

First Lutheran Church
Congregational Council Meeting Minutes
January 18, 2022 6:30 p.m. ZOOM meeting

“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, Dave Kennedy, Garrett Paul, Mary Spear, Jim Stenson, Randy Stuckey, John Sylvester, Nancy Timm, Michelle Twait

Members absent: Sarah Chambers, Raina Roemhildt, Callie Voeltz

1. Call to Order: Garrett Paul at 6:37 p.m.

2. Devotions: Garrett Paul

3. Approval of the agenda: M/S

4. Approval of the 21 December 2021 minutes: M/S/C

5. Pastor’s report: Pastor Chris Culuris

- Presided at 3 worship services so far and they have gone well.
- Staff are helpful and experienced.
- Led 2 confirmation classes. One in person and one online.
- Began pastoral care with visits to Benedictine Center and a nursing home. Working through a list of names provided by Pastor Bill Nelsen.
- Attended MN Valley Conference meeting at Scandian Grove Lutheran church.
- Attending committee meetings.
- If we hear of a member who is going to the hospital or having an emergency, please call Pastor Chris on his cell phone.

6. President’s report: Garrett Paul

- Election of Vice-President and assignment of committee liaisons
 - Garrett nominated Michelle Doose to be vice-president and after some deliberation, Michelle accepted the nomination as vice-president of the church council. There were no further nominations, and the vote was unanimous.
 - The following is a list of committees and their council liaison:
 - Building & Grounds: Steve Erickson
 - Cemetery: Bill Kautt
 - Congregation & Community Ministry: Michelle Twait
 - Greens: OPEN
 - Fellowship: Nancy Timm
 - Finance: Jim Stenson and Harry Hunt
 - Funds Management: OPEN
 - Lifelong Learning: Raina Roemhildt
 - Social Justice: Mary Spear
 - Staff Support: John Sylvester
 - Stewardship: Randall Stuckey
 - Technology: OPEN
 - Worship & Arts: Sarah Chambers
 - Committee liaisons should inform whoever takes minutes at the meeting sends them to Angela 4-5 days before the council meeting if possible and in pdf format.
 - Committee liaisons should also provide Angela with an updated list of their committee members.
- Council members volunteered for specific months to deliver devotions at our council meetings.
- Authorization for persons to conduct financial transactions M/S

- First Lutheran Church Congregational Council of St. Peter, MN moved to authorize Christopher Culuris (Pastor) to conduct all necessary transactions as outlined on the “Corporate Authorization Resolution” form relative to the First Lutheran Church P.D.F at First National Bank of St. Peter, MN effective immediately.
- First Lutheran Church Congregational Council of St. Peter, MN moved to authorize James Stenson (Treasurer), William Kautt, Karen Smithers and Ken Westphal to conduct all necessary transactions as outlined on the “Corporate Authorization Resolution” form relative to the First Lutheran Church Memorial Fund at First National Bank of St. Peter, MN effective immediately.
- First Lutheran Church Congregational Council of St. Peter, MN moved to authorize Christopher Culuris (Pastor), William Kautt, Karen Smithers, Ken Westphal, and James Stenson (Treasurer) to conduct all necessary transactions as outlined on the “Corporate Authorization Resolution” form relative to the First Lutheran Church Checking and Savings accounts at Pioneer Bank, St. Peter, MN effectively immediately.
- First Lutheran Church Congregational Council of St. Peter, MN moved to authorize Ken Westphal, Karen Smithers and James Stenson (Treasurer) to conduct all necessary transactions as outlined on the “Corporate Authorization Resolution” form relative to the First Lutheran Church Safe Deposit box at Pioneer Bank, St. Peter, MN effective immediately.
- Security at worship
 - FBI has issued a warning to all houses of worship about the possibility of terrorist attacks. We need to be prepared as a congregation. An ad hoc committee should be formed to address an emergency preparedness plan along with training in the event of this threat.
 - Michelle Doose and Bill Kautt volunteered to be on this committee and Bill will organize the first meeting. Michelle will contact Pat Pehrson who has some connection to law enforcement and will put us in touch with the appropriate authorities for putting together a security plan and training. Other members such as ushers and staff members will also be included in this ad hoc committee.
- Proposal regarding Eucharist
 - Checked with ELCA guidelines about serving communion when there are health risks and found out we only need to serve one element during communion under these conditions.
 - Communion will be delivered two times per month during Lent. The Worship & Arts committee should consider having just one element, preferably the bread, distributed during communion with people lining up to receive communion from the pastor, socially distanced instead of staying in the pews. There would be less time that a person is unmasked in this scenario.
 - This issue is referred to the Worship & Arts committee for further discussion.
 - If communion is to be delivered off-site it should be consecrated by the pastor.

