**Advent Lutheran Church – Church Council Meeting – June 16, 2021 Minutes**

**Present – Voting (n=9)**: Pastor Danielle Miller, Damaris Maclean, Michael Hammett, Miriam Sitz Grebey, Hans Kriefall, Laura O’Keefe, Dorothy Trigg, Deanne Walters, Kika Wright

**Present – Not Voting** **(n=2):** Kevin Bowen, Madelyn Soussoudis

**Absent – Excused (n=2):** Juan Minier, Bree Vandenburg

1. **Consent Agenda**

The Church Council accepted the consent Agenda, consisting of:

* May Meeting Minutes
* Financial Reports for May 2021:
  + Dedicated Accounts
  + Statement of Activities
  + Statement of Financial Position

**Action** ***(Motioned, Seconded, Approved)*:** The Church Council voted to accept the Consent Agenda.

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

**Update from Kevin Bowen**

In the next few months/toward the end of August, Kevin Bowen will be leaving the Advent staff. During this transition period, Kevin will focus on:

1. Handing off all strategy documents to the Council and other related parties
2. Organizing Advent’s brand documents and assets
3. Setting up Advent’s hybrid worship and livestream

At a later date, the Council will spend time in reflection with Kevin about his time at Advent and our immense gratitude for his countless wide-ranging contributions to this community. We are so thankful for him and wish him all the best.

**Pastor’s Report Discussion Items**

* Internship candidate:
  + The Synod came to us presenting Sergio Centeno, a Spanish-speaking Latinx candidate for ordained ministry from Chicago, as a potential intern for Advent.
  + He is coming from another tradition and desires to be ordained into the Lutheran faith.
  + The synod will cover the cost of internship (salary, etc) but asks that we provide housing.
  + He is also certified as a mission developer, which would open us up to new opportunities for grant funds.
  + Pastor Danielle Miller believes him to be a great fit for Advent and feels hopeful about the possibility of partnership with him. She suggests we take this on for a year, via renting a studio apartment or offering an equivalent housing allowance. Pending on the outcome of the internship, there would be the possibility of calling Sergio to Advent.
  + According to treasurer Madelyn Soussoudis, our investments are doing well, envelope giving is on track, and we received the PPP loan, putting us in a strong financial position to absorb the additional costs. Additionally, there will be additional savings in expenses this year due to unexpected salary savings (Frank and Kevin’s forthcoming absences).
  + The treasurer will put forth a budget proposal exploring from where we could pull funds to cover one year of housing expenses.
  + The Council preferred the idea of offering a housing allowance to renting an apartment.

**Action** ***(Motioned, Seconded, Approved)*:** The Church Council voted to offer the candidate Sergio Centeno a year-long internship, starting on a date to be determined by Pastor Danielle Miller, and fund a monthly housing stipend of $2,200 for one year.

* Roof: Work paused due to a family emergency of the roofer’s, but will be resuming shortly.
* Food Pantry: We received two grants: (1) a case grant (for cases of food rather than dollar amount) and (2) the NYC agricultural grant (for food grown/produced in New York) shared with Trinity Lower East Side. Both needed to be used by the end of June. We can only store so much, and some of the food that must be purchased through these grants is perishable, so there will be two extra Food Pantry dates this month.
* Sanctuary Renovations: Pastor Danielle Miller asked the Council to begin considering factoring a sanctuary renovation into our building project plans, to make the space more flexible by removing the pews and replacing them with moveable chairs. This would alleviate overuse/overscheduling of the basement and help with ministry development.

**Hybrid Worship Sundays**

The Council took time to reflect on hybrid worship from both the online and in-person perspective.

* Online:
  + There were some mic/audio issues in the Spanish-language service that have been addressed. Otherwise the experience was good!
  + The spirit of the online hybrid service keeps with the engaging, personal experience that we had while fully online.
  + It’s nice when we can see both the pastor and the congregation at the same time.
* In-Person:
  + The joy of being together in the same space assuaged anxiety about the change and being out and about.
  + Being together in our beautiful sanctuary surrounded by other members of the community made the worship experience very powerful.
  + Moving forward we can upgrade the sheet/projector setup.

**Working Groups and Action Items for Next Meeting**

* Putting together a Stewardship Committee (Michael Hammett)
* Strategic Plan Working Group related to Sundays (Damaris Maclean, Dorothy Trigg, Pastor Danielle Miller)
* Appeal to the congregation to finance the DEI consultation that will start in the fall. (Damaris Maclean to speak at date TBD with Pastor Danielle Miller)
* Revised budget for second 6 months of the year (Madelyn Soussoudis, Deanne Walters)
* Staff position reviews (Hans, Personnel Committee)

1. **Next Meeting**

The next Council meeting will take place on Wednesday, July 21 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom.

**Adjournment — Closing Prayer.**

Pastor Danielle Miller closed the meeting in prayer.

*Respectfully submitted by M.S. Grebey, 06/16/21*