

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

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

Members present: Pastor Chris Culuris, Garrett Paul, Sarah Chambers, Steve Erickson, Harry Hunt, Bill Kautt, Dave Kennedy, Nancy Timm, Jim Stenson, Randy Stuckey, John Sylvester, Michelle Twait

Members absent: Mary Spear, Michelle Doose, Callie Voeltz

1. Call to Order: Council President, Garrett Paul at 6:36 p.m.
2. Devotions: Nancy Timm
3. Approval of the agenda: M/S
  - a. Amended to strike item 9: “Report on current status of estimates of giving and budget building.”
  - b. Amended to strike item 10: “Need for council approval of tentative budget to be presented at December congregational meeting.”
  - c. Amended to insert into the proposed agenda for the congregational meeting, after Prayer: Approval of previous minutes.
  - d. Carried with amendments.
4. Approval of the October 18, 2022 Minutes: M/S/C
5. Pastor’s Report: Pastor Chris Culuris
  - a. A couple of requests: a) Please consider helping with ushering at our Wednesday Advent services from 7:00-7:30pm on Nov. 30, Dec. 7, 14, and 21. We need 2 ushers each service.; b) If you can enter a soup or chili for our Soup Cookoff & Pie Auction on Nov. 20th that would be a big help with this fellowship and fund-raising event.
  - b. Participated in the following activities for October: Hospital visits: 0, Nursing home visits: 0, Assisted Living/Office/Others: 10
  - c. Events: Rally Day for Sunday School; Youth Group Kick-Off Event; Invocation & Blessing for Troop 58’s Devan Stenger’s Eagle Scout Court of Honor; Troop 58’s Court of Honor; Emceed First’s Got Talent Show; two First Forums: “South African Partnership” with Dave Pedersen & “Wills and Estate Planning” with Chris Paul
  - d. Committee meetings: CCM, Worship & Arts, Finance & Stewardship, Green, Social Justice, Executive, Cemetery, Building & Grounds
  - e. Other meetings: Minnesota Valley Conference meeting at Swedlanda in Hector
  - f. Away on Vacation: Oct. 19-25
  - g. Away on Continuing Education: Oct. 26- Nov. 1, class: “Ethnicity, Justice & the People of God”
  - h. Upcoming vacation time:
    - i. Dec. 8-14, Pastor Steve Kidder covering worship on December 11<sup>th</sup>
    - ii. December 26-January 1<sup>st</sup>; Pastor Heather Culuris covering worship on January 1<sup>st</sup>
6. President’s Report: Garrett Paul
  - a. Thank you to the congregational council, committee chairs, church staff, and members of the congregation for their contributions.
  - b. Filled in for Pastor Culuris on October 30<sup>th</sup>, Reformation Sunday.

- c. Thank you to David Fienen who helped put up the church history display, as well as Dave Pehrson, who found the “First Lutheran Catholic Church” sign.
- 7. Treasurer’s Report: Jim Stenson
  - a. Council members were provided with an overview of financial activity in October. We are short on envelope offerings by \$29,000. Income is down, but expenses are down as well.
  - b. Concerns expressed how the budget might be impacted by members who give their entire pledge at the beginning of the year (in January). Historically, we have projected a significant increase in giving during the month of December, but this may be less so if members are giving the entirety of their pledge in January.
  - c. Concerns expressed about the church’s obligation to employees who leave and the need to have those potential expenses (e.g. payment for unused vacation time) reflected in our finances. The specific amount needs to be calculated and either set aside in a reserve fund and/or incorporated into the budget.
  - d. Council members reviewed a copy of the un-amended draft version of the 2023 budget. There is a projected deficit of approximately \$65,000. The Finance Committee will meet on Thursday morning at 8 am to discuss this further. With very few budget lines that could be reduced, the focus may need to be on an increase in revenue/income.
- 8. Committee Reports – none.
- 9. Health Advisory Team report (if any) – No report.
- 10. Strategic Planning Task Force Report
  - a. The task force met with Jeff Olson last week. The group will begin to gather information from constituents in December and will meet once a month, through March, with a goal to bring a final report to the Council at their March meeting. Council members have been invited to meet with the task force on December 4<sup>th</sup> and participate in an “I like, I wish, I wonder” activity. A survey will be distributed to all members at the beginning of December (both an online version and a print version will be available).
- 11. Unfinished Business
  - a. Ecumen lease agreement.
    - i. Harry Hunt sent the lease to an attorney for review; the attorney recommended a few minor changes to the agreement. Ecumen agreed to those changes. Garrett Paul will sign the lease on behalf of the Council.
  - b. Budget
    - i. Report on estimates of giving and budget building.
      - 1. As of November 10<sup>th</sup>, envelope pledges for 2023 are \$304,314. Building fund pledges for a 3-year period are \$332,075.
    - ii. Need for council to approve tentative budget for presentation at congregational meeting; how shall we do it?
      - 1. The tentative budget will be finalized at the Finance meeting on Thursday.
      - 2. Motion for the Council to give the Finance committee the authority to make any minor changes to the tentative budget and bring a finalized version to the congregational meeting. M/S/C
  - c. Safety and security; formation of a task force.
    - i. Dawn Hunter has agreed to chair a task force. This task force would develop plans for severe weather preparedness and active shooter response training. Garrett Paul will try to recruit additional volunteers for the task force.
  - d. New church directory.

- i. The company who does this is booked for months in advance, so springtime would be the earliest that this could be arranged. CCM is willing to help with arrangements but may need some office support with the scheduling of sittings.

12. New Business

a. Congregational meeting

- i. Letter announcing meeting to members; can anyone help stuff envelopes if Angela needs help?
  - 1. Bill Kautt and Garrett Paul are willing to assist with stuffing envelopes. The letter will indicate that meeting materials will be available to pick up the Sunday before the congregational meeting. The letter will also include a brief note about the 2023 budget.
- ii. Agenda for December 4th Congregational Meeting
  - 1. Call to order
  - 2. Prayer
  - 3. Approval of previous minutes
  - 4. Report of proposed changes in constitution and by-law
  - 5. Vote on by-laws
  - 6. Presentation of proposed budget
  - 7. Report of nominating committee
  - 8. Election of council members and other congregational offices
  - 9. Next meeting: January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023
  - 10. Adjournment; Lord's Prayer
    - a. Motion to approve this agenda. M/S/C
- iii. To Zoom or not to Zoom – and if to Zoom, how do we set it up?
  - 1. Virtual meetings will not be a consideration until after the congregation votes on the proposed changes to the constitution (specifically, the addition of new language in C10.08).

b. December Council meeting and celebration

- i. Traditionally, a potluck celebration is held after the December council meeting. Council members are asked to please consider bringing a dish to share.

13. Good of the Order

- a. The Nominating Committee has completed their work. Huzzah!

14. Meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m. followed by the Lord's Prayer

Next Church Council meeting will be held on December 20, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.

Devotions for December: John Sylvester