7. Treasurer’s report: Jim Stenson

- 2021 ending balance: (\$25,372)
- 2022 projected ending balance will be (\$15,256) if the congregation approves.
- Bill Kautt will present the 2022 budget at the congregational meeting on Jan. 30.

8. Committee reports

- Worship & Arts and Emily are concerned about congregation singing hymns for Pastor Chris's installation service on 1/23. She proposes that the congregation sing every other verse. Garrett Paul suggested men and women alternate singing verses of hymns. Pastor Chris will share this with Emily.
- Pastor Chris was wondering about a virtual option for the annual meeting but the constitution does not allow for that so it will have to be in person on Jan. 30.

9. Unfinished business

- Budget
 - Bill Kautt will present a budget to the congregation at the January annual meeting with an ending balance of (\$15,256) for their approval.
 - We will also need to roll in the building loan in 2022 which is separate from the regular budget.
 - One change of note in the 2022 budget is that benevolence has dropped from 6% to 3%.
 - Our Savings and Checking accounts have around \$230,000 in cash of which \$125,00 was approved for future capital renewal projects.
 - M/S to present 2022 budget at the congregational meeting.
- Promoting Kwik Trip and Family Fresh cards, Family Fresh receipts and Shop with Scrip cards
 - Nancy Timm will give a Temple Talk on February 13 about these programs.
- Women's Lock-in
 - On hold for now
- Sexual harassment policy
 - John Sylvester said the committee is meeting soon and will have information for our February meeting

10. New business

- Congregational meeting agenda
 - Call to order
 - Prayer
 - Approval of January 2021 meeting and December 2021 meeting
 - Budget presentation, discussion, and approval
 - Elections of Gustavus representative, Synod representatives, and Nominating committee
 - Questions
 - Lord's Prayer and adjournment
- Council Retreat
 - Saturday, Feb. 5 beginning at 9:00 a.m.
 - Opening Worship led by Pastor Chris
 - Review council members' duties and responsibilities
 - Questions for comments about the Church Constitution
 - Brief review first four articles of Augsburg Confession by Jim Stenson
 - Set council goals for 2022
 - Mission statement
 - Finance - including 3-year pledges for mortgage payments
 - How to deal with deficit and benevolence
 - Strategic planning?
- Security of church equipment, especially video equipment
 - Tech equipment used for streaming worship services is left out in the open in the balcony. This leaves the equipment open to theft.
 - Michelle Twait said Tami Aune would be a good person to ask about securing this type of equipment.
 - The issue was referred to the Technology Committee and its chair Brad Chambers.
- Pastor Chris's request for two new telephones
 - Would prefer a landline in his office for some calls involving church business so his personal cell phone number does not get into the wrong hands. He would also like a landline installed in the kitchen in the event that emergencies come up and a cell phone is not available.

- Michelle Doose suggested Pastor Chris look into Google Voice. It's an application for your cell phone that allows you to use your personal cell phone but establishes a separate number that can be used for designated calls. He will look into that.
- This issue was referred to the Building & Grounds committee.

11. Good of the Order

- John Sylvester would appreciate all written documents for the council meeting delivered a few days prior to the meeting and not at the last minute.
- Bill Kautt asked if we are closing the building down to outside groups due to the community increase of COVID cases. Michelle Doose, who is a member of the Health Advisory committee said the committee doesn't have a problem with outside groups using the building as long as they are masked and socially distanced.
- Pastor Chris has a meeting with the Boy Scout Charter organization and will ask about scouts using surgical or N95 masks when inside the church.
- Randall Stuckey welcomed Pastor Chris to First Lutheran, and we all agreed we are happy he is here.

12. Lord's Prayer

13. Adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Next meeting will be on February 15 at 6:30 p.m., Mary Spear has devotions