**Advent Lutheran Church – Church Council Meeting – September 20, 2023 Minutes**

**Present – Voting (n=9)**: **Dorothy Clementson**, **Pastor Danielle Miller,** **Mary Jordan Samuel, Carolyn Riehl, Hans Kriefall, Kathleen Matson**, **Bree Vandenberg,** **Laura O’Keefe**, **Damaris Maclean**

**Present – Not Voting** **(n=1):** Hayley Moe

**Not Present – Excused** **(n=2):**  Dorothy Trigg, Amanda Garcia-Harris

**Opening Reflection & Prayer**

Dorothy C opened us in prayer.

1. **Consent Agenda**

* Pastor’s Report – Complete and interesting; lots of exciting opportunities going on, thank you Pastor Danielle!
* August Minutes
* August Financial Reports
  + Hans acknowledged a shortfall in weekly envelope income against budgeted projections, which is due to the summer slow down.
  + Dorothy C. noted many of the line items being over budget like the draws from the Tiffany Fund and the Mission Fund, legal fees, congregational retreat etc. Hans reported that these discrepancies were justified by many of those being items which will incur no further spending for the year and some additional income being expected the last quarter (like grants and an uptick in the Weekly Envelopes with fall and the holiday season ahead of us).
  + The budget is “A tool not the gospel.”
  + Clarification on the overage in the worship budget was explained due to an in-kind donation of linens by a member of the congregation which we have to report as an expense.
  + Are the weekly envelopes submitted in person or electronically? Estimated that they are 50/50 in person vs 50 electronically submitted. Council discussed ways we can remind members to submit their offering via automatic bank check or scheduled payments including having a Zoom session on how to set up these payments or detailed instructions with troubleshooting the most common problems available online. Additionally, reminding people they can email [finance@adventnyc.org](mailto:finance@adventnyc.org) with questions is always helpful.
  + As we encourage folks to move to online giving, we need to think creatively on how we do the offering during worship, reminding folks of the act of offering looks different to many. We should also ensure there are enough yellow cards in the pews each week to share in the offering plates as an acknowledgement of offering.

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

1. **Bookkeeper Update**

Hans reported that the new bookkeeper has been onboarded including provided access to the relevant software and incorporated into the payment process. The bookkeeper will enter the invoices while Hans remains the person who can elect to pay those as they come in, giving him the chance to review them before sending them to her and prior to paying them as well. At the end of the month, she reconciles the bank statements.

1. **Music Mondays Update**

Dorothy and Hans met with Aaron and Norma to present the proposal discussed last month that Music Mondays, as a ministry of the church, give a portion of its revenue back to the church to cover expenses like admin time, bookkeeping, liability insurance, etc. Council would like to move $20,000 to Advent’s general income. Aaron had some follow-up questions and had a follow-up call with Pastor Danielle where she emphasized that Music Mondays is a wonderful ministry of the church and how valuable it is to Advent. These conversations are necessary to adjust for the level of success and growth that the current systems can no longer support. The goal is to ensure the sustainability of the program and its needs. Similar conversations are being had across all of Advent’s ministries.

Following her conversation with Aaron, Pastor Danielle suggested Council revisit the numbers to adjust for the increased liability insurance costs and remove the space sharing income and reshare with Aaron, Norma and the rest of Council.

1. **Constitution Update**

Mary Jordan reported that she would be organizing the efforts to update the Advent Constitution and will have a comparison of the ELCA’s standardized constitution with ours to discuss at Council’s October meeting.

1. **Call for Hayley**

Pastor Danielle will be meeting with the assistant bishop next week regarding the call to retain Vicar Hayley on a more permanent basis. Vicar Hayley is currently approved by Council to serve through the end of the year. Pastor Danielle will eventually be looking to members of the Council to help with that process once the Synod confirms how that process will look.

1. **Nominating Committee Update**

Bree reported that one invitation to serve on Council has been extended and they hope to have a response next week. The congregation can add up to 5 members to Council. Pastor Danielle led Council in a one-minute exercise to throw out as many names as possible of folks who would be good Council members. Bree will take that list back to Ellie and Norma and it was noted that sometimes a direct ask/invitation to serve is better (and if that ask comes from Pastor Danielle, it’s even more successful!).

1. **Upcoming Meetings**
   1. Council Lunch – October 1 after 11am worship (Dorothy T to follow up on location via email)
   2. October 18 at 7pm – hybrid
   3. November 15 at 7pm – hybrid
   4. December 20 at 7pm – hybrid
   5. Please complete the Hospitality Audit ([Digital](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1N6SHnrB0a-sex-fUqcwWIZh0xE6A1oqK/view?usp=drive_link) / [Print](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1l5QdcWgA0rik3b887jB3OsACdy-Nqo4d/view?usp=drive_link))

**Adjournment — Closing Prayer**

Pastor Danielle closed the meeting in prayer.