



## **Minutes from Christ Our Shepherd Lutheran Church Council Monday June 22, 2020**

**Members Present:** Don Livingston, Rick Burnett, Pastor Fritz, Pastor Miriam, Kevin Hawkins, Mike Oliver, Robbi Martin, Molly Breckling, Lisa Manthey, Sue Byers, Eric Jakubowski, Mark Bunker

**Members not present:** Bernice Huie

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 by Council President Don Livingston. This meeting was conducted via Zoom video chat.

### **Devotional:**

The devotional was given by Rick Burnett.

He discussed the notion of how you spend half your life accumulating so you can spend the second half of your life giving back. He also spoke about a book he read that had an impact on him along those lines. Several scripture verses from Isaiah were cited, including:

Isaiah 6:8 Then I heard the voice of the LORD saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"

### **Pastor Reports:**

Pastor Fritz: **Moving Forward**

- Pastor discussed the report that the Moving Forward team had created for safely returning to in-person worship services. More on this discussed below...
- He also mentioned that the Bishop had requested each congregation to develop a Diversity and Justice task force to "create congregational action steps to work on building a more diverse community that look like the kingdom of God calls us to be." He relayed a story from member Mike Earwood concerning his efforts following a recent sermon on systemic racism to reach out to black men that he had worked with in the past to better understand their experiences.
- Other topics highlighted included record-breaking blood drives at COS, rescheduling of the Haiti fundraiser that had been cancelled earlier in the year due to COVID-19, Boy Scouts and virtual VBS.
- Finally, he mentioned ongoing personnel opportunities and challenges the COS staff are still experiencing.

Pastor Miriam:

- Pastor discussed the special "Emmanuel Nine" remembrance ceremony COS recently hosted to remember the anniversary of the killing of nine Emmanuel church members by a white shooter.
- She also discussed COS's ability to host funerals, baptisms, weddings and other events at COS amid this pandemic and social distancing time. Our newly purchased audio/visual production equipment may be a way to still allow folks to "attend" these important activities via online broadcasts.

- She requested prayers for a member following surgery.
- Finally, she made a plug and quick introduction for our new accountant, Steve Profeta, that had replaced the retiring Bob Davis. She noted how he was a neat guy with a great spirit that enjoys fishing.

#### **Financial Report:** Kevin

- Kevin stated that we were on track to have a \$21,000 deficit to close out FY20 fiscal year at the end of June. He went into some detail about the repercussions of that deficit and how COS would mitigate it. Notably, although the "rainy day" fund would be depleted, we still have \$600k in savings and investments, so "we'll be ok."
- He mentioned the facts that we received \$109k in PPP funding and that our mortgage is now fully paid off will both help us out moving forward.
- There was a motion by Eric and seconded by Robbi to authorize Mark Bunder to receive on behalf of COS some life insurance funds that were designated to COS in a member's Will. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **Personnel** Molly

- The Personnel Team is working on a new Organizational Chart, as well as updated Roles and Responsibilities, for the staff. Expect them to be submitted to the Council in July.
- She discussed the possibility of Bill Porter taking on technology requirements in addition to, or instead of, his Connecting Ministries position. At this point Bill has been instrumental in procuring the required infrastructure and volunteers required to create and publish our online worship services. He has expressed some interest in filling the worship production position if it is eventually created.

#### **Facilities Maintenance Team** Lisa

- Lisa mentioned how having Linda Volkmann serve on the FMT committee has been a very good addition.
- The FMT was continuing to look at the Palmetto Road property. They desire that the property gets utilized much more by COS members. They also briefed three specific priorities:
  1. Fencing along a portion of Palmetto Road - \$2k
  2. Security cameras on the camp store building - \$6.2k estimated
  3. Finishing the inside of the building - \$700

The Council had a debate about the costs and ultimately brought up 2 resolutions for consideration. A motion was made by Rick and seconded by Don for the Council to approve spending of \$2700 to authorize the completion of priorities 1 and 3 above, using CTA (Call to Action funds leftover from the purchase of the property). A second, concurrent motion was made by Don and seconded by Robbi to approve the same \$2700 for priorities 1 and 3 but to utilize the current FMT budget which included a line item for Palmetto maintenance. Motion #2 passed 9-1.

#### **Administration**

- The motion was made by Rick and seconded by Molly to accept the May Council meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.
- Financial Audit. The FY21 budget includes funding to conduct an external audit of COS financial practices and bookkeeping. The council discussed forming an Audit Committee and that it should include the COS Accountant and Finance Committee chairman at a minimum. Other members should include those with HR experience and others. A motion was made by Rick and seconded by Molly to appoint Dave Pfundt as the Audit Committee Chairman. The motion passed unanimously. Don will follow up with Dave P.

## **Moving Forward**

- Bill Grabill and Mary Brunso joined the Zoom meeting to discuss the report from the Moving Forward Committee and on efforts required to prepare the church to restart in-person worship services.
- Bill mentioned that the plan submitted to council was a starting point, and that he expected it to be updated over time.
- An implementation team should be appointed to carry out all the tasks noted in the report in a multi-phased approach.
- The committee recommended expanding worship opportunities (online, sanctuary, Palmetto Road, etc) in order to allow in-person worship services to resume while also limiting the number of attendees to mitigate the risk of COVID spreading.
- Communicating constantly and in multiple forms will be important in order to ensure a successful return to in-person worship.
- The Moving Forward team comprised of nine members represented a wide cross-section of the congregation and their recommendations spanned the gambit of what we are seeing throughout our community right now.
- Mary provided some graphs and historical information concerning the amount of hospital beds in Fayette County, as well as the entire state, are occupied, to include ICU and COVID-specific areas. She will continue to provide this information on an ongoing basis to the council. She mentioned that at the current time (June 22<sup>nd</sup>) there were 80% of GA hospital beds occupied and that Region D (which includes metro Atlanta and Fayette counties) had 800 beds available.
- There was a suggestion for the council to set a date for returning to in-person worship in order to give us a goal to focus all our efforts against. The date could be updated by changing COVID information prior to the planned date.

The council decided to reconvene at 6:30pm on June 29<sup>th</sup> to get key stakeholders together and further discuss the specific tasks recommended by the Moving Forward team.

### **UPDATE>>>**

- During the June 29<sup>th</sup> meeting, Pastor Miriam and Sue Byers presented the required task spreadsheet organized by 3 functional areas: Cleaning, Logistics and Removal.
- While a volunteer was not designated to oversee COS's cleaning efforts, Dave and Sue Byers will oversee the Logistics tasks, and Eric Jakubowski will tackle the Removal tasks.
- July 26<sup>th</sup> was designated as the planned return date to in-person worship services.

The meeting was adjourned by Don. We remotely closed with the Lord's Prayer together.

The next council meeting will be Monday June 29<sup>th</sup> do discuss the Moving Forward requirements. The next regular monthly council meeting will be Monday July 27<sup>th</sup>.