

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Pastor and Executive Committee:

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pastor Dave Wrightsman | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> David Bell (Personnel) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Max Neuhaus (President) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Patti Graf-Palmer (Connect) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teri Odegard (President-Elect) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amanda Whipkey (Grow) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Angel Egan (Secretary) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Holly Mitchell (Invite) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steve Miller (Treasurer) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tom Bauer (Worship) |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ruth Emerson (Guest) |

Committee Chairs:

- Michael Hofland (Service and Mission)
- Jeff Bjork (Property)
- Tyler Linton (Stewardship)

1. CALL TO ORDER – Max

- A. Max called the meeting to order @ 6:35 pm.

1. DEVOTIONS – Angel

A. Trusting God in Difficult Times

- i. Isaiah 40:29-31
- ii. God is by your side and gives you strength, even when the times are tough and the future is uncertain.

2. ROUND TABLE – Max

- A. Max invited Council members to share something good that happened recently along with something they are looking forward to.

3. SECRETARY’S REPORT/APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Angel

- A. Additional detail received from Tyler Linton was added to Stewardship section.
- B. **Moved and seconded to approve the minutes from the March 18th, 2021 Council meeting (Steve Miller/Jeff Bjork); motion carried unanimously.**

4. TREASURER’S REPORT AND APPROVAL OF FINANCIALS - Steve

- A. **Moved and seconded to approve the March 2021 Treasurer’s Report (Tyler Linton/Jeff Bjork); motion passed unanimously.**
- B. General Fund 2021 – Monthly Summary:
 - i. Giving was still lower than anticipated for March.
 - ii. Budgeted expenses were also lower, primarily as a result from open salaried positions: Assistant Pastor and Faith Formation/Confirmation Ministry. These expenses will remain lower until positions are called/filled.

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| March Income | \$ 37,994 |
| March Expenses | \$ 42,333 |
| March Cash Flow | (\$ 4,339) |

- C. General Fund 2021 – YTD Summary:

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| 2021 YTD Income | \$ 118,742 |
| 2021 YTD Expenses | \$ 143,311 |
| 2021 YTD Cash Flow | (\$ 24,569) |

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

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| 2021 YTD Fund Balance | \$ 90,041.83 |
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E. Checking Balance:

- i. \$500,000 was transitioned from checking into the ELCA account to boost return on investment.

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| March Checking Balance | \$ 246,210 |
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F. Mortgage Summary:

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| Mortgage Loan Balance | \$ 655,251 |
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G. Total Endowments & Other Investments:

- i. \$500,000 transferred from checking into the ELCA fund:
 \$300,000 allocated to endowment.
 \$200,000 allocated to building/sanctuary renewal projects.

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| Total Endowments & Other Investments | \$ 822,900 |
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H. Shine the Light! Campaign:

The Shine the Light! appeal campaign began in 2019 with a goal of \$ 840,000.

- i. Funds are divided among:
- a. Mortgage: 75%
 - b. Ministry: 15%
 - Ministry funds are used to launch new staff and programs/initiatives.
 - Only the part-time Director of Youth Ministry (\$ 15,600) was being funded through Shine!
 - c. Mission: 10%
- ii. Pledges committed as of 3/31/2021: \$ 530,178
- iii. As of 3/31/2021, 42% of the appeal is complete; 55% of pledges (\$ 290,418) have been received.

5. MINISTRY COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Service and Mission: Michael

- i. Met on April 12, 2021.
- ii. The Starfish Program ran from Ash Wednesday through Easter Sunday, April 4th. Offerings totaled \$3,015 and will be used in support of our Haiti program.
- iii. Committee approved April's \$500 mission project for the Haiti Health Center.

- iv. Tom Anderson provided a great report on ARC (Area Resource Center), which has served the River Falls area for 15 years.
 - a. The Ellsworth area was added in 2012.
 - b. In 2020, ARC distributed \$98,000 in support of 537 families.
 - c. \$27,000 of support has already been awarded to area families in 2021.
 - d. Food, gas, etc. cards are always given in lieu of cash awards.
 - e. ARC has a close working relationship with Our Neighbor's Place.
 - v. **Moved and seconded (Michel Hofland/Angel Egan) for Ezekiel's Synod Assembly offering to be \$4,000 taken from the Mission Fund; motion approved unanimously.**
 - a. **Steve Miller to review availability of funds.**
 - vi. The construction of the Haiti Health Center is nearing completion and will soon be in operation.
 - vii. Curt Larson gave an update on the Haitian Relief Services direct mailing fund-drive that replaced last year's "It Takes a Village" Haiti benefit concert.
 - a. The goal of \$60,000 has been exceeded, which will be used in support of the Ganthier school, orphanage, and health center.
 - viii. Ezekiel received a letter of thanks from ETI (Educate Tanzania, Inc.).
 - a. The \$1,000 contributed by Ezekiel to ETI this year will go toward the pineapple processing plant to be built by ETI in Karagwe, Tanzania.
- B. Property: Jeff
- i. Met on Monday, April 12th regarding audio-visual system updates.
 - ii. Bid received for \$72,630 video system upgrade proposal, including ascending screen and live service broadcast capabilities. Will have two fixed cameras and one portable.
 - a. Cost will be covered by building fund.
 - b. Cost will include training.
 - iii. **Moved and seconded (Jeff Bjork/Tom Bauer) to accept bid from Reach Communications, Inc.: \$72,630 to pay for audio-visual system upgrades; motion passed unanimously.**
 - iv. Thank you to the volunteers from the ad hoc AV committee: Jim Ashbach, Jeff Bjorke, Paul Moe, Sue Hodgson, Jeremy Odegard, Joyce Breen, Tom Bauer and Pastor David Wrightsman.
 - v. Finished painting upstairs and downstairs in the Jacob's Ladder areas.
 - vi. Areas around the church building and rental properties have been cleaned up for spring.
- C. Stewardship: Tyler
- i. Did not yet meet this month – will be meeting on April 18th.
 - ii. Will also meet with Pastor Dave to discuss future vision/activities.
- D. Personnel: David
- i. The Personnel Committee met on March 30th, April 6th, and April 9th.
 - ii. March 30th: The Personnel Committee, Pastor Dave, Sandy Tauferner, and Marci Norum met to discuss mediation options and reach consensus on how to move forward.
 - a. It was agreed that the Personnel Committee should make the final decision regarding the selection of the mediator. Agreed to focus on employee mediation first and then move on to staff development. The initial goal will be to select a mediator; there is no expectation that we will use the same organization for both.

