

Ezekiel Lutheran Church Council – Final Approved
January 18th, 2021 – 6:30 p.m. (ZOOM)

Present:

Pastor Dave Wrightsman
Torrey Prigge (President)
Max Neuhaus (President-Elect)
Sue Hodgson (Treasurer)
Angel Egan (Secretary)
Jeannie Solum (Stewardship)
Michael Hofland (Service and Mission)
Patti Graf-Palmer (Connect)
Amanda Whipkey (Grow)

Loretta Peterson (Personnel)
Jeff Bjork (Property)
Ellie Richards (Worship)
Tom Bauer (Guest)
Ross VanOverbeke (Guest)
Ruth Emerson (Guest)
Teri Odegard (2021 President-Elect)
Steve Miller (2021 Treasurer-Elect)

Not Present: Dave Hallquist (Worship), Invite Committee Representative

1. CALL TO ORDER

- Torrey called the meeting to order @ 6:32 pm.
- Approval of Agenda:
 - i. Motion for petition received from church members to be discussed with Ezekiel council members only. **Moved and seconded (Sue/Max); motion passed.**
 - ii. **Moved and Seconded to approve January 18th, 2021 Council meeting agenda (Loretta/Max); motion passed unanimously.**
- Devotions: Pastor Dave
 - i. As a result of political unrest and the upcoming inauguration, many people are filled with fear and uncertainty for our country.
 - ii. Fear is lurking everywhere; worldwide, nationally, statewide, locally. It is difficult to put those fears behind us and know how to move forward.
 - iii. Philippians 4:4-7: On all occasions we should rejoice.
 - *4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! 5 Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. 6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*
 - iv. We give our anxiety to God and allow him to give us peace even if it defies our understanding. God is with us and providing us with everything we need.

2. SPECIAL REPORTS

- Secretary's Report: Angel
 - i. **Moved and seconded to approve the minutes from the December 21st, 2020 Council meeting (Angel/Jeff); motion passed unanimously.**
- Treasurer's Report: Sue
 - i. **Moved and seconded to approve the December 2020 Treasurer's Report (Loretta/Jeff); motion passed unanimously.**
 - ii. General Fund 2020 – Monthly Summary:

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December Income	\$ 214,365
December Expenses	\$ 76,733
December Difference	\$ 137,632

iii. General Fund – YTD Summary:

2020 YTD Income	\$ 625,588
2020 YTD Expenses	\$ 556,860
2020 YTD Difference	\$ 68,728

- Prior to December, we were tracking to an estimated (\$25,000) net deficit as offerings were tracking to approximately 75% of pre-COVID giving levels; we were holding \$45,000 in PPP funds in reserve to apply to the 2020 year-end deficit if necessary.
- Based on member giving, Ezekiel ended in the black, netting a surplus with the PPP funds applied after approved expenses.
- PPP loan was consolidated with general budget which reflects part of the income balance change.
- 2021 will begin with a positive surplus of \$114,611.

iv. General Fund Balance with Retained Income – YTD Summary:

2020 YTD Fund Balance	\$ 114,611
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v. Checking Balance

December Checking Balance	\$ 457,321
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- Checking balance includes \$120,000 CARES-PPP loan received as part of the COVID financial support offered by the IRS, and the WI CARES Grant.
- The PPP loan functions as a grant and repayment is not required if monies are used for the designated purposes according to the terms provided (i.e. payroll; staffing must be retained at the required limits, etc.).
- Ezekiel needs to report information regarding the PPP funds usage; paperwork has been submitted. Additional information will be forthcoming from Ezekiel’s banker, if necessary.
- New PPP loan program has been announced. As of January 18th, we do not believe that we will qualify for the new round as there needs to be a 25% reduction in gross receipts.

vi. Mortgage Summary

Mortgage Loan Balance	\$ 681,394
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vii. Total Endowments & Other Investments

Total Endowments & Other Investments	\$ 600,951
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- Money held in the ELCA Pooled Trust Fund (about **\$86,000**) was applied to fund the roofing project that commenced and was completed during summer 2020. The Trust Fund account has now been closed.

viii. Shine the Light Campaign

- The Shine the Light appeal began in 2019 with a goal of \$840,00.
 - a. Funds are divided among:
 - i. Mortgage: 75%
 - ii. Ministry: 15%*

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- iii. Mission: 10%
 - Pledges received as of 12/31/20: \$518,178
 - As of 12/31/20, 33% of the campaign is complete; 45% of pledges (\$230,608) have been received.
 - Ministry funds are used to launch new staff, programs/initiatives. Currently, only the new part-time Director of Youth Ministry (\$15,600) is funded through Shine!
 - \$20,373 of PPP funds were used to eliminate the deficit that had accrued in the Ministry Funds
- viii. WI CARES Grants
 - Jacob's Ladder received \$57,595 of special COVID-related WI state grants that were used to supplement COVID-related expenses.
 - \$18,100 of those grants are being carried forward to 2021.

3. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Service and Mission: Michael
 - i. Committee met via Zoom on January 11th.
 - ii. Ezekiel Volunteers of the Year for 2020, The Green Team Solar Panel Committee, will be honored in the second bi-monthly Ezekiel newsletter. Committee members to be recognized: Gwen Conklin (Chair), Don Richards, Sandy Tauferner (volunteer), and Valerie Woods.
 - iii. Ecumenical Giving Tree was successful, despite COVID challenges. 42 children received presents, 22 families each got \$100 grocery cards. May explore hosting virtually again in 2021.
 - iv. February \$500 going to Methodist Nuns in Honduras who are raising money to repair their local hospital. The roof was torn off during the last hurricane and they are seeking to raise \$70,000 to repair it. The Service and Mission Committee proposed a motion for Council to approve an additional \$500 from mission fund to support his cause; **Moved and seconded (Michael/Sue); motion passed unanimously.**
 - v. Committee is also requesting Council permission to run Operation Starfish from February 17th (Ash Wednesday) thru Easter Sunday, April 4th; **Moved and seconded (Michael/Angel); motion passed unanimously.**
 - This year, the *It Takes a Village Concert* will not take place as there are no functioning choirs due to COVID.
 - Committee will work on PR to get the word out and seek donations, including newsletter article.
 - vi. Curt provided update to the Service and Mission Committee regarding the Haiti Health Center; there has been additional progress made.
- Worship: Ellie for David
 - i. Last met in October 2020. No current updates.
- Property: Jeff
 - i. Committee has not physically met but has discussed information via phone.

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- ii. Committee will be working with Amy of Jacob's Ladder to coordinate painting; hoping to build a schedule to not interfere with activities.
- iii. Plan is to start painting the hallway using volunteer labor; may wait to do classroom areas until spring break.

- Stewardship: Jeannie
 - i. Committee has not met; annual report submitted.

- Personnel: Loretta
 - i. Last month Personnel refined the Business Manager position and posted externally.
 - Currently determining which applicants to bring in for interviews.
 - ii. At their January 12th meeting, Personnel approved a 3-6 month long interim Confirmation Ministry position (PT/10 hours per week), and corresponding job description.
 - Council unanimously voted to approve the job description for PT Interim Confirmation Director and approved a short-term hire, Ally Klug, for the role.
 - iii. Temporary "fill-in" organist, Jon Albright, was hired for traditional worship beginning with Sunday, January 24th virtual service.
 - iv. Personnel approved staff development/training with third-party consultant.

- Connect: Patti
 - i. Committee has not met; annual report submitted.

- Grow: Amanda
 - i. Committee has not met since last Council meeting.
 - ii. Josh has been able to restart Fireside meetings with small groups of high school students.
 - iii. Marci Norum and Barb Kuss have started working on the library; additional details may be available at next meeting.

- Jacob's Ladder: Max
 - i. Registration for pre-school is set for February 8th at 9:00 am to fill open positions that are available.
 - No Open House will be held for registration, but Amy has offered and conducted several private tours.
 - Registration forms are available online via the Ezekiel website, in the church office or via any Jacob's Ladder classroom.
 - Children must be 3 by October 15th, 2021 to register.
 - Classes offered:
 - a) 3 ½ - 5-year-olds 3 days: M-W-F 9:00-11:30 am or T-W-Th 12:45-3:15 pm
 - b) 3-year-olds: T-TH 9:00-11:30 am
 - ii. Annual butter braids fundraiser is upcoming in late February/March (funds will be used to help replenish the preschool scholarship fund).
 - Order forms will be available in the Church office for Ezekiel members to order.

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- iii. Painting of the hallways both upstairs and in the lower levels is back on radar. Working with Jeff Bjork on the Property Committee. People are on board, ready and willing to help.

- Invite: No committee representative available for this month's meeting
 - i. Pastor Dave: Invite Committee has a very difficult task, especially without in-person worship.
 - ii. We continue to monitor new members who had been in line to join Ezekiel prior to the COVID-19 situation.

- Acknowledgements/Nominations:
 - i. Paul Moe retiring as Business Manager on January 31st, 2021.
 - Would like to get a group to spearhead his acknowledgment.
 - ii. Spiritual Care Committee (Dot Seebach, Jan Ingersoll, Fern Tomaszewski, and Susan Gnatzig) retiring.
 - Pastor Dave to include a tribute in an upcoming newsletter.

