

**St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church
Congregational Council Meeting
Monday, July 24, 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
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 July 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 Mark Scott.

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

Staff presentation. Deacon Lyn, Natalie Fowler, and Walter Stout joined to present on Congregational Music. Highlights:

- Walter provided a couple of updates regarding the organ, pianos and equipment. Shared that he rededicated the organ last October. In addition, with regard to the overseeing and maintenance of the organ and pianos in the church, he noted that he made a switch in organ tuning companies to allow for better stewardship of church resources. Working with a small company out of Chicagoland and has been pleased with their work. As for the 2 church pianos, the small baby grand piano in the Welcome Area has required more frequent tuning due to its age and size, especially now that it is located in a larger, more open area but it is in good tune.
- Natalie has been serving as our Contemporary Band Leader. She will be starting Seminary in the Fall and noted that Justin and Mason recently completed their internships. Discussed some changes she would like to implement following recent meeting with the COJ band and singers: to introduce a prelude for the COJ service to help introduce new music while providing a transition to facilitate people getting seated. In addition, looking to have some instrumentals during communion as long as the worship team is able to participate in communion.
- Lyn provided an overview of the Worship Strategy/Focus Subcommittee noting that the task force was created to look at and evaluate how is our worship meeting the needs of the different services and identify if we need to change anything to better serve the congregation. In addition

to having members complete a survey, members of the subcommittee have been looking at other worship services with the goal to make sure our 3 services are special and unique while consistent with our mission. A meeting was held to share results and then members who had expressed interest completed a Likert-scale to address the various components of worship. The subcommittee has since created smaller working groups to represent each of the 3 worship styles based on the service attended.

Status of Worship Strategy/Focus Subcommittee. Mark shared that the task force met on the 5th to review forum results and set up additional small group sessions. These small groups consist of the members who expressed interest and are grouped based on the service attended. Each group will address questions specific to the style of worship based on data collected at the forum. Refer to report in dropbox for details. This first focus is not necessarily growth driven but to assess if we are meeting the needs of the community we are serving, with different talking points for each, to address a variety of themes in terms of cadence, innovation, and style of engagement. Highlights from each group::

SES – Identity is most receptive to change; Discussed blended service idea that may change from week to week with a more casual liturgy

Traditional – Discussed potential use of the assistant minister

COJ – Conversation regarding music and the worship leader bringing more apps/technology in.

Treasurer’s Report. Steve reviewed the Finance Report, noting that we continue to be very stable compared to last month and where we need to be overall, especially with regard to the Endowment Fund which is significant compared to last year.

- Cash and Investments total about 2.3 million across funds, leading to a net of over \$66K (\$11k which is payable to Zambia) at present time.
- Pledges for the building fund continue to come in allowing us to keep up with mortgage payments.
- Finance Team will be meeting monthly in August, September, and October to prepare 2024 Budget

Shari addressed items from the Finance Team::

- Finance Team is talking about doing a debt reduction campaign for late 2024 with the goal of the campaign to work on reducing debt between 2025 - 2027 at which time we would be eligible for refinancing.
- The church is facing some major expenses in the near future including boiler repair (\$6000) as well as an ongoing drainage issue needing attention.

Youth and Parent Forum Survey. Shari provided an update on the Youth and Parent Forum Survey discussed at the last Council meeting. She will be meeting with Amy Rademacher to go over an agenda for a follow-up meeting with the parents. Intent of the meeting will be to go over the results of the recent survey and to gather information about one, “What does it look like for them to be engaged/how do parents want to be engaged?” and secondly, “What does it look like for us to have a program that helps their child[ren] have a relationship with each other and with Christ?” Moving forward, the plan is to have youth participation, creating small groups to represent the different age groups to then address programming opportunities.

Executive Committee and Staff Reports

President's Topics

- See report in dropbox.

Senior Pastor's Report. Pastor David highlighted 2 topics:

- The congregation has the opportunity to support Natalie by formally recommending her to enter the process of discernment and candidacy, as well as looking into endowment funds that may be available to help her while she attends seminary. Pastor David and Dean will complete the necessary paperwork for submission.
- Pastor has made a deposit to attend a Pastor's Trip to Israel in January and is requesting Continuing Education funding to cover costs.

Randy made the motion to increase the amount of Pastor's CE funding by an additional \$2000 and Connie seconded the motion; Council passed unanimously by voice vote.

Executive Director of Business Operations.

- Need volunteers for the One Worship service. Go online to log in if you are able to help with set up, clean up and/or desserts.

Upcoming Council Meetings

- Executive Council, August 21st at 5:30 pm in the Conference Room
- Church Council, August 28th at 6:30 pm in the Loft

Meeting was adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Jolie Hoffmann, Secretary