

**St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Congregational Council Meeting  
Monday, March 20, 2023 Minutes–For Council Approval**

**Mission: Engage and Equip people to Embrace Jesus Christ**

**Vision: To be a growing and Christ-centered, Spirit-led community**

**Worship** gather, praise and pray **Love** welcome, care and serve **Grow** learn, discover and equip **Give** time, treasure and talents

**Council Present or excused:**

Dean Brown, President	Connie Moll (excused)
Mark Scott, Vice President	Joel Murphy
Jolie Hoffmann, Secretary	Carlton Potts (excused)
Steve BeMiller, Treasurer	Carla Snell
Tammy Fahling	Shari Buckellew, Exec. Dir. Business Operations
Randy Holthaus	David Glesne, Senior Pastor
David Johnson	

**Call to order and opening prayer.** The March 2023 meeting of the St. John's Congregation Council was called to order by President Dean Brown at 6:30pm and opened with prayer by Carla Snell.

**Consent Agenda.** Without objection, the consent agenda was approved by voice vote, including the meeting agenda, the minutes of the February 2023 Council meeting, and leadership reports. Reports and minutes can be found on Dropbox.

**Staff presentation.** Lisa Myers, Executive Assistant for Finance, joined to discuss her many roles at St John's. Lisa not only oversees purchasing supplies for the church (including but not limited to purchasing the Communion wine and wafers, getting the palms for Palm Sunday and weekly donuts 😊) but is responsible for the handling and recording of all contributions to the church, including bookkeeping and finances for NA, Kaffehuset, and the Columbarium. In addition, Lisa recently started working with the local Emergency Relief and Housing Coalition and is currently in the learning phase with the Coalition regarding steps for securing affordable housing. Talked about coordinating with PATH and community resources to respond to needs in the community, noting that St. John's has money in the budget which is specifically earmarked to help fund in emergent situations (i.e., where someone may need assistance with temporary housing, utility payments, groceries and/or obtaining a bus pass).

**Treasurer's Report.** Steve reviewed the Finance Report, noting that Cash and Investments remain stable at \$2.1 million across funds. Operating Budget YTD currently in the red \$4,195, which is as expected for this time of year. Will continue to monitor closely and update accordingly.

**Personnel Updates.** Staff reviews and salary adjustments were completed. Pastor David's review is scheduled to be completed by the Executive Committee at the next Executive Council meeting in April. Thanks to those who provided feedback to assist with the evaluation process.

**Call Committee.** Council Members met with Pastor Ken Sandlin of the Synod office last week to start addressing the Call process. As Council President, Dean will be heading the Call Committee and Pastor David and Shari will start the initial paperwork required as we proceed in our efforts for an Associate Pastor. Focus tonight was to elect members to the Call Committee though it was mentioned that we may want to take time at a Council meeting next month to get feedback regarding our vision for the position.

Dean asked for names that could represent a cross-section of the congregation to be considered for the Call Committee. Nominations were provided by Council members in attendance and the following nominees were presented for vote and unanimously approved: Scott Fahsbender, Elizabeth Haines, Grace Laufer, Cheri Miller, Marty Tarmann, and Nannette Wagner. The Call Committee will also include Council President, Dean Brown, who will oversee the committee along with Pastor David.

**Status of Worship Strategy/Focus Subcommittee.** Mark provided a video presentation to summarize the findings of the recent Worship survey. *See the Worship Task Force in dropbox for full survey results.*

While a "work in progress," the purpose is to build on the conversation that came out of the Church Council retreat and a desire to focus on the growth of our worship service as part of the Great Commission.

Information was gathered from 327 respondents in total, with a good representation across services attended, years of active membership, and Church background. Highlights from the survey included frequency of attendance, worship preferences (i.e., time of service, worship format, music style), as well as online vs in person attendance.

In addition to the survey, the Subcommittee is exploring common themes within a variety of worship styles and will gather recommendations based on information acquired to help with planning next steps.

**Nominating Committee.** Elizabeth Haines has requested some action for the Council. Seeking clarification regarding how many Congregational Council slots will be open for the 2023-2024 term. No one has their term completely ending. Both David J and Jolie are up for their second

term. David is not planning to run for a 2nd 3 year term at this time unless needed. In addition, the Nominating Committee is also seeking 3 additional members, including someone from the Council whose term is ending. As Steve's time on Council will be ending next year, he has volunteered to serve during the 2025 process. Additional names were suggested for consideration and will be given to Elizabeth.

**2023 Synod Assembly.** This year's assembly will be held in two parts, as has become the general practice. The first stage will be via Zoom this Saturday (March 25th); each delegate should have received an email with the link for online access and access to the Synod Assembly documents. The in-person stage will be June 1 – 3, at the Embassy Suites in East Peoria. Pastor David, Deacon Lyn, Joel Murphy, David Johnson, Jolie Hoffmann, Barb Haab, and Cynthia Davis have volunteered to represent St. John's as delegates.

**Council/Staff Planning Retreat.** 2023 will focus on adapting to our new realities, coordinating with council and staff as to how we can grow the membership and engage and expand our outreach with direction from the Worship Strategy/Focus Subcommittee. Further topic for consideration would be to address the size and function of the council moving forward.

No updates regarding projected time line. Working to coordinate schedules following Easter so retreat date may get pushed back further from initial thought to late April/early May.

## **Executive Committee and Staff Reports**

### **President's Topics**

Dean asked for volunteers to open future Council Meetings with prayer. Still looking for a volunteer for the month of December. Monthly commitments:

- April – Tammy
- May – Jolie
- June – Joel
- July – Mark
- August – David J
- September – Steve
- October – Randy
- November – Randy
- December – ??
- January – Randy

### **Senior Pastor's Report**

- Norma is asking for us to go online and "like" our page on FaceBook
- Mabel Lux and Connie Moll have made it to Puerto Rico as part of Mission Team research to assess if we might want to partner with the ELCA Church in Puerto Rico for future Mission Trip opportunities
- We are well into Lent so that is the focus of the next couple of weeks. Continues to be pleased with the attendance at the mid-week services and currently in discussion with

Deacon Lyn regarding some different possibilities to expand next year, including the potential for a noon time service to reach a different demographic

- Looking forward to some upcoming Continuing Education opportunities
- Noted that technology issues have been a challenge lately but continuing to learn and address

**Executive Director of Business Operations.** Shari provided a few highlights from her report:

- In reading through staff reports, there are some great things. Norma noted that our InTouch newsletter is opening at a 67% rate which is phenomenal
- We are doing the Prayer Room again during Holy week. Note that it will be in a new location this year (the Junior High room). In addition to the Prayer Room, we will be opening up the Worship Center as a place for reflection and having music playing throughout the week.
- Continued efforts are being made to encourage use of the building: In addition to Michell Brown's CPR classes, Heartland College will be starting up Cooking classes (approximately 3x/month) and the Luther College Band will be providing a concert this weekend

### **Upcoming Council Meetings**

- Executive Council, April 17th at 5:30 pm in the Conference Room
- Church Council, April 24th at 6:30 pm in the Loft

**Meeting was adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.**

Respectfully submitted, Jolie Hoffmann, Secretary