

CONGREGATION COUNCIL MINUTES

Date: 8/29/24

The August Congregation Council Meeting was held on 8//21/24

Council Members Present: Pastor Bannister, Ashdon Bobbie, Melanie Boyer, Alan Divver, CJ Hamilton, Bob Muller, Barbara Quinn, Bruce Roper, Carol Schlegel, Jenn Shaw, Tom Smith, Maryanne Sweeney, Ken Woods, and Louise Woods.

Absent: Kiran Bodamer, Shannon O'Neill, Anna Sweeney

The meeting was called to order by President Bob Muller at 7:00 p.m. The scripture was read by Pastor Bo and the prayer was offered by Louise Woods.

PERSONS WISHING TO ADDRESS COUNCIL:

None

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:

*It was moved and seconded to accept the minutes from June 2024 as presented without changes. The motion was made and seconded by Jenn Shaw / CJ Hamilton.
MOTION CARRIED

REPORTS:

President, Bob Muller – A verbal report given by Bob Muller. Bob spent time in Alabama recently. He explained that he found himself doing things without as much stuff and encouraged people to look at what's holding them back and what they can shed.

Pastor Bannister – Attached

Attendance – Attached. Pastor Bo pointed out Sunday is down; Saturday is not down which is unusual. The ice cream social probably helped.

Finance Committee – Attached. Carol explained that at June's Council meeting she was asked to keep the congregation informed of our current finances. She explained that she has changed how we're reporting finances. We used to track "to budget" rather than actual expenses which can sometimes include large expenses not budgeted for. (Actual

income vs actual expenses is much different) In the recent bulletin and moving forward, we will report to the congregation actual income, actual expenses and actual deficit.

Carol also explained we have been moving Food Pantry out of St John's funds. In doing so, we were not able to make payroll in July without using memorial funds. We have been cashing in investments and now all of our cash is in memorial funds and we have no operating cash left. Some are church restricted and donor restricted. Finance will be using church restricted funds first. By the end of August Finance will have a better feel for how long we can last on our own.

Thrivent funds have been moved into our money market.

Carol and the Finance committee will now be working on the 2025 budget. Our Annual Meeting has been held in February for quite a while, however, Finance feels it would be much better to have it earlier to avoid back-dating everything. Finance would like the budget approval to be done in December. Their goal is to meet with different committees and have it finalized for the Finance meeting in October, presented to Council in November, and then a Budget Meeting to present the budget to the Congregation in December. Assuming the budget is approved, it will be presented at the Annual meeting in January/February.

Tentative Budget meeting date is December 15th.

Carol would like everyone to submit any ideas that they may have on how to either reduce expenses or fund raise.

At the all-committee meeting in September, Carol will explain to them that she needs a budget from all the committees.

She also mentioned other items in the budget that can be removed such as funerals, coffee hour, building use, and others.

Pastor Bo said that we need to work on the basement and make the building more useable for outside groups/events.

Synod Benevolence has not been budgeted but should be, as well as Meals-On-Wheels and the pastoral discretionary fund but should be.

Carol asked why we donate to Grace Lutheran in Philadelphia and Pastor Bo explained that they are a sister congregation in a poorer neighborhood in Philadelphia that we partner with. Carol suggested that we can also direct them to various agencies in Montgomery and Bucks County that can also help through grants.

Carol also explained our insurance is going up about 15%. She went to another insurance company and the agent said they are being very selective on who they cover. They are looking for no recent history of claims and roofs no more than 10 years old, among other things. They then send the information to their underwriters. They suggested we stick with who we have. She is also checking another insurance company too.

ELCA will pay half of the benefits increases this year.

Tom Smith asked about going through the synod, if there would be any merit in trying to apply for insurance through them? Maybe the synod could consolidate churches under their umbrella to negotiate better insurance rates.

The question was asked if counting on a weekly basis is still our goal and Carol said that it is.

Tom said that Patty Cawthorne is a Poster but would rather be a head counter. This would be good to have an additional head counter, but we will then need a new poster

Bob Muller asked how much more we would need each month to avoid a deficit. Bob would like to be able to tell congregation how much we need each month of the remaining 4 months to meet our budget and erase our deficit.

Carol said that we are currently running a \$48,000 deficit and that she expects it to be \$80,000 at the end of the year. In order to not end the year with a deficit, we would need an additional \$20,000 per month increase to what our current anticipated income will be.

Tom suggested we get back to an active stewardship campaign committee immediately, whether it's with pledges or something else. He volunteered to be on the committee.

