**ADVENT LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL**

**FEBRUARY 20, 2019**

Present - Voting: (N = 8) Pr. Danielle Miller, Jon Dohlin, Michael Hammett, Norma Martin, Dave Richards, Blessing Tawengwa, Brelyn Vandenburg, Deanne Walters.

Present - Not Voting (N = 2) Kevin Bowen, Abby Ferjak

Absent/ Excused - (N = 4) Pastor Gary Mills, Juan Minier, Bayardo Peralta, Miriam Sitz Grebey.

Dave offered a devotion as we approach Lent and Ash Wednesday. He spoke about dreading Lent.: The best part of Easter is Lent is over. But, he said, if we hate giving up things we love, then we will hate Christianity which is expensive or difficult. He dreads giving something up for forty days, but encouraged us to think about what to add instead: Make a commitment to worship every week, read scripture every day. Give up your feelings of hopelessness and helplessness. The empty tomb not a finish line but the start of long and wonderful journey. Jon suggested we focus less on giving up and more on becoming aware and taking fewer things for granted. Be conscious of how much we have and how little we give up.

The Council accepted from the Consent Agenda the Pastor’s report and the Latino Ministry report.

**ACTION: Moved, seconded, and approved to accept these two items from the Consent Agenda.**

Deanne pointed to the Statement of Activities. She said the January income has not been recorded. The updated Statement of Activities will be available in a couple of weeks on the Google drive.

Pastor Danielle reported that our application to the Metro New York Synod for a grant of $200,00 to renovate the downstairs of our building. She said we should explore applying to NYC Department of Cultural Affairs for a capital grant. Norma and P. Danielle will discuss. The $200,000 grant must be approved by the congregation in a congregational meeting.

Annual meeting. Michael was thanked for chairing the annual meeting in Dave’s absence.

It was suggested that there be a gap of a week between the two informational meetings and the annual meeting. This would provide time for members to propose motions, and for those to be translated into Spanish or from Spanish into English. People do need to feel there is space to make motions. It is important that people be clear about what they are voting on.

We need leadership development around Robert’s Rules of Order for Council members and for emerging lay leaders. The Council discussed the tone of annual meetings as a spiritual issue. It is not an individual issue. It is a cultural issue that pops up in different ways. How do we put Christ at the center?

We need to articulate our commonly shared values at the beginning of meetings and small group processes. Conflict is a sign of a healthy congregation; you trust people enough to talk with them. How can we disagree productively? It is suggested we set aside time at next meeting to discuss a covenant about how to treat each other. We should pray with each other and for each other at the beginning of meetings.

The Council elected officers:

President: Dave Richards

Vice President: Michael Hammett

Secretary: Miriam Sitz Grebey

Treasurer: Deanne Walters

**ACTION: Moved, seconded and approved to elect the officers listed above.**

It was announced that a Property Committee will be established. The Property Committee will be more involved in the day to day operations of the building than the longer term Spatial Planning Team, which will focus on how to implement our vision. The Spatial Planning Team will manage the $200,000 basement renovation. The members will be Lukas Martin, Mica Hill, Maura Rosado, Debra Warn and Joshua Weidmann. Bayardo Peralta was recommended as the Council Representative.

**ACTION: It was moved, seconded, and approved to affirm these members of the Property Committee.**

April Council meeting will be on 4/10 instead on 4/17 (Holy Week). In December the meeting will begin at 7:30 not 7 due to Traveler’s Christmas.

A Devotion Schedule for 2019 was distributed and members signed up to provide devotions.

It was recommended that Deanne be added to the Sunday manager schedule. Council members are reminded that only Council Members can collect offerings from the altar after worship, since only they are bonded. Norma suggested the counters be reminded of this since they tap someone who seems available if a Council member has not been prompt.

**ACTIONS: It was moved, seconded, and passed to amend the motion for two Pastoral Housing Allowances to change the date to February, 20, 2019. The amended Pastor Housing Allowances were moved, seconded, and passed.**

Quorum: Advent has an onerous quorum for annual meetings. To reduce the quorum, we would have to amend the constitution. To do that, a change would have to be presented at one annual meeting and approved at a subsequent meeting.

Council members affirmed the Code of Ethics.

**ACTION: It was moved, seconded, and approved to affirm the Code of Ethics.**

After adoption, and then on an annual basis, the secretary, or other person designated by the Congregation Council, shall send a copy of this policy to each director, officer, committee member and employee of the Congregation. All new Congregation Representatives should be given a copy of the policy.

Deanne reported on the status of our financial reserves. We have over six months of reserves.

Vision Team: Jon distributed a document about affinity groups. We are moving into taking themes of the retreat and breaking into small groups. Leaders of small groups will be trained in facilitation and in engaging people. People can self identify for the small groups. There are ten proposed affinity groups. These would create spaces to listen and share perspectives. Advent members would respond and explore questions and share their faith. It is hoped that being able to choose up to three groups would give everyone ample opportunities to share. People would NOT have to identify.

Discussion ensued. Council members commented that some people are tired of being forced into boxes. Our intent is to create safe spaces for everyone to be heard. The affinity groups pose a risk of alienating some people because they might feel constrained into boxes. How will we weigh the comments of the more active members vs. the less active? It was suggested that we explore if people want to meet in affinity groups, and if so, what their affinity would be. We want everyone to be heard. We want everyone to feel comfortable.

DELIVERABLES: Kevin reported that the Vision Team is proceeding. There are some ambiguities about borders. Who is responsible for implementation? Kevin created a document. What is the time line? Is this a five year plan? Or some other length? This should be discussed at the March Council Meeting.

Agenda items for March Council Meeting:

Covenant about how to treat each other

Pray

Discuss Mission and Vision

Respectfully submitted,

Norma H. Martin