

Congregation Council Meeting
November 6, 2023
Minutes
Faith Lutheran Church

Call to order: The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Lorelee Daily, Council president.

Attendance: Lorelee Daily, Dana Singer, Pastor Jean, Lori Ashenfelter, John Reyes, Darryl Anderson, Karen Skerlong, Em Antal, Tom Peyton, Kim Kennedy, Wendy Gajarsky, Nancy Tobar

Guests: John Weisend, Andrew Fligor

Review of the Minutes

Kim motioned to accept the October 16, 2023, minutes; Dana seconded the motion. John noted that Church Council should read Congregation Council. All were in favor. Motion passed with correction.

Staff Reports

- Treasurer
October revenue at \$55,000 nearly matched October 2022 revenue. We had a surplus of approximately \$6,500, which reduced our YTD deficit to \$31,996. It was decided to publicly state our finances in the Weekly Beacon and to resume passing the offering plate at the Informal Service. John motioned to accept the treasurer's report for review; Tom seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.
- Pastor Jean Hansen – submitted. The Advent Gathering of the Congregation Council in December will be a social event with no meeting; therefore, officers will be elected at the January retreat.
- Eric Jezewski
- David Simpson

President's Report – submitted.

Old Business

- Formation of Sexual Abuse Response Team (SART), revision of "Keeping Children and Youth Safe" document – Dana Singer, John Reyes
It was discovered that the final version of "Policies and Procedures for Keeping Children and Youth Safe" document, approved by Council on August 17, 2015, was not the document sent to Church Mutual in 2023, as a condition for the church obtaining increased policy limits for sexual abuse claims. The first draft of the policy, titled "Child and Youth Abuse Prevention Program for Faith Lutheran Church" was the one that was sent. Lorelee motioned that we accept the document that was sent to Church Mutual in 2023; Dana seconded the motion. All were in favor. The Executive Committee will review both policies and bring recommendations for revisions, including proposed changes in the description of the Sexual Abuse Response Team (SART), to the Council in 2024.

- Report of the security consultant (Oliver), status of grant, formation of a Safety Team – Lorelee Daily
Lorelee gave an overview of the safety/vulnerability assessment provided by consultant David Oliver. The grant request for funding from the State of Ohio for improving safety was submitted, and a response is anticipated in early January 2025. Darryl reported that a Safety Team has been formed and had their first meeting; they are looking at those items that can be implemented quickly and inexpensively and that mirror similar items that the preschool must have. Some items being looked at are:
 1. Safety book
 2. Numbers for door and windows
 3. Gate in alley way
 4. Motion Detectors in main hallways.
 5. Camera at narthex door

New Business

- Agenda for the Annual Meeting
 - ✓ Report from the Nominating Committee – Martha Mazak
Kim reported that Wendy agreed to serve a second term on Council; Nicole Vincent agreed to serve on Council. We need one more person and are waiting for a response from two people.
 - ✓ Report from the Stewardship Team – Andy Fligor
120 EOG cards have been received to date. This is the same amount as last year at this time. Total pledged amount for 2024, as of today, is \$392,210 for the operating fund compared to \$401,100 last year; B&G pledged amount is \$40,473, compared to \$40,367 last year. Total combined pledges of operating and B&G are \$432,683 compared to \$441,467 last year.
 - ✓ Finalize budget for 2024 – John Weisend
The summary of expense changes from the 2023 budget totals \$226,700, with Preschool being the highest amount at \$197,813, followed by Salary/Benefits at \$11,186. Security Maintenance of \$1,500 is to cover ongoing security maintenance costs. In response to the security assessment, Tom motioned to add a line item in B&G of \$20,000 for future security systems expenses; John seconded the motion. Lorelee wanted to wait until we're notified on January 5, if we are awarded the grant. Five people voted in favor; 3 were opposed and 2 abstained. Motion passed.

Based on Andrew's new numbers tonight for the amount of combined pledges, total revenue changed from \$778,000 to \$813,000.

The salary for the Youth Director is three parts, base salary, activities and the ELCA Youth Gathering. The annual staff salary 4% COL increase for this position is to be applied only to the base salary. Last year it was applied to all three parts and needs to be removed for 2024. The preliminary budget will change from \$24,272 to \$24,053.

We're at \$877,000 which gives us a \$65,000 deficit total (\$28,517 Operating, \$20,000 B&G, \$16,483 Preschool). We have \$24,000 that can be transferred in from the Memorial Courtyard. The church has \$774,000 in savings.

John moved to approve the budget as amended; Dana seconded the motion; 9 people were in favor, 1 abstained. Motion passed.

Online-giving details will be added to the Weekly Beacon.

- ✓ Explanation re. addition of Preschool Budget to Annual Church Budget
John Weisend will explain this to the congregation.
 - ✓ Reminder concerning the Electronic Directory
Kim will speak on the electronic directory.
 - ✓ CLI Team introduction of prayer initiative – Melissa Johnson
Melissa will report on the new prayer initiative.
- Resignation of Jesse Unk; hiring for preschool custodian/set-up position – Pastor Jean Today was Jesse's last day. He was not interested in the new position. Until someone is hired, all event leaders will need to recruit volunteers for set-up and tear-down duties.

Ministry Area Reports

- Care and Nurture: *Wendy Gajarsky*
 - ✓ Tinsel and Tea, Dec. 2
 - ✓ FFF Team met last Thursday. No minutes received.
- Communications: *Lori Ashenfelter*
 - ✓ David Nevergall's Luther's Small Catechism adult education Zoom class is getting over 15 people, members and from the community.
- Celebration and Memorial Courtyard: *John Reyes*
 - ✓ Proposed 2024 budget is \$5,620. Next meeting is January 17.
- Faith Endowment: *John Reyes*
 - ✓ \$7,592 grants issued in 2023; \$5,206.50 still available. Asset total as of 10/31/23 is \$307,848.30.
- Growth and Learning: *Em Antal*
 - ✓ Advent Family Night is upcoming.
- Ministry/Staff Development: *Kim Kennedy*
- Operations: *Darryl Anderson and John Reyes (Finance)*
 - ✓ Stewardship Team: New Stewardship Team will be needed in 2024.

- ✓ New Property Team leader needed as of Jan. 1, 2024
- ✓ Darryl commented on the property report from Judy Vernon that was submitted.
- ✓ John commented on the submitted Finance Committee report.
- Outreach: *Loralee Daily, Tom Peyton*
- Preschool: *Karen Skerlong*
 - ✓ Playground has been completed. Last payment made.
- Worship: Dana Singer
 - ✓ Combined service at 9 a.m. on Nov. 19 – Annual Meeting
 - ✓ Combined service at 10 a.m. on Sundays, Dec. 17 (Music Sunday) and Dec. 24 (Advent 4/Christmas Eve); also, 7 p.m. worship on Christmas Eve
 - ✓ Two services resume on Dec. 31
 - ✓ No Christian Education on Dec. 17, 24, 31
 - ✓ No Kinship Café on Dec. 24

Adjournment/The Lord's Prayer/Next Meetings:

- ✓ **6 p.m., December 18 at the church: Advent Celebration hosted by Pastor Jean, spouses and significant others are invited to attend.**
- ✓ **Council Retreat, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., January 20 at the Synod Office, 1890 Bailey Rd., Cuyahoga Falls. No meeting on January 15.**

Dana motioned to adjourn; Kim seconded the motion. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 9:14 p.m.

Submitted by Nancy Tobar, Council Secretary