

**St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church
Congregational Council Meeting
Monday, June 26, 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 (absent)
Steve BeMiller, Treasurer	Carla Snell
Tammy Fahling (absent)	Shari Buckellew, Exec. Dir. Business Operations
Randy Holthaus (absent)	David Glesne, Senior Pastor
David Johnson	

Call to order and opening prayer. The June 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 Joel Murphy.

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

Staff Report. Norma Fagerland joined to talk about her role as both the Director of Communications (going on 11 years) and recently added Staff Missions Liaison. Pivotal to the day to day relations of the church, she is part of creating and putting out 99% of the graphics used for the weekly Sermon series, in addition to the other communications within the church including the Daily Blessings, Weekly News, InTouch Newsletter, as well as support materials for fundraisers and our presence on social media with website updates and Facebook posts. Norma has also been supervising our graduate assistant, Jai, to create a series of Welcome Videos to introduce visitors and new members to St. John's. Time becomes a challenge and the need to have a backup plan to allow for needed support in the event that Norma would be unavailable (i.e. on vacation or out of the office).

Treasurer's Report (Steve/Shari)

- Steve reviewed the Finance Report, noting that Cash and Investments remain stable across funds with a year to date net income of just over \$66k which remains very close to where we were last year at this time and where we need to be for this time of the year.

- Steve brought forth a motion to approve the 2024 annual operating budget for Noah's Ark. Motion moved by Steve and seconded by David Johnson and passed unanimously by voice vote.
- Shari provided an update on the Payroll Retention/Employee Tax Credit. Since the last meeting, she has signed an engagement letter with Reese CPA and has provided the firm with the requested information to complete an Impact Statement. Based on their preliminary review, we are projected to bring in \$418k if approved. Funds would be unrestricted after 20% allocated to the CPA firm, with \$60,000 designated to Noah's Ark and remainder to St. John's. It could take up to a year for the firm to review and determine if we qualify.
- Steve noted that given the current drop in utility rates, they went ahead and signed a 12 month electric supply contract to lock in these low rates for the next year.

Call Committee. The Call Committee held its first organizational meeting on June 21st to review the Ministry Site Profile (MSP) and discuss responsibilities and estimated timelines, emphasizing importance of confidentiality throughout this process so as to protect the privacy of the candidates. Next meeting date TBD. Shari noted that the MSP was submitted to the Synod today.

Status of Worship Strategy/Focus Subcommittee. Mark shared that approximately 25-30 members attended the Forum on June 13th. Members of the Subcommittee shared the charge of the Focus group, discussing what the fundamentals of Lutheran worship are about (ie what is core vs what has changed over time) along with the key findings of the recent survey. Shari, Kerri and Dave utilized a Likert scale to gather impressions regarding what worship might look like and what we might envision for worship in the future. Based on the positive feedback provided, information was well received. For reference, the powerpoint and Likert scale shared at the forum may be found in Dropbox.

Executive Committee and Staff Reports

Senior Pastor's Report. In addition to his monthly report, Pastor David raised three (3) additional points for Council Consideration:

1. Former location of St John's, now home to Wayman African Episcopal Church, is remodeling their sanctuary and reached out to see if we have interest in reclaiming and/or rehoming a painting that was gifted prior to our departure in the late 50's. Pastor David was able to look at canvas painting and is looking into options including Augustana College or the Mclean County Historical Society. Aside from its large size, it is canvas painting that has been bolted to the wall, posing some challenges with regard to its removal and restoration. Questions for consideration: Do we want the painting and respectfully, if so, what would we want to do with it? If we don't want it, do we want to have a role in determining how to handle its relocation?

2. Seeking Council approval to form a task force to explore direction for our Youth programs. Recognized that we have not come back fully post pandemic and feel it would be beneficial to form a focus group to encourage more engagement with our youth and families, especially parents, so as to identify expectations and how we can best understand the needs of the children and families based on where they are today.

Joel made a motion that Council endorses and supports an initiative for having a formally engaged conversation regarding our Youth and Family Ministry and David Johnson seconded the motion; Council approved unanimously by voice vote.

3. Working with the Synod with something known as Fresh Expressions which is coming out of the Anglican Church of England and being adapted by the ELCA as a way of exploring how we do discipleship today by reimagining how we have faith conversations. Currently offering a book study online. Several copies of the book were donated to the church which were distributed to council members interested in reading.

Upcoming Council Meetings

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

Meeting was adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Jolie Hoffmann, Secretary