for sponsorship are non-English speaking and the distant partnership that we are involved with would not work if the family does not speak English. There is an English speaker in the Somali refugee family. We had a brief discussion about saving the funds for a potential refugee family from Ukraine but the question was called and discussion ended with a majority vote. The motion to shift sponsorship from an Afghan family to a Somali family was carried.

10. New Business

- a. Motion to refer proposed constitutional amendment regarding electronic participation in meetings: C10.08 back to Pastor Chris Culuris so he can make it known that this a new amendment to the Church Constitution and be presented on a single sheet of paper at the April Council meeting. M/C

- b. Motion to refer proposed constitutional amendment: changing Nominating Committee requirements: C13.02 to Bill Kautt to state the current constitutional amendment and the proposed amendment (highlighting the changes) on a separate sheet of paper at the April Council meeting. M/C
- c. Strategic Planning Process
 - i. Pr. Chris talked with Pr. Troy at the SW MN Synod office and he suggested we choose one of two approaches. First is a systematic approach where we take a more deliberate course of action. The second option would be a radical approach where we disband all committees and start from scratch. Pr. Chris thought the systematic approach would better suit our congregation.
 - ii. Action items to include:
 - 1. Identify a team where committee liaisons from council ask their respective committees for volunteers to a strategic planning team.
 - 2. Pr. Chris will talk with Pr. Troy from the Synod about the availability of outside consultants that could lead us in strategic planning.
 - 3. Raina Roemhildt will talk to Calleigh Carlson about youth involvement in this process and use social media, social gatherings and Confirmation classes to reach out to youth.
 - 4. Present a more detailed description to the congregation of the strategic planning process and ask for volunteers.
 - iii. Ad hoc Constitution committee
 - 1. Motion to form an ad hoc committee that will look at the current constitution and see if there is any need for revisions and present to council in September. M/S/C
 - 2. Bill Kautt was identified as a person to serve on this committee. Ken Westphal and John Sylvester were also suggested. Bill will contact Ken and John. Pr. Chris will also be on this committee. Members of this committee will be brought to the April council meeting for approval.

11. Good of the Order

- a. Angela has asked for more volunteers to usher and greet on Sundays. A sign up sheet is available in the Gathering Space.
- b. Nancy Timm is looking for volunteers to sell Kwik Trip and Family Fresh scrip cards for a few minutes after Worship services on Sundays.
- c. Bill Kautt informed us of the upcoming inspection of the stained glass windows in the Sanctuary by an outside consulting firm. It's believed the windows have not been inspected since the church was built.

12. Meeting adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

13. Pr. Chris led us in the Lord's Prayer