**ADVENT LUTHERAN CHURCH**

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

**MARCH 20, 2019**

Present/ Voting (N= 9): Jon Dohlin, Michael Hammett, Norma Martin, Bayardo Peralta, David Richards, Blessing Tawengwa, Deanne Walters, Pastor Danielle Miller, Pastor Gary Mills.

Present/ Not Voting (N=2): Kevin Bowen, Dorothy Trigg

Excused (N=3): Miriam Sitz Grebey, Juan Minier, Brelyn Vandenburg

Jon Dohlin led the devotions. We opened with the Lord’s Prayer. Jon spoke about Frederick Douglass and Douglass’s perspective on the failure of the churches to fight slavery. There is a challenge for churches struggle with. Jon offered the quote, “let us always be the change.”

Pr. Danielle spoke about covenant prayer and the importance of making a commitment to each other to listen closely and accept divergent points of view. Participate and share ideas, even if not fully formed. And make space for the participation of others. Tips for covenant prayer: STEP FORWARD, STEP BACK, GIVING AND RECEIVING FROM A PLACE OF LOVE. GOD CENTERED. HEARING PEOPLE AS THEY WANT TO BE HEARD. TRUSTING ONE ANOTHER.

The group split into pairs, discussed their prayer needs, and prayed for each other.

The consent agenda was reviewed. It was moved and seconded to approve as distributed: Pastor’s report

Latino ministry report

Minutes of the February meeting

Investment Committee report

The motion to accept these was approved.

The Youth/ Communications report was deferred to next month because it had just been uploaded right before the meeting.

Financial

The January reconciliation has been finished but there may be some mis allocations. Deanne and Carla will review these so the reports can be made final. Carla’s learning is progressing, so the February and March inputs have been cleaner. Reconciliation has been a struggle. Garald Farnham, a member who is an experienced bookkeeper, will meet with Carla to share some best practices. With two leaders transitioning out, a big adjustment has been needed. By early next month we should be up to date and on target with our reports. Pr. Danielle has been very involved. When we see the March report, the current plan to manage these tasks will be reassessed.

In response to a question, Deanne explained that dedicated reports are updated quarterly. Linda had updated it monthly. Those who are interested can look at the available report to see the changes from month to month.

Audit Committee: Drew Westphal was nominated to serve a second three year term. The nomination was seconded, and Drew was reelected.

Advent policies:

Advent policies: Nepotism, Anti Harrassment, and Equality/ Diversity/ Inclusion policies had been distributed. It was moved and seconded to adopt these. The motion was carried.

Kevin and Dorothy presented information on our Mission and Vision process. The Listening phase is from 3/24 to 5/12. There will be two rounds. The listening process will consist of small groups, each led by a member of the team who has had training on facilitating small groups and fostering listening. There are four themes: Community and belonging; Faith journeys and practices; Faith formation and social justice; and Adaptability and innovation.

Distilling what has been learned will be addressed from May 13 to December 31. The Distilling phase will include developing the Spatial Planning and Financial Planning teams which could begin in November. We anticipate a plethora of information and ideas from the Listening phase. These need to be seen as part of a larger whole, and distilled into major themes. The Mission and Vision team, consisting of about eleven members, will do the distilling. A list of the members is available electronically. At the end of this phase there will be a product: a report.

Empowering will occur from January 1 to March 31. In the Empowering phase workshops and meetings with committees will be held to figure out how to implement what we have learned.

The annual meeting will occur in late January 2020. In the interest of transparency, and congregational involvement, perhaps there should be a report back to the congregation at the 10 AM hour in late May or early June before people disperse for vacations. The entire congregation will be involved in the distilling process in the fall.

The visioning process is laid out on a timeline in the sanctuary.

At the end of the process, there will be a final product: a Mission and Vision document, and a strategic plan. This will be a clear document outlining directions for committees. It will articulate values. It will address criteria for future ministries, since no one congregation is able to address all possible ministry areas. Further steps will be handed off to committees via workshops and meetings. The Council will have to establish the leadership of the committees. The report will also assist in creating effective branding strategies for Advent.

The Council thanked Kevin and Dorothy and Jon for their work on this process, and for the presentation. Dave spoke about the importance of involving the congregation.

This will not be a top down process: everyone will be responsible for implementation. It is not only the Council’s job.

Jon urged continuing to communicate with the congregation so there are no shocks or surprises. Pr. Gary urged that the report be succinct and memorable, and clear. Norma suggested Mission and Vision and core values come first, then strategic directions, and then the implementation plans, criteria for future ministries, and branding. It was noted that recommendations for implementation have to come from a larger body. Buy in to that has to be from a large body.

Blessing asked how the spatial and financial teams fold into this. Pastor Danielle said their role is to develop aspects that enable us to carry out the Mission and Vision in clear and specific ways. Pastor Gary pointed out that the Mission and Vision team needs to provide directions for moving forward but these are only recommendations until the congregation agrees to move forward.

Recommendations for implementation could include continuing some ministries, paring down others. Recommendations don’t have to be make something new. We can explore opportunities to integrate some things.

Dave and others members said that the initial directions and the implementation plan need to go together. Implementation recommendations should be rolled out early when the initial strategic directions start taking form, before a final statement is released, so feedback can be given.

There was consensus that Brand identify is off to the side under recommendations for implementation, as are criteria for future ministries.

It remains to be determined who will be responsible for implementation, how the strategic plan will be updated and how often, and how staff and members will be empowered to understand and carry out the mission and vision.

Pastor Danielle directed the Council’s attention to several documents distributed via the Google drive. VISIONS AND EXPECTATIONS was created when the ELCA was formed, before the ordination of extraordinary candidates occurred. It outlines a Christian ethic. Most aspects of it were never implemented e.g. social justice, care for creation. It had been implemented only with regard to LBTGQ clergy. Now a new document has been created: Trustworthy Servants. This was created with no input or participation from entities such as Reconciling Works, ELM.

The document positions sexual “immorality” as the worst sin. Pastor said that there are other ways to handle actual serious sins like sexual abuse or harassment. Pastor commended the Fillable Resolution which asks that the Trustworthy Servants document not be put adopted and that the Visions and Expectations document not be affirmed.

It was moved and seconded that Advent sign the Fillable Resolution. The motion was carried.

The meeting was adjourned with a prayer.

Respectfully submitted

Norma H. Martin