

**First Lutheran Church
Congregation Council Meeting Minutes
December 21, 2021 6:30 p.m.**

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

Members Present: Bill Kautt, Pastor Bill Nelsen, Garrett Paul, John Sylvester, Cindy Nadeau, Michelle Doose, Steve Erickson, Harry Hunt, Mary Spear, Nancy Timm
Rachel Szybnski, Randy Stuckey, Jim Stenson, Raina Roehmhildt

Members Absent: Mary Thompson, David Marlow, Michelle Twait

1. Call to Order: Bill Kautt at 6:35 pm

2. Devotions: Rachel Szybnski

3. Approval of the Agenda: M/S, added to New Business- Finance Committee Charter, Cemetery committee nomination of Barb Wilkinson to another term. Carried with additions

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

5. Pastor’s Report: Pastor Bill Nelsen

- Pastor Bill is impressed with members stepping up in November and December to reach out to homebound and others that may need some extra attention. Thanks to youth and those who put together Christmas bundles and cards.
- Thanksgiving Eve community service held at Catholic Church
- Baptisms
- New members again last Sunday: Reach out and seek to get them involved!
- Advent Wednesday evening services by youth have been wonderful- thanks to youth, Calleigh, and confirmation teachers.
- Lots of time has been spent in conversation with Pastor Chris to prepare for transition. He is ready to get started and is very committed to Pastoral care. We have come a long way in reconciliation.

6. President’s Report: Bill Kautt:

- Thank you to Pastor Bill for his service and work to get through rough times and help us prepare for a new pastor. You have been a blessing to our congregation. Thanks also to Margie!! We will have time to say goodbye at the end of Sunday’s service, with a brief fellowship.
- Thank you to outgoing council members and welcome to new members.
- Phone calls and meetings with Jim N. concerning the Boy Scout issue. Based on Executive Meeting discussion, we feel we are not eligible to vote because we have no claims against Boy Scouts.
- If submitting minutes, it is better to send in a word document rather than Google Doc

7. Treasurer’s Report:

- Review of 2019-2021. Envelope offerings are on a downward trend. Projected budget for 2022 is about \$26,000 short. A lot of savings in past year was due to closed church, committees not meeting, etc. Still waiting to see what Dec. brings.
\$ 1,224,000 owed on the mortgage.

8. Unfinished Business:

A. Boy Scouts: Update given in President's report. No action needs to be taken. Charters have been signed by Bill Kautt and transferred to Pastor Chris

B. Budget:

- Actual year to date: version 1a- still same income. This will change daily because of money coming in. Once we get into the new year we will be ready to prepare budget to vote on.

- 106 cards were turned in - \$306,000 pledged. Some people have not pledged but still give-

- \$401, 000 is what we want to get to. Some anonymous donors give once a year. Funds Management Committee- \$26,000 from endowments is going to committees. Chunk given to cemetery committee.

Synod- 6% of envelope earnings. Finance Committee wants to change it to 3% to lower the deficit.

First column is what all of the committees requested, next column is what has been reduced to lower the budget.

Maintenance, insurance, office ex- have not been reduced

Salaries reflect synod guidelines, Calleigh will be going to $\frac{3}{4}$ time.

Full budget with no cuts, then budget with reductions. Some things to play with, but it depends on whether we have funds or any excess.

Karen is available from 9-2 on December 30, 31 to accept any pledges and gifts.

Expenses- \$4,000 for Emily's sabbatical. Ruth Larson endowment allows us to use some of these monies for moving expenses for Pastor Chris and Heather. This money will also be available for Emily's sabbatical year- carry over from last year and money from this year. This will cover subs needed to take some of Emily's duties while she is away.

Budget will be presented in January for approval.

9. Informational Reports

A. Tech Committee Update: New Chair- Brad Chambers, new member. He has been instrumental in getting the live stream running and functioning. Live streaming is coming along very well. We gave the ok to purchase some more equipment, up to 12,000 dollars to make it even better. Still looking for more people and getting youth involved.

B. Ideas for Increasing Income: Task force- Nancy Timm

-Temple Talk in early January by Nancy to report Family Fresh and Kwik Trip earnings.

