**Advent Lutheran Church – Church Council Meeting – September 15, 2021 Minutes**

**Present – Voting (n=9)**: Pastor Danielle Miller, Damaris Maclean, Hans Kriefall, Laura O’Keefe, Dorothy Trigg, Bree Vandenburg, Deanne Walters, Juan Minier, Kika Wright

**Present – Not Voting** **(n=2):** Madelyn Soussoudis, Kevin Bowen

**Not Present – Excused** **(n=1):** Michael Hammett

1. **Consent Agenda**

The Church Council accepted the consent Agenda, consisting of:

* August Meeting Minutes
* Financial Reports for August 2021:
  + Dedicated Accounts
  + Statement of Activities
  + Statement of Financial Position
* Pastor’s Report

**Action** ***(Motioned, Seconded, Approved)*:** The Church Council voted to accept the Consent Agenda.

1. **Strategic Discussions: Presentations, Feedback, and Actions**

**Livestream Producer Update**

A job description has been put together (creating graphics, preparing software, being onsite during services) and posted/advertised. There’s an initial interview tomorrow. Please share with anyone you think might be fitting. This is an hourly position at 7-10 hrs/week We won’t be re-hiring for Kevin’s position yet, as we’re going to do some evaluation and wait until we have a better sense of where we’re at and what we need moving forward. [Link to job description.](https://www.nyfa.org/view-job/?id=03cdc6a7-1b63-4667-80d6-436ef4552c6f)

**Event Coordinators**

Pastor Danielle shared that we have more space sharing coming up than we’ve had previously, which is a wonderful thing, but that our slate of event coordinators is smaller than it has been. She recommends that the salary for these positions be bumped up to $18/hour (from $15) to be able to find more coordinator candidates who are well-qualified. The event coordinator makes sure everything is clean prior to an event, opens the doors, and is there to answer any questions that the space sharers may have, then at the end of the event they clean up, take out garbage, lockup, etc. Even in pre-pandemic times this has been a tricky position to hire for because of the uncertainty of hours. This recommendation is in line with what other businesses are doing around hiring, and there were no objections from Council so this will move forward in hiring.

**Stewardship Update**

The Stewardship Committee had its first meeting this past week, and will meet again in 2 weeks. The committee did some brainstorming and discussions around messaging for the last quarter of the year, discussing what stewardship is, why it’s important, and how we can talk about and encourage it in a welcoming and interesting way. They have also asked for quarterly giving updates to start going out again, which Deanne and Carla have already begun working on putting together.

**Covid Protocols**

Pastor Danielle and Damaris shared the updated Covid protocols for Music Mondays, which starts back with its first concert this Monday, 9/20. The protocols follow the city rules for entertainment events and will require all audience members to show proof of vaccination at the door and wear a mask for the full concert. There will also be no intermission or post-concert reception. Musicians will also be vaccinated, and required to wear a mask except when they are performing.

Pastor Danielle also shared an updated protocol agreement for space sharers, including vaccine requirements for most events with eligible participants in accordance with the city rules for indoor events and buildings.

We will have a further conversation at next month’s meeting about possible changes to covid protocols and vaccine requirements for worship.

**Mission Fund Proposal**

Damaris shared an updated proposal for a change in how Mission Fund distributions are made and used, refined from the last meeting by a small group between meetings. The proposal included more time and financial details, as well as backup from Deanne about the value of the Fund over time.

This proposal states that a welcoming and safe building is critical to the future of our mission to share God’s love, and we need to make sure that our building meets codes for fire safety, is secure, is cool enough in the summer, warm in the winter, dry all year round, offers a flexible space for our community partners and space sharers, and so forth. Given the current and upcoming needs of our building and our current economic reality, the congregation council realized that we needed to create a more predictable and stable planned maintenance schedule. Therefore, Council recommends a 10 year suspension of Annual Distributions from the Mission Fund. The 5% that would have otherwise been distributed will be redirected to a Scheduled Maintenance Budget, which will be directly connected to supporting Advent’s 10 year strategic plan. After ten years the Council and Congregation will revisit the resolution to determine how best to move forward with the Mission Fund. In the meantime, the Council will also propose annual operating budgets that reflect a commitment to reduce the draw on the principal of the mission to cover budget shortfalls.

We discussed that this proposal feels like a strong and solid use of the Mission Fund, within the original intention while still being good stewards of the fund. We are still providing grants toward mission, but it will be towards Advent’s mission instead of outside organizations. We don’t want to get to the point where we have to make a choice between doing the maintenance or having to close, which has happened in other congregations. If we’re using this money for maintenance then when we do stewardship we can use that for mission programs which is an easier ask for giving than for replacing the women’s bathroom. This proposal will help alleviate a lot of the current stress because we spend a lot of time talking about the building and about money, but if we have a strong plan then we can turn more attention as a council, staff, and congregation to our mission programs.

There was a question about if we want to continue to limit the distribution to 5%, and if that will be enough for some larger projects, but think that sticking to the 5% initially is the best path forward, and if a larger project comes up we can discuss and have another vote as needed. It was also determined that the proposed 10 years would start with the 2021 cycle, and that the previous monies we have granted to ourselves for the roof repairs would be separate from this proposal.

**Action** ***(Motioned, Seconded, Approved)*:** The Church Council voted to bring this proposal to the congregation in our September update meeting, to be voted on in the January congregational meeting.

**Congregational Update Plans**

We discussed plans for the congregational update meeting, happening next Wednesday 9/22. This meeting will include a financial update from Madelyn and Deanne, a Pastor’s report, a building update, and the Mission Fund proposal.

**Thank You, Kevin!**

This was Kevin’s final council meeting ahead of his transition to a new position in October. We thank Kevin for his 10 years of service to the Advent community, and for his immeasurable contributions and positive effect on the congregation. He will be missed, and we thank God for his presence!

1. **Next Meeting**

The next Council meeting will take place on Wednesday, October 20, at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom (or in person). Dorothy will close us in prayer

**Adjournment — Closing Prayer**

Deanne Walters closed the meeting in prayer.

*Respectfully submitted by D.Trigg 09/15/21*