

6-28-20 Zoom Meeting Notes

11 am

Lisa Melton, Carla Girkin, Ron E, Nancy, Pr Bill, Joyce Hoover, Pam, Sara, and Phil Gross.

Opened with prayer from Pr Bill

Nancy liked the mission in the newsletter

Pam asked attendees to consider the question posed to council members: What are the 3 main problems ASLC faces? Where do you see us in 5 years? What are our obstacles? What do we need to do to get there?

Lisa: Concerns about youth. Hard to off activities with diminishing numbers. It is a systemic problem in mainline churches. Families don't attend. Is this our new reality? What is the larger church body saying?

Pr: Attendance is down all over so churches are experimenting. Results are mixed but it isn't as pessimistic as 3 years ago. Attendance and contributions are down. As churches close and the buildings are sold, these funds help support other congregations. There is a group that has tried meeting at the City Market in a bar or restaurant. Attendance was good for a while and then it slowly diminished. If we don't come together, we won't be here. Blue Ridge Trinity spend 2 ½-3 years in the redevelopment prosceno and came through it for about 10-12 years. They were sharing a minister with the Episcopal church, but it wasn't sustainable. The Lutheran members decided they didn't want to share their minister. You need to find a way to define yourself. Failures may lead to other things.

He did a Zoom meeting with the transitional ministers last week. Online services have better attendance than the average attendance of most churches. We have 35 for average attendance but we get more on our services on our website.

Nancy: What is normal? I don't think there is an answer to that question. It comes in peaks. The 60's had revolts and more liberal ideas. People were questioning, speaking, trying, testing. She is not as concerned about ASLC as long as there is a strong base and her interviews showed a strong base.

Lisa: Is the congregation open to change? COVID may provide new opportunities if we have a willingness to change.

Sara: We had a new normal after 9/11 and we will have another one after COVID is under control. We have already been forced to change and will continue to do so. We will keep online services even after we are meeting in person.

Ron: We have 80-85 people viewing online services, but more are doing it on Tuesday. This reinforces my belief that worship isn't just on Sunday. I worship each day.

Lisa: I think we need to continue to grow the online services.

Ron: Our goal is to have streaming services.

Nancy: People are more informal now which reflects their mood. We need to create a bridge between the new and old normal.

Phil: What are the statistics? Do you have individual times or number of repeats?

Ron: I have individual IP addresses but no names. I can tell the length of time for the visit and if they watch the entire sermon at one time. The time on the sermon has gotten longer as COVID continues. You can pause and return but I can't see that. They may watch it more than once.

Carla: I enjoyed the outdoor service and look forward to it in September. We should advertise it online for additional viewers. I liked Nancy's write up about the service in the July newsletter.

Pr Bill: The shortened service seems to be an attraction according to other ministers.

Pam: I enjoyed it, It took a bit of work. But was worth it to see everyone.

Sara: We have the first one under our belt so the next time should be easier.

Carla: Some people in my hometown church in Cole Camp were so upset about no singing that they are attending another church. I enjoyed the music provided by David Fast.

Sara: Music lifts us up, but singing isn't the point of worship. All of our decisions about the in-person service were geared toward safety. We wanted it to be a meaningful service, but we have to work within the safety guidelines. Music is a part of service but not all of it.

Nancy: We need to explain why we can't sing. (I think we did this in writing and Pr Bill may have said something at the beginning of service.)

Communion could be handled a bit better. Pr could have sanitizer on the communion table and use it before handing it out. He could wear gloves for that portion of the service. People could pick up their own if there was enough space between the cups so they wouldn't touch other cups.

Two council positions are still open. Jim McDonald contacted 7 people, but no one has volunteered. Lisa is interested but she is on the Transition team and is also concerned about work in the fall. She will do both online and in person teaching. Is council concerned that no one has stepped up? Pam said we have a lack of resources. We all know that 20% of the people do 80% of the work. People may think they aren't qualified to be on council but that isn't true. We may only have 4 people on council so less work may get accomplished. People that are working from home may be saving commute time, but it has been taken up with online meetings. We need leaders to move forward. Jim and Joyce Cutbirth will stay on until replacements are found but that won't last forever. And we shouldn't expect them to stay on.

Joyce H: We need to be patient because there is no roadmap for what we are experiencing. I think online services and Zoom meetings are great and want to see more of it.

Nancy: We should start other groups via Zoom: youth, bible study, writing group, etc. Lisa said she wasn't sure the kids would be interested in that because they use it too much for school.

Pr: This is a preview of the transitional meetings that will be held with specific agendas.

Lisa: I think we need to explain the roles of the council vs. the transitional team. Has the transitional team taken in any new ideas from calls?

Pr: The transitional team has been slowed by the virus. They are to work on finding the mission but that is problematic. How did ASLC grow? Most from other churches that closed and brought talent and experience with them.

No one called me during office hours, so I started calling members. Lisa said the kids appreciated his calls and humor.

Nancy: The interviews showed members have a strong Lutheran heritage and are proud of it and want to keep it.

1 pm

Ron and Linda Schwantes

Liked the outdoor service. No more until September due to heat.

Our financial position stays stable and in the black.
Pr is here through the first of the year and then it is negotiable for another extension.

They appreciate the calls from Pr. Reaching out is important. People may get too comfy not going to church. Staying at home makes them lazy.

Discussed online services and keeping them.

Nancy asked about using some of Ron Schwantes's music recordings online. He will get with Ron E about that. Pr asked if he had any Lutheran hymns in addition to the gospel songs. Ron S said people can ask him to record specific hymns for online services.

Discussed the treasurer position. Doug bought a retirement home in the Carolinas.

Carla G has expressed interest in being on council.

There was a discussion about prayer lists and privacy issues. We must have written approval to post any names on the prayer list.

Discussed communion at outdoor service.

3 pm

No one called in.