**Advent Lutheran Church – Church Council Meeting – September 8, 2019 Minutes**

**Present – Voting (n=10)**: Pastor Danielle Miller, David Richards, Michael Hammett, Miriam Sitz Grebey, Deanne Walters, Norma Martin, Juan Minier, Blessing Tawengwa, Bree Vandenburg

**Present – Not Voting** **(n=9):** Kevin Bowen, Abby Ferjak, Bekah Anderson

**Not Present – Excused** **(n=2)**: Jon Dohlin, Bayardo Peralta

1. **Call to Order**

Michael Hammett led a devotion focused on Genesis 32, when Jacob wrestles with God. We discussed the importance of grappling with, wrestling with, discerning in a difficult, strenuous way—and especially the importance of and keeping God at the center of that struggle.

1. **Consent Agenda**

The Church Council accepted the consent agenda consisting of meeting minutes, staff reports, and financial statements.

* **Pastor’s Report** — Details pastoral concerns and provides updates about ministry, administrative, building, scheduling and other items.
* **Meeting Minutes** — Notes from the July Council meetings.
* **Financial Reports** — Statement of activities.
* **Communications & Youth Report** — Provides updates about communications and outreach efforts and youth activities.

Norma Martin voiced concern about errors in the Equipo El Salvador and Music Mondays budgets.

**Action** ***(Motioned, Seconded, Approved)*:** The Church Council voted to accept all items of the consent agenda as indicated above.

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

**Vision & Mission Sunday.**

David Richards emphasized the importance of Council presence on Sunday, especially during the 10am, 12pm, and 1:30pm conversations sessions.

Kevin Bowen shared the one-page Vision & Mission document, which the Council received with great joy and satisfaction. Kevin explained that the Vision & Mission team has activities planned for Sunday that will allow the Congregation to experience and sit with this Mission & Vision. He also noted that the team plans to hold space on future Sundays (10am and 12pm on Sundays between September 29 and October 27) to unpack the details of the Vision & Mission over the next several weeks.

Pastor Danielle Miller emphasized that while there will be ample opportunity for people to raise questions about the Vision & Mission in the future, this Sunday is more about experiencing, sitting with, and mulling over the findings of report, which represents the fruits of 9 months of labor. So, as a Council, our role Sunday is to encourage people to immerse themselves in the findings, and to be present, while holding specific suggestions and questions for a future moment.

Pastor Danielle also suggested that as a Council, we are intentional with implementation and encouragement of ministry leaders, perhaps even setting up a schedule to regularly (a few times a year) to check in on our progress toward accomplishing our goals.

The Council wishes to express our immense gratitude to the Mission & Vision team for this impressive undertaking, and for articulating and capturing the essence and goals of our church in such a thoughtful and clear way.

**Interim Pastor.**

Juan Minier reported that the Call Committee has interviewed and identified a very promising candidate. However, due to immigration paperwork issues, a call cannot be extended at this time. In the meantime, the Call Committee and Pastors suggest that Advent employ an interim pastor, the Rev. Dr. Carol L. Kessler (who is fully bilingual), for a few months on a part-time contract basis, to lead the Spanish-language worship and outreach, and provide pastoral care to the Latino community. (Interims are appointed by the Bishop and supported by the Council and senior pastor.)

The Council agreed to move forward with engaging Rev. Kessler as an interim pastor, empowering Executive Council to speak with the Synod to gain a better understanding of compensation (noting that Rev. Kessler will need health insurance coverage), terms of the contract, and other details.

Juan also challenged the Council to embrace a culture of “practice not perfect” with regard to learning a bit of Spanish, and becoming more aware of issues affecting local and global Latino communities. The Council affirmed this challenge!

**Action** ***(Motioned, Seconded, Approved)*:** The Church Council voted to move forward with engaging Rev. Kessler as an interim pastor for our Latino ministry.

**Property Committee.**

The Property Committee will meet at 7pm on 9/19 regarding serious roof leak issues.

**AMMPARO.**

Norma Martin reported to Council about the humanitarian crisis in Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala leading to tens of thousands of unaccompanied minors to flee to the U.S. Advent could join the ELCA Welcoming Congregations Network of AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities).

By becoming a “Welcoming Congregation,” Advent would agree to welcome migrant children and families, listen to their stories with respect, pray for and share the gospel, provide emotional and spiritual support, accompany migrants to access local and institutional services as needed, and advocate for justice for and with migrant families and children—actions that are already very much in line with our core values as a church, and that echo findings from the Mission & Vision process. Affirming our status as a Welcoming Congregation with AAMPARO would hopefully lead us to more intentionally and purposefully live out this value. (Becoming a part of this network would NOT include offering shelter, employment or other financial support.)

Pastor Danielle Miller noted that this could be a good initiative to put forward at the Annual Meeting, or something for which the Council provides leadership direction now and is tied in with the Mission & Vision initiatives. Either way, our involvement will be the most meaningful with the entire Congregation’s buy in and support.

**Action** ***(Motioned, Seconded, Approved)*:** The Church Council voted to join AMMPARO.

**Nominating Committee.**

Norma Martin asked the Council what qualities would we like to see added to this group? Suggestions included: someone with deep ties to a specific, existing ministry (such as Music Mondays, Equipo El Salvador, or Sunday school); someone from the Latin community.

1. **Next Meeting**

The next Council meeting will take place on **Wednesday, October 16, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.** Juan Minier will lead the devotional.

* **Adjournment — Closing Prayer.**

David Richards closed the meeting in prayer.

***Respectfully submitted by M.S. Grebey, 9/23/19***