

**Minutes of Congregation Council Meeting
October 20, 2020
7:00 PM**

- I. **Call to Order** at 7:04 pm. Note that this meeting was a virtual meeting, with members of Council calling in via a Zoom arrangement, allowing for audio only or audio-visual participation.
- A. **Attendance:** M. Binkley, M. Blower, F. Casciano, R. Doty, Pr. R. Elliott, K. Ervin, S. Mathieu, C. McGrath, N. McNally, C. Pirrotta, Pr. T. Reichley, D. Rohrbach, M. Stanziola, R. Stevens
- B. **Excused Absences / Absent:** K. McNally, Pr. S. Steele
- C. **Devotions:** R. Stevens
- II. **Approval of Minutes**
- September 15, 2020 Council Meeting - Motion:** To approve September 15th Council meeting minutes as submitted - by Pr. R. Elliott, second by R. Doty. Motion **Approved**.
- Minutes of Council Electronic Vote of October 6-7, 2020 – Motion:** To approve the minutes of the Council electronic vote of October 6-7 as submitted – by K. Ervin, second by C. McGrath. Motion **Approved**.
- III. **Staff Reports**
- Pr. Elliott talked about the stress on the staff resultant from trying to complete full schedules of activities and pastoral care in this time of pandemic. He observed that taking care of self is an important aspect of being able to care for others. Pr. Reichley added that addressing the experiences of the last few months was definitely not covered in her theological education.
- Pr. Elliott **moved** that Council remove the word “Acting” from the Acting Director of Liturgy position title as performed by Pr. Lamberton. He indicated the satisfaction of staff with liturgical preparations and the willingness of Pr. Lamberton to continue in the position for an unspecified period of time. The motion was seconded by S. Mathieu. Motion **Approved**.
- IV. **Mission Team Reports**
- A. **Faith Formation for Children and Nursery School (K. Ervin) –**
- Nursery School** - Nursery School has opened with 36 students, a low number but stable over several weeks. One teaching position remains open but staff is covering the vacancy well.
- FFC** - The outdoor fall event for church and Nursery School families was held as scheduled on October 18th to a small but pleased group. The children will be participating in the God’s Work Our Hands effort over the coming weeks.

B. Stewardship – Pr. Elliott noted that the fall campaign is underway.

C. Finance (R. Doty) – (1) September operating income was about \$7.5k lower than expected, while September operating expenses were about \$9.6k lower than expected. This resulted in a net income of about -\$7.1k as compared to the expected -\$9.1k. An operating cash balance of about \$147k was held at the end of September.

(2) The Payroll Protection Program loan forgiveness application has been submitted to the Federal government, and we should learn by November 23rd whether the loan has been changed to grant status. Holy Spirit did meet the spending requirements for salary and certain other expenses needed to be approved for that change.

(3) The expense budget for 2021 is being developed. Mission Teams are requested to get their proposed budgets to S. Scheetz in the near future.

D. Property (Pr. Elliott) – Additional work remains underway to ensure full remediation of the mold and ventilation issues in the lower level of the building.

E. Outreach (N. McNally) – The first issue of the Outreach newsletter has been released and the second issue is in development. In October-early November, there is a transition underway to the God's Work, Our Hands program benefitting Lutheran World Relief.

F. Building Emergency Task Force (C. McGrath) – The focus in the near term will be on building surveillance equipment and access controls.

V. Old Business

A. Capital Campaign – Final scoping remains in progress, with the timeline slipping by about one month for the completion of that work. A congregational meeting to consider approving the scope is likely to be held in December 2020.

B. Organ – Ordering of a replacement organ is expected to occur in late October or early November 2020.

C. Mid-Week Services – This item is on the agenda to reconsider the earlier approved schedule. Since that time, the daily numbers of COVID-19 cases have increased in Pennsylvania, and the LCHS staff has expressed additional concerns about the related safety issues and the staff resources needed to develop the short services for what may be a low number of attendees. Considerable discussion ensued. Council is certainly concerned with safety and resource efficiency, but is also aware that additional diversity of worship, education, and fellowship offerings may be needed, potentially including some access to the building to enable those offerings to occur. Staff and Council will think of ways of diversifying and offering additional faith-formation activities over the coming months; these may include indoor, outdoor, and remote (Zoom)-based activities.

Pr. Elliott **moved** that the indoor mid-week service for the last week of October be suspended (cancelled) and that the plans for November and beyond for such services be given additional thought to enhance effectiveness, efficiency, and safety. M. Stanziola seconded the motion, which was **Approved**.

VI. New Business

A. Potential Cub Pack/Scout Pack Sponsorship – Pack 5 sponsored by St. Timothy’s Lutheran Church in Allentown needs to find a new sponsoring organization in 2021. Nativity Lutheran and Holy Spirit are being considered. Council indicated interest in being the sponsoring organization pending better understanding of the obligations of the sponsoring organization and where the group may be meeting. At this time, there is no known financial obligation to being the sponsor.

B. Narrative Budgeting/Pledging – R. Stevens displayed the 2020 budget using a first-draft approach to breaking the budget down into expenses for missional areas such as worship, faith formation, and benevolence, and into expenses for support areas such as administration. Items such as non-budgeted benevolence can also be considered in such a breakdown. Stewardship will be using a narrative approach in its fall 2020 campaign to describe the “story” of what is planned to be done with dollars contributed by members.

C. Christmas Services – Staff is considering how to make Christmas Eve services very meaningful to worshippers. The use of remote (Zoom) and outdoor services is being considered, as are means to send Advent and/or Christmas devotional materials to members. Council concurred with the idea of an outdoor activity among the offerings for Christmas Eve and means of using musicians to provide for incorporation of music into that offering (anticipating no singing by the general congregation).

D. Connection with Families with Younger Children and Teens – Council brainstormed some ideas of this topic and observed that youth may be “zoomed out” if they attend school remotely during the week.

E. Council Nominees for Election in Early 2021 – M. Blower and R. Doty will need to be replaced on Council in early 2021. M. Stanziola and N. McNally are able and willing to remain for an additional term on Council. K. McNally’s youth term on Council will also end in early 2021. Both M. Blower and R. Doty have given input to Pr. Elliott as to individuals who may be interested in being elected to Council. At the November or December Council meeting, nominees for election to Council will be considered for ballot spots.

VII. Next Steps

A. Next Meeting Date: November 17 at 7 PM

B. To Do/Assignments: Devotions for November 17th meeting – C. Pirrotta

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned with prayer by Pr. Elliott.

Time of adjournment: 8:32 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Doty, Council Secretary

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