Carol can/will put out how much we need for the remaining 4 months to the congregation.

The 2025 budget without HVAC and roofing issues will still have a deficit next year unless something unexpected drastically changes things.

*It was moved and seconded to accept the Finance Committee's report as presented. The motion was made and seconded by Ken Woods / CJ Hamilton. MOTION CARRIED

OLD BUSINESS:

75th Anniversary Update – This month's meeting was pushed back to next week; invitations have been sent out to people that don't attend regularly. Over 70 people have signed up so far.

Continuing Resolutions – Two have been worked out, Bob is holding until Sept Council meeting.

Volunteer Training – Done, will now be available digitally

ELCA Account - Closed

NEW BUSINESS:

Staff Job Descriptions – These are being worked on now, the goal is to have them done by September.

Constitution and Bylaws – Constitution is done to match Synod constitution. Bylaws will have old and new for September. The Synod needs to approve the Constitution, it does not approve bylaws. Then together they will be presented to congregation.

Outreach Committee – Ashdon spoke for Shannon saying she felt it would be a good idea to create a committee. It would concentrate on such outreach activities as the Hatboro parade, running booths at events, and reaching people outside the walls of our church rather than just fundraising and benevolence.

Council approval of six new members was presented, see attached list. Pastor gave a brief intro to council. All new members were approved.

Alan Divver brought up that he is starting to plan Christmas caroling now and presented a couple dates. After discussing briefly, Council thought Saturday December 7th with a back-up date of Sunday December 15th would work best with the current calendar. Alan will now be looking at places.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Community Outreach Ministry – No report
- Constitution and Bylaws – No report
- Fellowship – No report
- Hatboro Community Cupboard – See report
- Kids & Family Ministry – See report – New chair will be Maryanne Sweeney. Shannon will 2nd chair for several months. VBS was successful. Sunday School is planned for the whole year, teacher signups are ready to go. 5-6 kids will be in confirmation class this year. Looking for Bible Buddies as sponsors for the kids. Rally Day will be September 8th.

Youth Group – 2027 will be the youth trip. Also, an October 2024 camp trip event is being worked on to be held in NJ with several other churches. We have about 15 kids that would be eligible but 5 is a more realistic number.

- Memorials – No report
- Mutual Ministry – No report
- Property – See report – Unknown persons adjusted thermostat. Locking up the controls was asked but Ken explained that if they are needed, someone would need to get a key. Mostly it's not an issue.

Ken Woods had quotes for our A/C repairs.

Peters HVAC – Two scenarios involving two different brands, same set-up. Lennox, \$98,360 with a \$10,000 discount for a final price of \$88,360. Payable in three installments. Coleman, 1-year parts/labor, \$90,376 with a \$10,000 discount for a final price of \$80,376.

Industrial Mechanical – \$105,000.

Estimates for both companies attached to minutes.

Current hope is that it will work through next year but there is no way to know. The above is for the Sanctuary and Narthex.

Tom Smith suggested that maybe we could return to fellowship hall for the summer months.

- Social Media – No report
- Stewardship – No report
- Women’s Ministry – No report
- Worship & Music – See report – Tom Smith had a conversation with Pastor Bo and both agreed that the communion assistants seem to always be the same people and suggested that council members take turns helping.

It was also suggested that the Brad Fox concert is an opportunity to use as a way of welcoming people into our church and getting to know them.

On the topic of Audio/Visual, as Bob Muller becomes less available, we have a responsibility to take care of it both financially and technically. Bob said that although he will be out a lot, he will also be around. Tom is concerned that we have the necessary people for repairs/maintenance/operation when Bob is out. Bob agreed but also said that there are people here that know how the system works and can work on it.

Bob said that there will be another production coming, December 14th Saturday after worship service about the life of Joseph. Although the event will be free and open to anyone, we will gladly accept any free will offering and use it towards the church’s finances.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Al-Anon Family Groups – use of Fellowship Hall and kitchen (\$60 clean-up fee applicable) to celebrate Hatboro Friday Night AFG 50th Anniversary.

Oct 25 6:30-9:30 pm for about 40 people

Approved.

CARES AND CONCERNS:

Pastor Bo and council members shared their cares and concerns.

NEXT MEETING: Date: September 18, 2024

Meeting Leader: Bob Muller

Scripture: Carol Schlegel

Prayer: Pastor Bo

Refreshments: Louise and Ken Woods

*It was moved and seconded by CJ Hamilton / Ken Woods to adjourn the meeting at 8:58 p.m. MOTION CARRIED

Respectfully submitted,

Bruce Roper