

Minutes from Christ Our Shepherd Lutheran Church Council Meeting

Monday January 25, 2021

Members Present: Rick Burnett, Sue Byers, Carol Jensen-Linton, Pastor Fritz, Pastor Miriam, Lisa Manthey, Scott Bosecker, Mark Bunker, Molly Breckling, Robbi Martin, Mike Oliver, Brad Harris

Guests Present - None

Members not Present - Eric Jakubowski

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 by Council President Rick Burnett.

Devotion: Pastor Fritz gave the devotion and welcomed the new council members - Scott Bosecker, Carol Jensen-Linton and Brad Harris.

Opening Comments:

- Rick began the meeting with opening comments. Rick referenced old agendas from Sept through December. There are no monthly written reports provided by the Pastors as they are included in the annual report.
- Update for TSV and Palmetto was presented at yesterday's congregational meeting so no need to re-discuss tonight.
- Updating of governance documents have been completed and will be forwarded to Synod.
- Pastor Fritz indicated over the course of the month that all efforts to improve technology have been fruitful and so no need to discuss further tonight.

Pastor Reports:

- Pastor Fritz hoped everyone read the annual report which is also his report for this month. This lent, Feb 17 is Ash Wednesday. We will have a pre-recorded service so the service can be watched anytime that day. COS will have drive-thru ash presentation by the pastors.
- There is a lot of confusion within our country right now. On Wednesday (1/27) there is a webinar sponsored by the Synod discussing the rising trend of nationalism.
- We will have a great Lenten series. On Wednesdays we will have small groups (fruit groups) beginning at 7:00 pm. Small groups will be essential to connect people during Lent. Contact Barb Anderson to volunteer as a small group leader.
- Pastor Fritz thanked the council for the governance document(s) update. Rick, Don and Pastor Miriam were involved making suggestions. Some quick observations that if we had not had COVID we would have had a Q&A ahead of time to ensure the annual meeting went smoothly. Goal of updating governance documents was recognition that a lot of language was composed three to four decades ago and was helpful at that time to help run congregations but in many cases had become outdated. One example was a requirement for the Pastor to visit every person who hadn't attended a service in two years. We updated that requirement. Another example was Melissa Jacobsen who couldn't get enough people to volunteer for a committee. We tried to update the language to better align where we are in the last five years as a congregation.

- Pastor Miriam followed up with comments about how we are still learning the best ways to communicate with everyone. There's an effort to reach people who don't always open emails. She encouraged everyone to read the annual report to better understand where we are as a church. She reflected on the difference between last year's annual meeting which was live and this year's meeting which was on Zoom.

- Pastor Miriam shared that her daughter-in-law Sunny is home and released from the hospital but not yet in hospice. She welcomed prayers for the family.

Finance:

- Mark shared that we are trending to a tough year. Looking at a \$50k deficit for the year. He feels that we meet all of the metrics to have the PPP loan forgiven. That would turn the year from a negative to a positive. It would provide a small cushion going forward into 2022. Operating expenses are lower since we are using the building less. We do have expenses coming up for the building and insurance. There are a number of restricted accounts we could tap to offset operating expenses. While numbers are not where we'd like them to be this year they are better than it could be given that we are only 15% off the plan. Rick asked if we qualified for a second PPP loan and Mark shared that we currently don't qualify for a second loan based on the new metrics. One criteria for the second loan is a 25% drop in revenue which we don't have.

- Shelley has requested to do a pop-up web page for Lent/Easter as well as for VBS on the COS home page. We ran a Christmas/Advent pop-up page that cost \$500. They are checking to see if there are adequate funds to cover the cost. Most likely we will need to reference restricted accounts. Pastor(s) Miriam and Fritz will follow up with Linda to discuss.

- Carol asked when we'd find out when the PPP loan would be forgiven. Mark said there's almost no chance it won't be forgiven but that we don't know when it will happen.

- Pastor Fritz reiterated how good a job Mark had done last year and that if anyone needed help understanding the budget that Mark would make time to go over.

- Scott asked if we modeled retirements in congregation to giving? Mark said that we presently don't but are moving towards doing so.

COVID:

- Rick shared a document sent by Mary earlier today. As long as Coweta and Fayette counties are in the red we decided to stop in-person worship. Number of hospital beds in use is also a factor. In December, we used 13% vs 10% to determine whether we would do in person. Currently re-evaluating whether to go in person at the end of January. Will have discussion at next council meeting to determine whether or not to go in person again. Scott asked if we had determined who in the congregation had received a Covid vaccine.

- Pastor Miriam, Pastor Fritz and Barb have tried to reach out to everyone who would be affected by a CARE call. Pastor Fritz shared a story of a couple who attended our drive in service and decided to join COS after the experience. Pastor Miriam wanted to know why there are two lists of people being called. The answer was the CARE call is going to everyone in the congregation and the other list is for people who aren't opening the emails from COS.

Stewardship:

Eric wasn't available to share his report on stewardship. Rick encouraged everyone to read his report that was sent out last night. Rick wanted to let everyone know that Eric has shared that he doesn't want to lead the stewardship drive this fall. He thanked Eric for the excellent job that he has done the past couple of years with Stewardship. He encouraged Council members to think of someone who might be a good fit to take over Stewardship.

Facility Maintenance:

Lisa provided an update with Palmetto. We finally got the fence up and it should be completed by the end of the weekend.

Rick said that Dave Byers got a quote from a lighting company to improve the lighting in the sanctuary. The higher expense is due to the fact that the controls to run the LED system is 40 years old. The quote would include replacing the lighting and the controls.

Administration:

The December Council Meeting Minutes were approved.

The meeting was adjourned and Pastor Miriam gave a closing prayer.