

**St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Perrysville, Pennsylvania  
Council Minutes**

**Date: October 7, 2019 FINAL**

Attendees:

Ben Engelhard, President; Steve Zinger, Vice President; Jenn Harris, Treasurer; Matt Pritchard, Secretary; Pr. Michael Robinson, Pastor; Melinda Dishong; John Frantz; Jess Freeman; Susan Falk; John Halley; Jeanne Hendricks; Mark Anderson; and Charlie Wingerd were present. Laurie Mazure was absent but excused. There were no guests.

Secretary Matt Pritchard noted the existence of a quorum of council.

The meeting was called to order in the undercroft of the church by President Ben Engelhard at 7:02pm.

Devotions: Pastor Robinson offer a devotion, discussing the hymns sung during Service on October 6, 2019, one of which was Taste and See. It proved very popular and was requested for "every" Service.

The devotion concluded with a prayer.

Pastor's Report: Regarding the care and concern list, Pastor Robinson reported that members Nicholas Kecks (9/10) and Donald Madora (9/21) passed away and that Denny Capo has been hospitalized. Pastor Robinson took a week of vacation from September 16th through the 23rd. During that time Pastor visited Trinity Lutheran Church of Magnolia, Ohio for it 175th Anniversary. He had been ordained at that Church on August 11, 1985.

There were two weddings in October: Wintermantel/Mazzetti and Phaff/Baurle. Pastor will attend Confirmation Camp at Lutherlyn on October 19th and celebrate Reformation Sunday on October 27th. Lastly, Pastor offered his sympathies to Gail Stutz upon the death of her husband Paul Stutz on October 3rd.

Secretary's Report: Matt Pritchard reviewed the August 26th and September 8th (Special Meeting) minutes, previously distributed electronically, for review.

A motion to accept the minutes, as corrected, was made by Mr. Zinger and seconded by Mrs. Hendricks. The motion carried on a voice vote with one abstention.

Lastly, Mr. Pritchard reported that he cannot attend the November Meeting due to business in Philadelphia.

Treasurer's Report: Jenn Harris distributed and reviewed the Treasurer's Report for September. She reported a deficit of about \$18,000 based on a decrease in donations without any extraordinary expenses (apart from the landscaping project). Additionally, she is aware of a request from the Quilting Ladies for approximately \$175 (\$2-3 per quilt) for shipping.

There were no questions.

President's Report: Ben Engelhard reported on feedback from our vote concerning consolidating Sunday Services, which trended more positive than negative, except for one communication directed to him. There have been some comments as to whether we had full communication to the 8am Service. He encouraged everyone to wait and see what kind of reaction continues to occur, suggesting that everyone can respond as they wish.

Mr. Engelhard indicated that he needs help with the website - temporary, volunteer assistance is fine.

Mr. Engelhard indicated that Steve Slepecki, our intern, is quite enthusiastic and intends to invite him to some of our meetings. Steve has provided us with a memo outlining his time with us. Mr. Pritchard made a comment that we should solicit the Youth Groups for assistance with the website.

Correspondence: Lutheran Senior Life Foundation - \$50 gift (Lutheran Service Society is now under the auspices of LSLF).

### **Committee Reports**

Worship and Music: John Halley distributed (electronically) and reviewed the minutes from the September Worship and Music Committee, highlighted plans for a St. John's brochure and Volunteering Opportunity booklet. He also addressed the Handbell Choir directorship, as Mr. David Freeman has expressed interest and will be invited to the next meeting on October 21st. The Committee is developing a plan for the Handbell Choir by the Thanksgiving/Advent timeframe. There will be no age limit for the choir and we would need 8 or so members.

There is no update on the implementation of Sounds & Seasons in place of the Today's Readings insert for the lectionary readings in the weekly bulletin .

The concert on September 22nd broke even (expenses were: \$750 paid to the musicians plus the cost of a cake). The next concert is in December. John expressed some concern about the schedule for the Chancel Organ work. Steve Slepecki will be invited to the next Committee meeting to discuss his role with Worship.

Youth: Jessica Freeman provided an oral summary of Kerry Anderson's report (attached). In addition, she indicated that there is an interest in painting the Youth Room. Lastly, there has been some discussion of combining our youth efforts with other congregations.

Christian Education: Jeanne Hendricks reported that there are an additional seven (7) 5th and 6th grade members to acolyte starting in January. There will be four (4) 3rd graders receiving their Bibles and plans for a christian Education sponsored coffee on Reformation Sunday.

She also reported spending \$954 on new televisions for our classrooms. Lastly, Confirmation Camp expenditures will be in 2019, as it has been moved to the Fall (October 2019).

