



## **HOLY LOVE LUTHERAN CHURCH**

### **COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

May 16, 2023

In attendance: Beth Newsom, Ed Truett, Pr. Harry Laubach, Eric Hermanson, Lindy Whitney, and Lauren Kennedy.

Members absent: Pr. Brittany Kooi, Melissa Waples, Laura Flynn, Greg Boynton.

1. Call to order by Beth Newsom, Council President.
2. Opening devotion provided by Eric H.
3. VRSM Connection to Community presented by Beth N.
4. Open Discussion Time for Congregation: Nothing was brought to Council this month.
5. Approval of April Council Minutes: No amendments requested.

MOTION to approve the April Minutes as distributed to the Council.

PROPOSED by Ed T.

SECONDED by Lauren K.

APPROVED unanimously.

6. Pastor's Report provided by Pastor Brittany Kooi (in absentia, at El Paso Synod Assembly).
  - Maternity Leave schedule (subject to change):
    - i. Last preaching Sunday on July 16, and the last day in the office on Tues. July 18.
    - ii. Returning to the office on Wed. Aug. 30; first Sunday on Sept. 3.
    - iii. Will coordinate with the Personnel Team: Vacation time to be used per Synod guidelines, working .8 time during September, and possibly beyond.
  - Pastor Brittany requested a Housing Allowance adjustment to \$35,000 annually, effective with the July 1 Calendar Year start.
    - i. Pastor Harry explained that the adjustment does not affect the annual salary. Pastors must justify their mortgage, property taxes, and related expenses. The Pastor maintains a dual role: as a paid employee of the congregation for IRS reporting, but self-employed for taxes.
    - ii. MOTION to approve the Housing Allowance adjusted to \$35,000 annually.

PROPOSED by Lauren K.

SECONDED by Ed T.

APPROVED unanimously.
  - God's Work, Our Hands is scheduled for September 10. Beth N. will discuss with Pr. Brittany, regarding options to organize the event. Alan Schmuck will not be leading it this year.
  - Two baptisms (brothers) are scheduled for May 21, and one baptism on July 2.
  - June 4 is Confirmation and Graduation Sunday. The liturgical red vestments will remain in place for May 28 and June 4.
7. Council Updates:
  - Finance update, provided by Lindy W. (Treasurer).

- i. The Holy Love 50th Anniversary will be celebrated in 2024. For consideration: Set up a fund to pay off the church mortgage, which is currently \$124,925. This was tabled by the Council, pending further discussion with Pr. Brittany.
  - ii. Discussion of a separate fund, to replace the church sign with an automated message sign. Jean Roenfeldt has donated \$500 for the sign, in memory of Vern, who had updated the sign messages over many years. Ed Truett mentioned that he had obtained previous price estimates from a sign company, with a price of \$36,000 -- based on a 4' x 8' display area, at \$1000 per square foot. The Council questioned how the 2022 Tree Removal Fund had been started and approved. This was tabled by the Council, pending further discussion with Pr. Brittany.
  - iii. Jean Roenfeldt has requested access to Servant Keeper, as a backup to Melissa Waples. Jean previously had access, as Financial Secretary. The Finance Team had proposed discussing this with the Council. The current access is the Financial Secretary (Melissa Waples), Pastor, and the Council President. This was tabled by the Council, pending further discussion with Pr. Brittany.
  - iv. Discussion regarding who has access to the church bank accounts (savings, checking, and credit cards). This is pending additional discussion.
- Online Task Force (Council discussion).
  - i. Laura F. has volunteered to lead the Online Task Force. There is availability for four additional members.
  - ii. Steps: Document process & costs of the current process, plus review of tech upgrades and consideration of live streaming. Possible information from All Saints Lutheran? Greg Watson had mentioned junction boxes in the upper left/right rear of the sanctuary, but these may obsolete, or in need of upgrading.
  - iii. Brainstorm cost-saving options, including live vs. pre-recorded. Evaluate the plans and options, as they relate to our Core Values. Obtain membership feedback. Formalize a report, with recommendations to Council and/or the 2024 annual congregational meeting.
  - iv. Additional discussions: Eric H. mentioned the need to include announcements and "things to know for the week", as part of the online service. Lauren K. mentioned the professionalism of the Holy Love online service, which different from many other services. Example: Other churches may have only a single camera, broadcasting from the rear of the sanctuary.
  - v. Pr. Brittany had provided online worship attendance statistics in the April meeting.
- VRSM (Council discussion).
  - i. The VRSM team is reconvening in May/June.
  - ii. It was noted that the current Holy Love bylaws need to be updated, as they do not align with VRSM, which was approved by the congregation. Examples: HL bylaws mention Stewardship and Evangelism as council committees with representation, while VRSM does not. Also mentioned: Youth, Christian Ed, and Family & Care Ministry (Amy Schmuck).
- Worship and Music update, provided by Lauren K.

- i. Five of six Sundays have been covered for Pr. Brittany's maternity leave. Amy Schmuck will be preaching on July 30, with no communion. Pr. Harry is preaching on July 23. The August 13 coverage is pending.
  - ii. The sermon theme this summer is "Fruits of the Spirit".
- Property update, provided by Ed T.
  - i. Spring Fest was on May 6. Approximately 14 people participated. New cubbies were constructed in the Preschool hallway area, which took considerable time and resources.
  - ii. The recent hailstorm and rain resulted in two roof leaks: in a storage room above the fire panel, and in a classroom. The Property team is investigating.
  - iii. An overview of the new security system was presented on May 21. Discussion of who will be the keeper of access codes -- possibly Hannah and/or the Property team? Daily "non-activated" hours will be posted.
- 8. Devotions for June will be provided by Ed Truett.
- 9. Closing Blessing was provided by Pastor Harry.

MOTION to adjourn

PROPOSED by Eric H.

SECONDED by Lauren K.

APPROVED unanimously.

10. Next Council Meeting will be held via Zoom on Tuesday, June 20, 2023.

*Submitted by Lindell Whitney, Treasurer*

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***In a divided and disconnected world, we fervently believe that our shared humanity is grounded in Christ's unconditional love. God's infinite grace and mercy drives us to replace anger, judgment, and loneliness with love, forgiveness, and belonging.***