**Advent Lutheran Church – Church Council Meeting – November 9, 2022 Minutes**

**Present – Voting (n=9)**: Pastor Danielle Miller, Damaris Maclean, Hans Kriefall, Dorothy Trigg, Laura O’Keefe, Dorothy Clementson, Bree Vandenberg, Amanda Garcia-Harris, Kathy Matson

**Present – Not Voting** **(n=1):** Vicar Sergio Centeno

**Not Present – Excused** **(n=2):** Vicar Hayley Moe, Michael Hammett

1. **Opening Reflection & Prayer**

Amanda Garcia-Harris opened us in prayer.

1. **Consent Agenda: October Minutes and Pastor’s Report**

Pastor Danielle shared some highlights from the Pastor’s Report, particularly that Amanda Gray has started as office administrator. Her hours are Mon - Fri from 10-3, and PD encourages getting to know her by calling the office etc. Amanda is eager to learn and PD is excited to work with her. There will be an extended onboarding experience due to PD’s part-time maternity leave.

Pastor Danielle also shared a presentation from Pastor Amy Miracle that was given to her clergy professional development group. She particularly highlighted a phenomenon Pastor Miracle named the Groan Zone, a place of tension that we may solve or just need to manage (old/new, too much time doing X, not enough doing Y). PD reminded us that we are all still in a transitional period finding a new way forward after the Covid shutdown, and that it can be helpful to reframe this by knowing it’s okay for things to take a little longer so we can work together. Pastor Miracle has also been tracking that regular adult volunteers are in sharp decline from pre-pandemic levels. It can be helpful knowing we’re not imagining it when it feels like we’re going back to the same people. We’re doing well, we’re doing what we need to do, but recognizing pain points and naming them as we work through can be helpful.

The stewardship letter that was sent to the congregation notes there has been an increase in attendance – is that true? At least since we’ve been back in person yes, but we’ve been eyeballing not actually counting. We used to have a Sunday Manager that the Council rotated through – the two main responsibilities for that role were collecting the offering at the end of service and counting attendance. We won’t formalize a return to this (yet) but do want to try to keep better track of attendance moving forward.

A question was raised about the snow removal contract that was recently signed. This is something that is required by our insurance, and Mary Jordan led a small task force to compare prices. This was the best one for the service opportunity at $7000. Hans is going to talk to the insurance agent to see if there’s any adjustment opportunity here, since this is a large expense for something that is only typically needed once or twice a year.

**Action** ***(Motioned, Seconded, Approved)*:** The Council voted to approve the consent agenda.

1. **Council Vice President Election**

Pastor Charles Miller has resigned as Treasurer for personal reasons. Hans Kreifall has agreed to be the interim treasurer, and we are deeply grateful for his willingness and service. Amanda Garcia-Harrris has volunteered to serve as Vice President until the next elections in early 2023.

**Action** ***(Motioned, Seconded, Approved)*:** The Council voted to approve Amanda Garcia-Harris as Vice President of the Council.

1. **Nominating Committee Appointments**

Michael Hammett is rolling off Council and will be leading the nominating committee. The nominating committee is responsible for advertising openings to self-nominate and tapping people to be on Council. A nominating committee was not appointed at the annual meeting, so we need to recruit a few team members to serve with Michael. The suggestions are Ricki Ravitts, Norma Martin, and Juan Minier; Damaris will ask these people to serve. Information for council member recruitment will be put in the e-newsletter and announced in services in December.

Hans & Damaris are up for their second 3-year term. We need one new member to replace Michael, and perhaps one or two others to ensure a robust and active Council.

1. **Date for Annual Meeting**

The 2023 Annual Meeting should either be in late January or early February. Damaris’s recommendation for timing is:

* Hold two update sessions on Sun 1/22 and Wed 1/25 (could be same content or different)
* Annual Meeting Sun 1/29

The announcement requirements according to the constitution are a physical mailing (though we have shifted to email & physical mailing to those without emails) and announcing dates twice in service.

