**Advent Lutheran Church – Church Council Meeting – February 16, 2022 Minutes**

**Present – Voting (n=8)**: Pastor Danielle Miller, Damaris Maclean, Hans Kriefall, Dorothy Trigg, Bree Vandenberg, Michael Hammett, Dorothy Clementson, Amanda Garcia-Harris

**Present – Not Voting** **(n=2):** Deanne Walters

**Not Present – Excused** **(n=2):** Kathy Matson, Laura O’Keefe

1. **Opening Reflection & Prayer**

Damaris Maclean opened the meeting with a reflection and prayer.

1. **Consent Agenda**

A few questions were raised about the financial reports:

* What is the credit shown in the Tiffany dedicated account? It is insurance money we were expecting.
* What is the Welcome Center bequest? Was there a dedicated gift for the Welcome Center? This was a way to help show money going across years dedicated to that project, but was perhaps miscategorized previously and Deanne will look into how to move and clarify that.
* What is the credit in the Welcome Center bequest account? There was a $1000 surplus after 2021 and wanted to show that it’s specifically for the Welcome Center that carries over.
* When will the Welcome Center MNYS grant come in? We recently finished putting in expenses to date and expect a check from the synod to reimburse for those expenses to come in shortly.
* What were the $5600 in Capital Improvements this month, noting that it is a large percentage of that $15k budget line early in the year? New banners were installed above the doors in the front. The plumber came in. The property committee knows that they are going to spend a large portion of their budget in the first quarter.
* What was the $20k draw from the General Reserve line? Any surplus from previous year gets put in general reserve, and after finalizing the budget the 2021 surplus moved to the agreed upon other accounts and were paid out to those accounts.

From the pastor’s report, we discussed that Pastor Danielle has been running social media, website, and e-letters since Kevin’s departure! Thanks to Hayley for starting to contribute to social media, and Dorothy Trigg volunteered to help with the e-letters.

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

1. **Overview of Year’s Goals**

While we are not post-pandemic, we’re looking at a different year ahead. Staying aware of that and what Council’s role is moving us forward, Damaris shared a few goals for the year:

* Financial Review – This involves three prongs: an accounting restatement, evaluating best practices for budget presentation and how we label things, and training & guidance for how Council reads and understands the financial reports each month.
* DEI review – Dorothy Trigg is leading the organization of this with a team of others along with consultant Korin Mills. The goal is a review of practices, and the team will work intensely for the next few weeks with the consultant so that we can continue work once her contract is done. Because DEI and anti-racism work doesn’t have an end point.
* Planning for Field Ed, Interns, and Spanish language pastor – We will need to proactively plan for the future of our Spanish ministry before Pastor Sergio’s internship ends in December. There will also be three new field ed students next year with a wide range of interests and ways they can learn and support Advent.
* Return to the Strategic Plan: what to implement and prioritize at this point?
	+ We are scheduling an in-person Council retreat to focus on this. Saturday 4/9 from 12-4pm looks to be ideal so far, but perhaps 11-3 instead as there is a Chorale rehearsal at 3. Please complete the poll so we can confirm the date!
	+ We acknowledge that a lot of time & space has been given to thinking about & talking about the strategic plan, without much putting it into action. How can we move this forward into action? What is the practical output of the strategic plan? The action & practical output will be a main focus of this retreat conversation.
1. **Covid Protocol Update**

We know that Covid is not over but we’re in a very different place than we have been. Schools don’t have masks. Some businesses have vaccination policies, some don’t. The property committee has previously given building regulations. But in this new time it is a moment for Council to step in and make a decision strategically to determine policy moving forward. Three areas for specific consideration currently are: masks in worship, vaccination policy for food ministry volunteers, and fellowship time & meal sharing.

We discussed insight from a doctor that there is still plenty of transmission, and they have seen more positive tests recently. We have a large space but not a large fresh air turnover. They would recommend keeping masks mandatory.

Another doctor recommends masks be optional because the mask protects you and so if you’re concerned you wear it, and with vaccination rates generally high and such improvements in treatment the risk is relatively low.

Guidance around masks has also changed recently, as it used to be about protecting others *and* yourself, now it’s more about wearing a mask if you feel like it will make you more safe.