Introduce Family Fresh card program. Also Shop with Scrip program will be recommended for implementation. Much like Kwik Trip and Family Fresh, but works for purchases from 700+ places. A percentage of each purchase will go to the church- no cost to users. Church is not out any money up front.

Motion to recommend this program to the congregation for implementation. S/C

-Event in February- 18th. Women's Lock In/ Comedy Show at church - starting with comedy show and appetizers. Tickets sold for the show. Those wanting to stay for craft activities, etc and stay overnight and breakfast in morning may do so. Cost to bring in comedian will be 900.00.

Down payment for 450.00 will need to be paid to move forward. Motion to refer discussion to the Increasing Income Task Force to give council a report at the January meeting. Carried.

Task force has lots of ideas going forward once we get past covid restrictions.

10. New Business

A. Finance Resolutions: Sent out by committee. Fund Balance Resolution:

WHEREAS First Lutheran Church understands that it has many future facilities renewal projects, including the care for its building, roof, carpets, organ, other musical assets, parking lots and sidewalks, and other fixed assets; and

WHEREAS best financial practices recommends that First Lutheran Church include in its annual operating budget an amount to fund such future projects; and

WHEREAS this best practice is not occurring;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that First Lutheran Church set aside \$125,000 of its current unrestricted fund balance to be designated for future capital renewal projects and that only the First Lutheran Church Congregational Council has the authority to make qualifying disbursements from this designated fund balance.

Portion of the cash-designed to be a capital improvements fund. Motion from Finance Committee carried.

Benevolence Resolution for 2022:

WHEREAS First Lutheran Church has been generous in its support of the SW Minnesota Synod through its actual payments in recent years (\$46,131 in 2019, \$44,737 in 2020), along with a budgeted expense of \$20,940 in 2021; and

WHEREAS First Lutheran Church has experienced declining envelope revenues from its membership in recent years resulting in a forecasted structural budget deficit in 2022;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that if the final 2022 revenues exceed 2022 expenses, the First Lutheran Church Congregational Council may vote to increase the actual disbursement to the Synod up to 10% of envelope offerings.

Reduce benevolence from 6% in budget to 3%. Option to go up. Move to eliminate the second paragraph: whereas the budgeted expense for the Synod....

Vote to pass motion as amended above- carried

B. Staff Support Recommendations:

“The Staff Support Committee recommends that the Council act to continue the employment of Calleigh Carlson as the FLC Director of Youth and Family Ministry for 2022 at the reduced level of three-quarter time.”

Accept as recommended. Carried

Updated Sexual Harrassment...policy. Reporting form still needs to be created. Move to defer consideration to February council meeting. S/C

C. Use of the Ruth Larson Endowment: talked about in the Treasurer's Report.

Recommendation to use money from the Ruth Larson Endowment for moving expenses for pastor and expenses incurred during Emily's sabbatical. Carried

D. Congregation and Community Ministry Committee Charter Change: One change should be removing the budget from the end of the charter. Motion to defer item to next meeting when Michelle Twait can be present to talk about changes. S/C

E. Afghan Circle of Welcome Recommendation:

The Social Justice and Congregation and Community Ministry committees move that First Lutheran Church become a distant partner in the Lutheran Social Services (LSS) Sponsored Circle of Welcome program for Afghan Refugees and Evacuees.

Trinity Lutheran and Union Presbyteian would partner with FLC as distant partners. First Lutheran would contribute \$2,500.

Funding can come from Ruth Larson endowment as a one time event. We could possibly raise our donation to 3,000. Pastor's Discretionary Fund could be made available to cover some of the cost. Move to give Harry power, after consultation with Ken Westphal, to write a check for 3,000 to cover a donation to the Circle of Welcome Distant Partnership Program and disperse the funds. S/C

F. Motion to approve Barb Wilkinson to another 3 year term on Cemetery Committee. Carried

G. Finance Committee Charter accepted as presented.

H. Election of 2022 officers: Nominations were opened and accepted.

-President: Garrett Paul

-Vice President: Unfilled at this point

-Treasurer: Jim Stenson

-Secretary: Mary Spear

11. Good of The Order: Good Question, Observation or Comment!

12. Lord's Prayer

14. Adjourned at 8:58

Next meeting will be on January 18, 2022