We will have a separate discussion about mechanics of the annual meeting at a later date

1. **Basement Update**

There have been conversations in cycles with team members. The team met last week and reiterated the goal of making sure our safety issues are taken care of (i.e. we would not be in danger of burning the place down). Questions came up about how much that would cost, circling back to the original plans to confirm only what is required just to bring us up to code, and then how close we can get to that with $400,000. This is as much a financial decision as it is a building decision, as this doesn’t feel like a good time to spend $800k or $1m on just the basement for what would amount to being not huge adjustments. We acknowledge there’s a possibility this is ultimately shortsighted strategically, but it feels like the most reasonable financial decision for where we are.

Part of the basement renovation was framed as becoming a Welcome Center, is that no longer a priority or goal? The original starting point of the Synod grant was getting up to code and getting the certificate of occupancy so that we can ultimately do more to welcome people & the community and get further grants, etc.

It feels like the right way to use this money to get us on literally a firm foundation to move forward.

1. **GoFundMe Update**

Community Lunch has been thinking about various kitchen needs that would enable them to work better & more efficiently. There hasn’t been great communication between that leadership group & council. PD & Damaris had a general discussion with Fred about raising some money for a double convection stove that would be about $17,000 (including installation), but then the conversation stopped and they hadn’t seen anything in writing so assumed it didn’t move forward. It wasn’t discussed with food pantry leaders either. Then a Go Fund Me launched aiming to raise $75,000. This is an activity that needed to come through Council for review & approval, but it did not. Executive committee suggests that it be changed to be capped at $17,000 to be used just for the stove as initially discussed.

It is a major communication & functionality issue that this wasn’t brought to Council, and will be something we need to work to improve for the future. There will be continued conversations on these topics to ensure more open communication moving forward.

Should we do research on what it would mean for food ministry programs to be an affiliated 501c3?

1. **Stewardship Committee Update**

Kathy, Ellie, and Hayley were working on getting the Stewardship mailing out this week. The mailing list was a bit problematic as they were combining an old list with a new list, but they did manage to get it complete for this mailing. Thank you for your work!

Are we pointing towards a Stewardship Sunday to turn in our pledges? Yes, November 20. Could we ask future in-worship speakers to also mention the dates when they speak. It’s also in the e-letter, and the letter was printed in the bulletin this week with the date.

Thank you to the whole Stewardship team for your work!

1. **Finance Update**

* Financial reports – thank you to Linda Kelly for putting the reports together this month. Hans is still getting settled as Treasurer and working through issues to create an action list to get finances back up to date.
* Pastor Charles had made a few notes on financial item to share with the Council in November:
  + Clarify the status of the food ministry lines in the statements of activities and dedicated accounts – this was a note from Pastor Charles to discuss & share with the Council but Hans is currently unsure of the exact changes being referred to. The October report is more robust than previous reports due to adjustments made by Linda Kelly.
  + Share a correction made by Deanne to the May 2022 statements and its effect on all statements after May – there was a large check for the building fund that went into the wrong account and had to be reversed. This is not an overall budget change, but it will be a significant shift on a particular line.
* Treasury at this point is focused on getting giving recorded, and the month of November will be dedicated to bringing Hans up to speed. He hopes to be able to answer further questions in December meeting
* The finance committee will be meeting next week to lay out an action plan, and Hans hopes to divide some tasks among committee members (how do we get Stripe monthly report from MM into account, set up direct deposits, close out old CC, etc).

New report formats are really helpful to more clearly pinpoint questions and where we are & need to focus our attention. Thanks to Linda for that adjustment.

We’re in a strong spot, we can pay our bills, we’re not at risk of closing due to finances, so we need to be patient and calm and ride this out as we work through this transitional period together.

1. **Budgeting Priorities for 2023**

As we head into a year of economic insecurity, our budget priority is for a sustainable year to be able to support our ministries. We will look less at growth mindset. It could be helpful to look at priorities for a few years in advance, but for now doing what we can to maintain our current work is top priority.

1. **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be Wednesday December 14 at 7pm in person.

**Adjournment — Closing Prayer**

Bree Vandenburg closed the meeting in prayer.

*Respectfully submitted by D.Trigg 11/9/22*