

LUTHER MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A community committed to making Christ's disciples, dedicated to worship, study, and prayer while serving all in need. We are a Reconciling in Christ Congregation.

Minutes for Meeting of Congregation Council, April 25, 2021 (Zoom format)

Andy called the meeting to order at 12:35 pm

In attendance: Elaine Belay, Teresa Cassell, Jay Crone, John Hess, Andy Hansbrough, Carolyn Howard, Campus Minister- Alyssa Kaplan, Gail King, Mara Knott, Tim Larson, Carol Reynolds, Ed Vigen, Pastor Monica Weber, and Patty Marickovich representing the Committee on Personnel, Lois Voss – Revision of the Bylaws Task Force

- 1) Jay Crone shared John Berryman's *Poem to the Lord*. With awe, we become aware of God's power and care for the creation.
- 2) Agenda – Items related to social ministry, the Cassel Report, Nita's report, and Pastor Monica's report were moved to the agenda. Motion to approve passed.
- 3) Consent agenda – Mara noted correction to the minutes from the meeting of March 21. John will provide corrected minutes to Marcia. Elaine explained the expectations for the Personal Items Pantry to be located on the property by the end of summer. Andy moved several items to unfinished business and accepted the consent agenda.
- 4) Unfinished Business and General Orders
 - a) Finance – Mara summarized the financial report in the Council packet
 - i) In general expenses are on track for the first quarter
 - ii) Income for March exceeded expenses but reflect some pledges paid in full for 2021.
 - iii) Expenditures from the PPP loan are on schedule for complete use of the loan in June at which time forgiveness of the loan will be requested.
 - iv) We are gaining experience with utility expenses during this year of operating the new equipment.
 - v) Higher than expected payments to the accountants relate to one-time additional effort to clarify data entry and reports.
 - vi) Mara moved approval to pay budgeted benevolence commitments for the first quarter; John seconded; motion passed.
 - b) 2021 Task Force – Ed reviewed proposed revisions to the spending plan.
 - i) Ed moved that Council adopt a revised ministry spending plan defined by Plan E that includes income from the PPP loan, income from the Hokie Hangout, and a prorated amount from the anonymous donation for campus ministry as well as indicated decreases in expenditures. To provide some level of flexibility for the balance of 2021, the Pastor, President and Vice President of Council may authorize adjustments up to 15% for any line item in consultation with the convenor of the Committee on Finance. Revisions above that threshold will require approval by Congregation Council. Plan E will reflect the addition of \$500 for supply pastor. John seconded; motion passed.
 - ii) The revised plan will be sent to members by email and regular mail as necessary.
 - iii) Carolyn moved the congregation apply for the second round of the PPP loan; Karl seconded; motion passed.

- c) Christ Lutheran/ LMLC-Well partnership – Carolyn reported that Christ Lutheran has submitted a letter from both congregations to Rebecca Walls to initiate the call process for the shared full-time pastor.
 - i) Pastor Monica moved approval of Rachel Larson and Carolyn Howard from LMLC and Ryan McIlwee and Rachel Rosenquist from the Well to serve on the call committee. Ed seconded; motion passed.
- d) Council Launch 2021
 - i) Karl reported no specific plans from fellowship at this time.
 - ii) Carol reported preparation of a welcome letter for in-person worship.
- e) COVID task group - Lois reviewed the report from the task force with specific emphasis on return to in-person worship.
 - i) The Gospel and sermon will be recorded and other virtual resources will be available from the VA Synod.
 - ii) Lay leaders and servers will be recruited.
 - iii) Opportunities for the focus of worship include Scout Sunday, memorials, and care of creation.
 - iv) Pastor Monica moved adoption of the recommendations from the task force; Teresa seconded; motion passed.
- f) Long Range Visioning – Pastor Monica moved to form a Long-Range Visioning Task Force to be chaired by Ed Vigen. Mara seconded; motion passed.
- g) Wedding Policy – Pastor Monica moved to approve the revised wedding policy; Karl seconded; motion passed.
- h) Personnel Policy – Patty reviewed the added revisions recommended at the last meeting as included in the council packet.
 - i) Several changes were identified that the personnel committee will finalize.
 - ii) Mara moved approval of the Personnel Policy with noted revisions; Pastor Monica seconded; motion passed.
 - iii) Patty will provide the final document to council prior to the next meeting
- 5) Andy initiated an Executive Session to discuss a personnel issue. At the close of this session, Pastor Monica moved to extend the meeting until 2:30 pm. Ed Seconded; motion passed.
- 6) Evangelism – Pastor Monica addressed how persons join worship from the congregations in the Blacksburg/Radford Lutheran Fellowship.
 - a) The best estimate for participation is to add the numbers from Vimeo and YouTube data.
 - b) Open Door Grants – request additional suggestions for actions that might qualify for grant support.
 - c) Creating blogs take intentional effort. Perhaps Nita can expand the efforts she has in place to promote music at LMLC.
- 7) Pastor’s Report – Pastor clarified that counseling effort varies over time but that connections with non-members are welcomed as are conversations with persons who ask questions related to the rainbow flags.
- 8) Campus Ministry – Alyssa acknowledged the important contribution of graduating seniors to the vibrant ministry of the Well and requested prayers for them as they move to new experiences.
- 9) Anniversary/homecoming – Pastor Monica and Andy will be reviewing possible ways to connect with the 135 anniversary of the charter for LMLC and the congregations in the Blacksburg Lutheran Fellowship.