We discussed the various mitigation tools & risk factors we have at Advent. Air flow & circulation is a mitigation tool we don’t have in our favor (high ceilings but poor air turnover). Vaccinations are a mitigation tool, but while we know we have a high overall vaccination rate it’s not 100% and don’t want to mandate vaccines for worship attendance. Singing is a high transmission risk activity which we do a lot of. Masks are the remaining best mitigation tool

A few questions we posed for thought moving forward: If we went mask-optional are there people who would not come to church who might have come back with mandates? What policy would make our immuno-compromised worshippers feel safe? How do we weigh the physical risk with the emotional reward?

There are many people who want to share a meal, especially in Spanish ministry, and people who hang out in the back of the church after the service ends looking for fellowship. We will try to plan some outdoor fellowship time as the weather gets nicer.

Masks in worship and indoor eating will be re-evaluated at the April Council Meeting. Council proposed that food ministry volunteers no longer need to show proof of vaccination

**Action** ***(Motioned, Seconded, Approved)*:** The Council voted to no longer require food ministry volunteers to be vaccinated.

1. **Stewardship Update**

Michael Hammett shared an update from the stewardship team. There was a mission moment from Pastor Becca & The Vine to share about the college food pantry and its success. Another mission moment is coming up this week – Hayley will be giving a mission moment with children this month. Next month there will be a mission moment from someone in their 20s, keeping with the theme of “rooted” and how giving changes and what it means for people as they grow in age and in faith. The team is also working on the visual & social media presence of giving at Advent.

Michael is going to work with Pastor Sergio on a potential art project to talk more about giving throughout the year as part of the life of the congregation. The idea is a tree mural with notes that are added to various points, roots, trunk, branches that talk about giving and stewardship.

Stewardship team has a list of folks working to switch from Vanco to Tithely or direct giving to reach out and help them with that transition. If you are struggling to cancel your Vanco account in order to transition giving, please reach out to Pastor Danielle, Michael Hammett, or Bree Vandenberg.

The team is looking at a giving/pledge drive around Pentecost.

Could it help this team to have some data/tracking about how many people are coming to church (online and in person) and how many people are giving? Tracking attendance is something the Sunday Manager used to do, and is part of a system that needs to be evaluated and reinstated. Information like this could help the hybrid worship team too.

1. **Appointing Counters**

Advent is in need of approved counters appointed by Council now that there is more regular in person worship attendance. Executive Council should be empowered to recruit, appoint, and train new counters. Reinstate lay leadership. They will look at regular worshippers in the next week or two and put together a list of potential names.

**Action** ***(Motioned, Seconded, Approved)*:** The Council voted to empower Executive Council to recruit, appoint, and train new counters.

1. **Handyperson position description**

Hans shared the position description for an **Advent Handyperson:**

***Reports To:*** Office Administrator

***Position Status:*** Part-time employment (approximately 10 hours per week)

***Position Summary:*** The Advent Handyperson is responsible for basic property repairs and oversight of vendor and maintenance service calls.
***General Duties:***

Support Advent’s mission and its spirit of welcome to all.

Model ethical and legal behavior

Exhibit good interpersonal relationships and teamwork.

Provide dependable attendance for both on-site and on-call necessities.

***Job Skills and Requirements:***

Basic repair skills

Experience in ordering and oversight of supplies

Attention to detail.

Ability to climb ladders, crawl and bend, lift 50 pounds, and navigate small spaces

***Evaluation and Compensation:***

Annual review will be done with the Senior Pastor in collaboration with the Personnel Committee.

Compensation is $25 per hour.

Compensation is reviewed annually by the Senior Pastor and Personnel Committee and approved by the Council

***Responsibilities:***

Implement needed repairs where identified by pastors, staff, and the property committee.

Independently tour building weekly and address anything needing attention, e.g. expired light bulbs, leaky faucets

Clean the gutters monthly or more frequently as needed

Oversee the negotiation and ongoing review of vendor contracts in collaboration with Senior Pastor and Office Administrator;

Attend service and maintenance visits for the boiler, HVAC, electrical and plumbing systems, fire extinguishers, and other infrastructure systems;

Promptly deliver files relevant to building operations to Advent Office Administrator including vendor invoices and payment records, insurance documents, service contract and inspection reports.

Stock and maintain inventory of supplies for building repairs and maintenance.

Communicate and collaborate with the Property Committee, including feedback on vendor services.

**Action** ***(Motioned, Seconded, Approved)*:** The Council voted to approve the handyperson position description as written.

1. **Next Meeting**

The next Council meeting will take place on Wednesday, April 20, at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom.

**Adjournment — Closing Prayer**

Dorothy Trigg closed the meeting in prayer.

*Respectfully submitted by D.Trigg 03/16/22*