

Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church
Council Meeting Minutes – March 7, 2024

Called into community, gifted to serve.
Glorifying God through love in action.

Present: Pastor Aileen Robbins, Jeff Gerstenberger, Laurie Simonson, Sheri Treadwell, Amy Trichanh, Paul Williams, Mark Sutliff, Jim Hartmann, Andy Mitchell, Amy Trichanh, Brianna Dauphinee, and Brad Roberts.

We met via Zoom.

Devotions and Opening Prayer – Andy started our meeting with an opening prayer and devotions based on the Jacob and Esau story.

Jeff led the meeting.

Agenda Review - Added Property to Ministry reports

Financial Reports – Brad asked questions regarding what reports the Council would like to see each month. We looked at the reports he sent prior to our meeting and provided suggestions. Finalizing the data for 2023 is slow. October is done, however there is a \$34 difference. Brad requested the finance team commit to increased communication. He requested a March meeting with Julie, Jeff, Gene, and Pastor. Julie is helping with data entry. It looks like we have a positive balance of \$12,000.

Ministry Team Reports

- Outreach – Extended Report – Mark told us the dinner at RIT in April will have 16 students. A signup sheet for volunteers will be in the Sunday Bulletin and Newsletter.
 - The Crop Walk will be Sunday, May 5. Walkers will meet at Alders Gate.
 - St. Johns requests volunteers to assist people to their church services on Mondays. It is challenging to find people who have time on a Monday.
 - Gods Work our Hands should happen on the second Sunday in September, possibly Sept. 8. Mark is open to any ideas to make this a great event.
 - LCLC retreat in the Fall might be possible this year. We need to have some fun. A survey will be sent regarding interest. Suggest carpooling, which might help with decisions.
 - The Food Ministry is doing well. Need to ask Reggie if there are enough helpers.

- Mutual Ministry Team Recommendations – Jeff provided an update from the Mutual Ministry Team.
 - We agreed to fully pay Willie during leave to take care of his wife during her illness because the funds are already in the budget. Willie should be told that the Council approved this leave.
 - We also agreed to add one week of paid vacation to Pastor Aileen’s 2024 benefits to care for her mother.

To record these changes, the Mutual Ministry team will amend Willie’s job description and create a memorandum for Pastor Aileen (we cannot change her letter of call, which describes her leave). We also need to create a bereavement policy.

- Property – Paul told us a drone checked the outside of the church and our windows look ok. Houseflies are being treated. There are no bees currently. There is a problem with the dishwasher, the repair person said there was a problem with the temperature, this will cost a few hundred dollars.

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- Pastor Aileen:
 - Pastor discussed the Lenten series. Following up on what we discussed previously, Pastor reviewed where each service would be held and who was officiating. Special attention is being made to ensure each congregation has their important liturgy. The Longest Night service will incorporate familiar aspects of all five congregations. Good Friday will be at Greece Baptist and Steve and Cheryl will officiate. Next year we should have greater collaboration between our partners so everyone is comfortable and expectations are met.

- **It was brought to our attention that our website does not have the reconciling in Christ language, we agreed this should be added as soon as possible.**

- **Other Business**
 - Follow up with Pastor Hans regarding Annual Meeting – Jeff talked to Pastor Hans to clarify some misunderstanding. Pastor Hans felt heard. We should look at outside facing ministries and get numbers of people impacted, such as the grief group. We can look at this during our next Strategic Planning Meeting.
 - Time and Talent Engagement – We can work on this list to use again in the fall. The lists from November have not been compiled yet, Andy volunteered to help.
 - Pastoral Assistant Search – our current budget does not support hiring an Assistant. There is also a shortage of pastors in the US. This is a big challenge moving forward. We can look at Methodist or Episcopal pastors if necessary. We need to consider lay leaders. We can have a coffee hour regarding Spiritual Gifts and see if anyone would volunteer to preach. There could be courses to take.
 - Youth Essay Contest – Pastor asked if we would approve \$100 toward the contest, as we have done in years past. We all agreed.
 - Brianna suggested Blessing of the Pets in October.

Next Meeting

Council Installation Meeting – March 17, 2024

Council Meeting – April 11, 7:00 – 8:30 PM

Devotions & prayer – Mark

Extended Ministry Report – Pastor Aileen

Closing Prayer – Andy closed our meeting with prayer.

Submitted by Laurie Simonson