10) New Business

- a) Committee on Creation Care – Ed Vigen reviewed the proposal to establish a meadow/pollinator garden, which the town of Blacksburg encourages with the expectation that it is an intentional garden.
 - i) Consideration of a review of the project perhaps spring 2022.
 - ii) Keep the Well informed as it may affect parking options.
 - iii) Ed moved to establish a pollinator demonstration pollinator garden with a no mow component that would cover 20-30% of the area beside and behind the shelter. The precise area to be determined and would be worked out between the CCC and the Property Committee/Lawn Mowing team. The area would include the pine trees behind the shelter and an area that get a lot of sun for the pollinator demonstration garden with review by February 2022. John seconded; motion passed.
- b) Virginia Synod Assembly – two voting members are expected. John nominated Lois Voss and Karl nominated Carol, who accepted the nomination. Council approved their representing LMLC at the Synodical Assembly, June 12, 2021.
- c) John moved extension of the meeting time to 2:45 pm. Ed seconded; motion passed.
- d) von Bora House – Pastor Monica reviewed some options for use
 - i) Use the house for an intentional student community would require an investment of up to \$100,000 to meet requirements for this purpose.
 - ii) Raze the house and build a parking lot - zoning and other considerations
 - iii) Continued use for temporary housing remains a need for social services. Need to address ongoing water problems in the basement.
 - iv) Possible property development for affordable housing.
 - v) Recommendation to include planning for property use in the Long-Range Planning Task Force accepted by consensus.
- e) Revision of by-laws – Lois requested that for all future meetings a space be available to consider

11) Next meeting: May 23, 12:30 am - 2:00 pm; devotions-Carolyn Howard

12) Adjournment – Andy adjourned the meeting at 2:40 pm.

13) Pastor Monica closed the meeting with prayer

Out of session action via email:

May 11, 2021 Carolyn Howard moved to approve Zelma Harris to replace Rachel Larson as a member of the CLC / LMLC/The Well Shared Minister call committee, and Karl Pederson as an alternate committee member; Andy Hansbrough seconded the motion. Following receipt of votes by email through May 13, President Hansbrough reported the motion passed.

Submitted by John Hess, Secretary, May 17, 2021

Council Corner May 2021 (Submitted to Marcia Barrow on April 26 for May Newsletter)

1. Approved payments to local benevolence pledges for the first quarter.
2. Accepted the recommendation from the COVID-19 task force to initiate in-person, outdoor worship on May 30. Lay leaders, tellers, greeters, and persons to assist with preparing the worship space will be needed.

3. Approved the members of the Call Committee for the campus pastor: Carolyn Howard (LMLC), Rev. Rachel Larson (LMLC), Ryan McIlwee (The Well) and Rachel Rosenquist (The Well). Christ Lutheran has named two persons to the committee. The members from The Well have voice but no voting privilege on the committee. The call process has been initiated with Rebecca Walls, Virginia Synod.
4. Established a task force, chaired by Ed Vigen to focus on long-term planning and visioning for LMLC, which will include evaluation of options for the best use of the Von Bora House and property.
5. Adopted the revised wedding policy presented by Pastor Monica.
6. Adopted the revised personnel policy prepared by the Committee on Personnel.
7. Adopted the recommendation from the Committee on Creation Care to establish a no-mow, pollinator, demonstration garden to be located on the west side of the picnic shelter. Details will be established with input from the Committee on Property and the Lawn Mowing crews.
8. Approved Carol Reynolds and Lois Voss to be voting delegates at the Synodical Assembly, June 12, 2021, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm using a Zoom format.
9. Considered opportunity through the Open-Door Grants program (ELCA) to plan tangible actions for welcoming the community as we return to in-person worship.
10. Will review initial input from committees on revisions to the bylaws in May with ongoing review through the summer months.