

American Lutheran Church  
March Council and Call Committee Meeting  
March 3, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 7pm by Vice President Maureen Even. Present were Barb Hayek, Shirley Bergman, Mitch Hayek via phone, Secretary Chris Waring. ALC Call Committee members: Merritt Jones, Bill Schnieder, Beth Stanek. Absent Council members: Christy Phillips and Cindy Gosse. Absent Call Committee members: Amanda Phillips

Meeting began with VP Maureen addressing the Call Committee members that were present on how the follow up Zoom meeting with Pastor Joy went. They felt that the questions brought forth had already been addressed and that Pastor Joy was comfortable going over the concerns.

Pastor Joy's goals for our congregation are to revitalize the rural church. She felt that Zion and ALC were a good fit for each other. She wants to get to know both congregations better and find the tools that will enable both of us to grow in membership. She is planning to reach out to members of both congregations in person, current and non-participating, and invite them back into the congregation. The call committee expressed that she is skilled in meeting people, getting to know them, finding their gifts and talents and encouraging them to join committees, teaching Sunday school, music, etc. getting members more involved in the life of the church.

Concerns were raised about the possibility of her coming here and wanting to alter the structure of our service. However, the call committee assured that she is committed to aligning with our established practices. She will not initiate changes independently; instead, she will follow our lead. Should she identify areas for improvement, she will present her proposals to our council for approval before implementation.

The council expressed reservations about the structure of her current services, which differ significantly from our liturgical practices. It was noted that she had adapted to the existing setup at her current congregation. However, she has conveyed her willingness to collaborate with the Worship and Music committee to tailor her approach to meet our specific needs.

The query regarding Pastor Joy's age, 60, arose with a curiosity about the duration of her pastoral service. The members of the call committee clarified that she mentioned planning to serve until the age of 70, but she also expressed a potential reluctance to retire outright due to her genuine love for the vocation.

Pastor Joy shared with the Call Committee her motivation for seeking a change from her current congregation, citing experiences of backstabbing and nitpicking directed towards her. Unfortunately, the committee designated to address these concerns has not been supportive or acknowledged the problem. The call committee acknowledged the possibility of similar challenges at ALC but assured that such matters would be handled appropriately. Pastor Joy welcomes constructive feedback for personal and professional growth.

In the context of her ongoing pursuit of a Doctorate in Reviving Rural Churches through a hybrid program at the University of Dubuque, the committee inquired whether she would incorporate our congregation into her thesis. Pastor Joy clarified that if she wished to use any material involving our members, she would obtain consent from the concerned individual(s).

The call committee at Jubilee is in favor of extending an offer. According to Synod guidelines, recommended compensation level for the role is at 19, determined by factors such as life skills prior to ordination. Notably, Pastor Joy's current church falls significantly below these guidelines, causing her to feel undervalued. While she does not anticipate a full salary, she is hopeful for a compensation package that is closer to the suggested level.

Concerns were raised about the affordability of the proposed salary, and the response is affirmative, contingent on Jubilee's commitment to the joint agreement. It was emphasized that the congregation would cover only her health insurance, considering that her husband, a veteran, would be covered by the VA.

Her profile stated her goal for a minimum salary was \$57,500. The housing item on budget was bought up and it is \$17,000, 30% of base salary, set by the Synod. The Synod's recommendations for Pastor Joy's base salary is \$58,303.

Members of the call committee were unsure what parsonage Pastor Joy and her husband would be using, and that is unclear at this time. We need to know what parsonage sooner than later due to the improvements that need to be done in ALC's parsonage.

Maureen recommended that we accept the call and Shirley agreed. The question was then brought up if the council would be able to meet Pastor Joy before the vote was taken to the congregation. Maureen asked that we have Amanda contact with the Synod to see if the guidelines allow the council to visit with her before they vote on the call. The visit could be by Zoom or in person depending on schedules.

Maureen stated that both councils will be meeting to discuss financials, March 10<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup>.

Merritt mentioned that Pastor Joy is getting concerned about the timeline, her goal is to work at her current congregation until her confirmation class is confirmed, which is early May. Both councils need to approve her then we need to inform the congregation two weeks in advance of the Congregational meeting to be held for their vote.

Motion was made by Beth to adjourn and seconded by Shirley

Meeting adjourned at 8pm

Respectfully submitted,  
Chris Waring, Secretary