

Minutes of the September 8, 2020 Congregation Council Meeting

Present: Pastor Mark Laatsch, Ronda Pedersen, Kathy Bero, Terrie Porras, Stacy Hansen, Boni Nerat-Heckel, Matt Vanni, Jim Zobel, Jeff Hines, Bill Kuhnlein, Jeremy Sallgren. Absent: Dave Anderson, Bill Taccolini (e), Kylie Chevalier (e).
Present to Report: Debbie Villas, Patti Treptow, Judy Raygo.

Meeting called to order @ 6:04pm by President Ronda. Council met virtually via Zoom. Ronda called for agenda approval. Bill K motioned to approve, Jeremy seconded; motion carried.

Opening Devotion: Pastor Mark read from 1 Peter 5:1-11 and *Listen to the Heart*. Peace is experienced in the presence.

Secretary's Report: Terrie asked for review of the 8/11 minutes. Stacy motioned to approve as presented, Kathy seconded, motion carried. No other activity.

Treasurer's Report: Debbie reported: **1.** Our numbers look good, giving is over budget for this month. **2.** Discovered some payroll and tax liabilities had not been paid. She made missed payments and we are now up to date. A late penalty was incurred, Debbie wrote a letter explaining the situation and the agency will wave and refund the penalty. **3.** Finance Committee discussed benevolence payment, recommend we pay amount due to bring us up to date. Kathy **motioned** to make benevolence payment to catch us up through September and to resume monthly payments, Bonnie seconded, motion carried. **4.** Discussed need for council to vote to approve payment of bills, per review of constitution and Finance Committee job description, it is not necessary to do this. **5.** Reviewed Church Usage Fees P&P (per annual review requirement), no changes recommended. **6.** Question about financial contribution made to Home Mission Fund, what is this fund? A fund to help people in our community. For example, someone stops in the church and needs help to pay their water bill. There has been no money in this fund for over a year, recently a member donated to it. The fund is a dedicated fund like the flower fund. Pastor can use this fund at his discretion; usage is tracked by Financial Secretary. Financial Secretary's Report was not sent to council; Deb will e-mail it to us. **7.** Budget is coming up, preliminary forms going out to committee chairs to start work on their budget's to be submitted next month.

ACTION ITEMS – where we've been – Rachel Raygo will accept position on Audit Committee vacated by Debbie Villas. **Motion** to approve Rachel made by Bonnie, seconded by Jim, motion carried.

REPORTS – where we are.

Youth Advisory Council Report: Patti reported the group met outside on 8/23 for Frisbee, campfire, and hot dogs. 5 youth attended and were very happy to meet. Chris Erickson, Youth Leader and a member of the Marinette Fire Dept. made and supervised the fire. Next meet on 9/20.

Youth & Family Ministry Director's Report: Patti reported Learning Committee met 8/25. Decided on virtual Sunday school from 9/27 - 12/13, then evaluate if in-person classes can start in January. Video lessons will be put on our church You-Tube site. Patti is looking for help to read Bible stories on video tape. PK-2nd grade will watch a Bible Story then do a worksheet with their parents. Patti will instruct 3rd-6th grade on the beatitudes. She attended a webinar on Strengthening Families. It covered how to engage and empower parents, and nurture faith at home.

President's Report: Ronda was amazed at how *The Agile Church* parallels COVID-19 times and appreciates our flexibility!

Finance: Debbie waiting on paperwork from Property Committee on Inventory and value of equipment and other items.

Youth: Stacy - have not met, no activity

Learning: Patti – Confirmation letters going out to parents when finalized. Communion classes when back together.

Endowment: Kathy reported on use of endowment funds: 20% to help community (look at Emmanuel members who may need help). Compassion International in Kenya – adopted boy and gave money to support his education, purchased Bibles. Money to Equipping the Saints. 40% of money in fund to Pastoral debt relief in our synod.

Fellowship: Ronda reported they have not met. Will meet next month and discuss how to engage members.

Human Resources: Jim is looking at updated salary data. Will be talking with Executive and Finance Committees regarding budget, salary increases, and bonuses for next year.

Memorial: See attached report submitted by Sandi Zobel.

Outreach: Terrie - reported they have not met.

Policy & Procedures (P&P): Jim reported they met 9/22 with Endowment to start work on their P&Ps. Continues to work with Finance and Property Committees.

Property: Bill K reported they have not met but will meet next Thursday.

Stewardship: Kathy reported they met 8/22 via Zoom with Grace Pomeroy from synod. They looked at electronic giving and learned about generational giving. No temple talks this year. We need to be very careful due to COVID-19 hardships. Instead of asking for a pledge, we will ask for an estimate of giving. Next meet on 9/22.

Worship Committee / Pastor's Report: Pastor reported: **1.** Outdoor worship attendance is steady. Will continue outdoor service through September, weather permitting. **2.** Met with our synod bishop and other pastors. Using risk assessment tool on NGL synod website, numbers indicate it is not safe for inside worship yet. Will continue to wait, watch COVID-19 numbers, and see what happens with school openings. **3.** Had a baptism on 8/16, another scheduled for 9/13. Wedding planned for 10/10. **4.** AA asking when they can return to meeting inside. Red Cross asking about doing blood drives at church. Pros and cons of opening church discussed. We need a protocol for opening; discussed including actions such as taking temps, screening questions, social distance, limit of 20 people, staggering meetings, cleaning. Does AA have a protocol? Pastor will ask Red Cross for their protocol. Jim will obtain the AARP Tax Aid Foundation protocol. We can use protocols as examples to help develop ours. **5.** Passed out "Walking Together" handout. Event is being held virtually this Thursday. Call Pastor to sign up.

NEW BUSINESS – Ronda reported that Executive Council would like us, as the Congregation Council, to reach out to Members through phone calls. The purpose is to find out how members are doing, let them know the church is here for them, thank them for continuing to support our church (send in their pledges). Terrie volunteered to organize this activity and will work with a small group to develop a script we can follow. A list of FAQ with answers will also be made to ensure we all respond with the same information. Ronda further expressed we should put a "thank you for continued giving" in the Messenger.

LONG TERM PROJECT/GOALS – Pastor led discussion on chapter 4. Read chapter 5 for discussion next month.

Meeting adjourned at 8:16pm on a **motion** by Kathy, seconded by Jeremy, motion carried. Closed with prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,

Terrie Porras, Council Secretary