**Advent Lutheran Church – Church Council Meeting – April 19, 2023 Minutes**

**Present – Voting (n=10)**: Dorothy Clementson, Amanda Garcia-Harris, Pastor Danielle Miller, Carolyn Riehl, Damaris Maclean, Laura O’Keefe, Kathleen Matson, Hans Kriefall, Bree Vandenberg, Mary Jordan Samuel

**Present – Not Voting** **(n=1):** Hayley Moe

**Not Present – Excused** **(n=1):** Dorothy Trigg

**Opening Reflection & Prayer**

Dorothy C. opened us in prayer.

1. **Consent Agenda: March Minutes**

**Action** ***(Motioned, Seconded, Approved)*:** The Council voted to approve the March Minutes with the amendments suggested of updating the number in attendance.

**Consent Agenda: Pastor’s Report**

Dorothy C. asked for clarification on the coverage for Zion-St. Mark’s that Pastor Danielle is working into her schedule. Zion-St. Mark’s is without a pastor and Pastor Danielle will be working with them for a year to help them get connected to whatever the future of their church is going to be. Her term with Zion-St. Mark’s wraps up in February 2024 and she is currently working on getting more lay person support for Zion-St. Mark’s as well.

She further reported on the deluge of services done around Holy Week and the value that the field ed students provided during that busy time.

**Action** ***(Motioned, Seconded, Approved)*:** The Council voted to approve the March Pastor’s Report.

**Consent Agenda: March Financial Reports**

Hans shared the March financial reports in advance and there were no questions.

Pastor Danielle clarified one question regarding the Space Share income, confirming that additional payments are coming in which should get the income up to the expected year-to-date amount.

Carolyn acknowledged how much easier the reports are since adjusting the

column headers to better follow the information provided.

Clarifying questions were also asked regarding where/when the payment for services like our visiting musicians will be (Answer - Line 5027, will be in the following month report), whether or not Advent pays for the parsonage (Answer - yes, line 5001 which also includes Vicar Hayley’s parsonage), and the acknowledgement that plate cash was below budget (potential explanation - people are moving away from cash).

Hans also presented the suggestion that Council approve a task force to think strategically about the long-term financial health of the congregation. Council promised the congregation that it would gradually wean itself off using the Mission Fund to cover our deficit and therefore a closer look at the church’s spending and where adjustments can be made is critical.

Carolyn asked how the budget is typically created and perhaps that process should begin earlier, potentially addressing some of this strategic thinking. She also thought a primer on the endowments that the church has (the Mission Fund, their history, their current balance, etc.) would be beneficial for any workgroup looking at the long-term fiscal health of Advent.

Hans attempted to give an overview of at least the Mission Fund piece of the endowments which was a $1 million gift from a member’s Last Will & Testament to be used by the church in whatever our needs were. There were no needs at that moment so Advent established a mission fund and gave out 5% of the fund to external people or organizations who would apply for various needs within their organizations. They stopped doing that when the church began to need the money and the current balance is at $550,000.

Dorothy C. reminded everyone that sustainability of the Mission Fund will be an additional goal for this group.

Hans also noted that the drawdowns of the fund are currently at the 2022 rate so that will be retro-actively fixed to the 2023 rate for the remainder of the year soon.

Council discussed who should be included on that task force and Pastor Danielle

suggested reaching out to the Finance Team and INvestment Team for volunteers. Hans will reach out to Jim Kelly and potentially ask Madelyn Soussoudis and Charles Miller.

**Action** ***(Motioned, Seconded, Approved)*:** The Council voted to approve the March financial reports, including the development of a task force to think strategically about the long-term financial health of the congregation.

1. **Pastor Roles & Constitution Review**

An excerpt from the constitution as well as the Pastor’s call letter was shared with the council in advance on the Pastor’s roles & responsibilities. Pastor Danielle presented these documents, noting that much of this is ELCA-dictated.

She also noted that she relies on a team for much of this execution but that the

team relays back to her the relevant outcomes or needs. Pastor Danielle gave additional context to how searches for pastors can vary based on the church’s needs ranging from Pastor-centered, community-centered or staff-centered. Advent is in a unique place in that its size may suggest Pastor-centered but a pastor can’t do it all.

Dorothy C. expressed her surprise at the realization that the management of the church and involvement in finances is really not in pastoral care but Pastor Danielle used an example of stewardship as an area with a lot of overlap in things she may not necessarily be responsible for but can be involved in.

The conversation moved to the management of staff which is listed as falling to

the personnel committee but Pastor Danielle is the one most often on site. The new handyperson will likely be managed by Amanda for that reason as an entire group of people (like the Property Committee) managing someone is not effective as Damaris pointed out.

Carolyn noted that there is a lot of wiggle room and it does not surprise her that everything is not spelled out. She asked for an update on the work done to engage more lay people in worship and Pastor Danielle confirmed that a sign up sheet is still in existence but that they are having someone who coordinates this and advocates for those pieces, an example of a shared responsibility.

Carolyn also asked about the Spanish ministry and how the decision to put it on hiatus came into existence. Pastor Danielle provided the history of that with COVID playing a big role in the decline in Spanish ministry in our neighborhood. Communication about those decisions could be better.

1. **Communication with Food Ministry** (moved up in the agenda)

Laura asked for a request that Council communicate better with the food ministry teams - particularly around construction to the basement and shared their lack of knowledge on the work repairing the water damaged wall in the basement.

Mary Jordan confirmed that an email was sent to the leaders of both food ministries and church staff about the pending work but that no one circled back when an actual date for when the work was to be done.

A recommendation was made to potentially include a “Notes from your Council” in the listserv each month and quarterly “Meet the Council” meetings after services. Pastor Danielle confirmed she is always looking for items for the ListServ.

1. **Approval of Copier Replacement Contract**

The Finance Committee presented a recommendation for Council to approve a new contract with our current vendor for a new copier and contract. Hans asked for clarification on the monthly payments which Mary Jordan provided ($410/month for 60 months). Hans confirmed these would be within budget.

**Action** ***(Motioned, Seconded, Approved)*:** The Council voted to approve the new copier contract with TGI.

1. **Basement Committee Report and Conversation**

Laura gave a brief overview on the Basement Committee report and explained that the current state of the project has a lot of goals that do not seem quite feasible. The Basement Committee is hoping to get direction from Council on how to move forward.

Council will make this a priority next month when we can invite Linda for a full report on the Committee.

1. **Hospitality - Postponed to a later date**
2. **Upcoming Meetings**

Dorothy C. noted the next Council meeting will be on May 17 at 7pm and will be a hybrid meeting. Anyone who is available should try to attend in-person at the church.

There is also an in-person meeting with Dart Westphal on nonprofit governance scheduled following the service on Sunday May 7.

Dorothy C. is also hoping to schedule an in-person Council Retreat in May or June and she asked all Committee Members to share available weekends during those months.

1. **Handy Person Hiring**

Pastor Danielle presented the final candidate for the church handyperson which

will be a ten-hours-a-week position. Tina Gonzalez comes to the church with experience as a member of the United States Marine, a licensed electrician, a house flipper, and a past employee at our fire panel company. She is a dog walker and is very involved in refugee resettlements.

Hans encouraged us to create a formal schedule for her so we are fair to her

time and our own needs within those ten hours as well as spend some time with

Amanda while Amanda is in the office.

**Action** ***(Motioned, Seconded, Approved)*:** The Council voted to approve hiring Tina Gonzalez as the new handy person.

**Adjournment — Closing Prayer**

Pastor Danielle closed the meeting in prayer.

*Respectfully submitted by MJ Samuel 5/7/23*