Evangelism: Charlie Wingerd encourage members of Council (and everyone) to extend invitations to attend Advent and Christmas services. He also noted that Stewardship Sunday will be November 17th. First Communion will be on All Saints Day. Lastly, A woman named Gracie (attending 6:30pm service) has expressed an interest in becoming a member.

Stewardship: Steve Zinger reported working a letter to the Congregation encouraging end-of-year giving. We need a push for the last quarter of the year. On a positive note, giving for the Organ Fund has been excellent. Mr. Zinger announced that Stewardship Sunday will be November 17th.

Social Ministry/WOSJ: NO REPORT.

MOSJ: Steve Zinger reported that the MOSJ hosted an outreach dinner on September 26th at the Pleasant Valley Mens' Shelter. Schedule/dates for planned activities for 2020 has been sent. November will be busy - Pork & Sauerkraut Dinner is November 9th - get your tickets now!

Finance: Report was deferred until New Business.

Property: Report was deferred until Old Business.

Old Business:

Organ Update: Mr. Frantz discussed the written report of the Organ committee, indicating that Walker is on target for early December delivery date, with re-leathering beginning in January 2020 and that financing/contributions are strong. While the electrical work is complete, the cost was higher than expected because of unexpected drilling and wire fishing efforts.

Lastly, the Choir Room project is complete except for music re-filing - see report.

Kitchen Proposal Update and Voting Schedule: InTex Contracting provided a proposal (\$14.5k for materials with a total of \$16.8k including labor). We will need to pay a deposit to begin the equipment ordering process. We have received a \$5,000 donation from a congregant toward this project. The additional money to complete it is already in the capital account. A discussion of permitting, if any, followed.

Mr. Zinger introduced a motion that was discussed and amended. Eventually, Mr. Zinger moved that Council recommend the approval of the InTex contract to replace the existing cooking appliances in the kitchen in the amount of \$16,800, to be entered after the approval by a vote of the Congregation. The motion was seconded by Mr. Halley. The motion was unanimously approved, with abstentions from Mr. Wingerd and Mr. Anderson.

Auditor Position Update: Mr. Zinger reported that he has been keeping up with the necessary month-to-month activities and is still looking to identify an individual to step up and assume responsibility for the position.

Landscaping Project Update: Mr. Zinger reported that the Landscaping project is complete, which was slightly more expensive due to unexpected expenses to make minor concrete repairs.

Update on Consolidation of Sunday Services: This topic was addressed in the President's Report (above).

New Business:

#### Budget Presentation and Approval and Voting Schedule:

Mr. Anderson discussed the status of our current budget - expenses holding steady with a slight increase in Property and for ?????, while contributions have fallen short of our budget. He is unsure if the Organ Project has had an impact but feels that the shortfall is not a structural issue. We will try to hold steady on the next budget with a 2% increase in personnel expenses.

During a discussion, Council members agreed that the shortfall in contributions is likely due to the Organ Project, particularly since attendance has remained steady. We will also need to continue to focus on demographic changes in the Congregation.

Mr. Anderson moved to recommend advancing the proposed 2020 Budget to the Congregation for approval. The motion was seconded by Mr. Zinger. The motion was approved 11-1 with no absentions.

Mr. Engelhard indicated that a letter will go to the Congregation with the Kitchen and Budget proposal to be mailed this week. A presentation on these topics will be made during Services prior to the vote of the Congregation, scheduled for October 26th and 27th.

A brief discussion was held as to the various lengths of service of current Council members. Mr. Engelhard and various members agreed to follow-up with Bonnie Polaski to confirm their individual lengths of service, as the Constitution and By-laws limit participation to two (2) three (3) year terms.

#### Pastor Benefits and Expenses for 2020:

Mr. Frantz discussed published guidance from the Synod concerning Pastor compensation, including benefits. The 2020 budget numbers amount to a two percent (2%) increase in compensation in general. 2019 was complicated by the ages (insurance) of Pastor Robinson and his wife. The minimum guidelines promoted by the Synod are met in the proposed budget, despite some uncertainty as to the exact expense for health care due to Pastor's plans concerning Medicare. We may also need to revisit how we handle automobile expense allocation, to provide an opportunity to Pastor Robinson to minimize his tax liability without meaningful change to our actual expenses to to changes in federal tax law.

Lastly, Mrs. Falk made a motion to allot \$525 to pay for shipping of quilts from the Memorial Unrestricted account (800 380). The motion was seconded by Mrs. Freeman. And was passed unanimously.

Next Meeting: November 4, 2019 at 7:00 pm.

There being no further business before Council, a motion to adjourn was made and approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:04pm with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Pritchard

Council Secretary