4. PASTOR WRIGHTSMAN'S REPORT

- Curbside Communion has restarted; 70-90 families have been participating.
- Living the Message Class – continues to be a joy to teach.
 - i. 26 people; two-year bible study.
 - ii. Lots of good questions.
- Temporarily hired Ally Klug, originally from Spring Valley for part-time Confirmation Director role. Experienced in confirmation and youth ministry. Full-time seminary student. Ally will work with programming for 6-9th graders.
- John Albright will fill in as organist. Thankful to Rich Kuss and Matthew Mitchell for filling in musically for blended virtual services.
- Planning to have a third-party consultant come work with youth programming staff on team-building and increased communication standards.
- Pastor Dave declaring \$25,000 for housing allowance as per requirement.

5. OLD BUSINESS

- Ezekiel Web design (by Brilliant Impact) update
 - i. Paul Moe and Pastor Dave have been working since late November 2020 with Jonathan Harsdorf from Brilliant Impact.
 - ii. He is approximately halfway through website buildout.
 - iii. Trying to capture video of Ezekiel, but he missing opportunity to get "people pictures" without in person worship. Once COVID allows, he will come back to capture more footage for the website.
- In-person worship begin date
 - i. Fifth Sunday of the month healing service will take place in-person on January 31st @ 10:00-11:00 AM. Matthew will play instrumental music.
 - ii. Going to continue virtual services to run concurrent to in-person services.
 - iii. Plan is to consider doing one blended in-person service on Sundays
 - Can do pre-recorded, virtual Wednesday services for Lent starting on Ash Wednesday.

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- In person blended Sunday worship @ 9:30 am to begin March 7th moving forward, with one service to serve as a “practice run” on February 21st.
 - a. Other locations currently holding in-person services include 1st Covenant Church, Journey Church, St. Bridget’s, and Memorial.
- Nominating Committee
 - i. Still looking for one committee chairperson.
 - ii. Still looking to fill out the nominating committee for next year.
- Annual meeting (January 31st at 1 pm)
 - i. Proposal:
 - Acknowledge proxy and absentee voting is prohibited by Ezekiel’s constitution.
 - Individuals will have choices about how to attend annual meeting.
 - Goal is to keep it safe.
 - Offer onsite presence:
 - a. Attendees will be required to sign up in advance.
 - b. Building will be open for attendance:
 - i. Sanctuary – we can accommodate up to 75
 - ii. Have capability in the building to have people in the fellowship hall (15), Room 100 (15), Room 200 (15) to view the meeting via Closed Circuit TV broadcast.
 - c. Now are in possession of a parking lot transmitter
 - i. People within 1 mile can tune to 87.9 (suggested location is the 1st National Bank parking lot) and can listen to the meeting.
 - Private Link to YouTube live
 - a. Required to sign up in advance.
 - Voting
 - a. If you are attending in person, listening to the transmitted meeting or watching via the private YouTube link, you are considered “in attendance.”
 - b. Everyone who is “on-site” will be able to vote.
 - c. For those who are remote, may be given an option to call the church to log/submit their vote.
 - d. If there are questions via remote attendees, they can call in accordingly.
 - Will have a “dress rehearsal” with the Treasurer’s report on Sunday, January 24th.
 - Requesting a neutral Parliamentarian from the Synod.
- Wednesday Meals
 - i. Reaching out to individuals to help coordinate Wednesday meals going forward.
 - ii. Barb Kuss has agreed to be on rotating schedule, along with Mary Frederickson and one confirmation family per week.
 - iii. December weekly meals served approximately 50 people per week.

6. NEW BUSINESS

- Petition to Ezekiel Lutheran Church Council
 - i. Closed discussion held among Ezekiel Church Council regarding two-question petition received from congregation members regarding Serina Bentley’s separation from Ezekiel.
 - ii. **Moved and seconded (Max/Patti) to hold congregational listening session at 11:00 am on February 14th, 2021 regarding the termination of Serina Bentley; motion passed unanimously.**

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- It is understood that information provided at the listening session may be limited due to confidentiality.
- We will listen to concerns from the congregation and determine how we can heal and move forward together.

7. DATES TO REMEMBER

- Finance Meeting January 24th (Sunday) @ 10:00 AM (Room 100)
- Ezekiel Annual Meeting January 31st (Sunday) @ 1:00 PM (Sanctuary)

8. NEXT MONTH: Devotions:

- February 18th (Thursday) @ 6:30 PM – Max Neuhaus
- Effective February 2021, Church Council Meetings will now be held at on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 6:30 PM.

9. Motion to adjourn: (Patti/Jeannie); meeting adjourned at 10:34 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Angel Egan, Secretary