- b. Three consulting options were considered and further researched: St. Croix Valley Restorative Services, Clarity Central, and at the suggestion of Steve Anderson, Holy Cow Consulting. Personnel Committee agreed to make final decision at the April 6th meeting.
 - iii. April 6th: Mediation Services were selected and the scope of work defined.
 - a. The Personnel Committee unanimously approved Clarity Central.
 - Updates will be provided to Personnel only but will adhere to confidentiality concerns.
 - Intake meetings will be scheduled as soon as possible.
 - Not yet determined number of sessions; will be identified once sessions begin.
 - b. Process will be two phases: 1:1 sessions and the group conflict mediation session.
 - c. Cost was discussed; we will be invoiced for services monthly and can stop at any time.
 - d. Staff development will occur at a later date and as additional staff are onboarded; this process may or may not be done with same facilitation company.
 - iv. Personnel committee reviewed Senior Pastor Review process and approved the process.
 - v. **Moved and seconded (David Bell/Steve Miller) recommendation to extend Jon Albright's contract in accordance with prior terms until a permanent backfill is approved; motion approved unanimously.**
 - a. PD to verify 12 hours per week is acceptable.
 - vi. April 9th: Approved Director of Youth Ministry job description to backfill Josh's position.
 - a. Process will continue to publication for seeking open positions.
 - b. **Moved and seconded (David Bell/Jeff Bjork) to approve the Personnel Committee-approved Director of Youth Ministry job description; approved unanimously.**
 - c. Also discussed Associate Pastor and Music Ministry positions but no action was taken.
 - vii. Kris Bjerstedt resignation submitted on April 12th (announcement was expected).
 - a. Job will be posted in accordance with normal process.
 - b. **Moved and seconded (David Bell/Tyler Linton) to approve the Personnel Committee-approved Part-Time custodial job description; approved unanimously.**
- E. Connect: Patti
- i. Met on Monday, April 12th.
 - ii. Relay for Life
 - a. Committee has begun sales of flowers and butterflies that will go up and be displayed beginning May 1st.
 - b. Pet photo contest to be held in May.
 - Will solicit "competition" pictures for \$5 per entry.
 - iii. **Moved and seconded (Patti Graf-Palmer/Jeff Bjork) to set up collection jars in May for photo contest votes; motion passed unanimously.**
 - iv. Will be doing chocolate basket and pet basket for the Relay for Life event at St. Croix Central.
 - v. Table will be set up at Relay for Life; considering a "Golden Ticket" raffle for movie tickets to go along with Willy Wonka theme.
- F. Grow: Amanda
- i. Will be meeting in early May and will have more information at next Council meeting.
- G. Invite: Holly

- i. Met on Monday, April 12th.
- ii. Discussed text content for the new Ezekiel website.
- iii. Spiritual Care Committee – waiting on in-person attendance to normalize before further action.
 - a. Starting to brainstorm new committee members.
- iv. Discussed holding member survey.
 - a. General feeling that listening session filled this niche.
 - b. Concern a survey may trivialize current feelings/interactions.
- v. Invite Committee would like to see more action taken from results of listening session.
 - a. People felt like there would be more questions answered.
 - b. There is a desire for more recognition/validation from the listening session.
 - c. It was shared that staff hasn't felt like input has been acknowledged.

H. Worship: Tom

- i. Worship Committee has not yet met this month.
- ii. Will be exploring when it will be appropriate to go back to two services.

I. Jacob's Ladder Report: Teri

- i. Met on Monday, April 12th.
- ii. Very appreciative to Property Committee for painting.
- iii. Amy brought to attention the fact that the playground needs to be sanded and re-stained as some of the kiddos are getting splinters.

6. PASTOR'S REPORT – Pastor David

A. Shared reflections on Holy Week:

- i. Four recorded virtual and live services.
 - a. Thank you to all of the volunteers who assisted with the services.
 - b. Feedback is welcome regarding safety protocols, communion, music, etc.
- ii. 105+ in person in the sanctuary for last week's in-person services.
 - a. With increase in attendance, may be getting to the point where it is necessary to transition back to two services.

B. Six students celebrated their First Communion on Maundy Thursday.

- i. Limited number of communicants due to COVID; focused on those who needed this sacrament to start confirmation.

C. Held three baptisms this past two weeks – 5th, 6th, and 7th graders.

D. Staffing – while there are many retirements and resignations, this is not out of the ordinary and many were expected/planned, although still unsettling.

- a. PD shared he is full of great faith; we are doing our best led by the Holy Spirit.
- ii. Paul Moe begrudgingly agreed to allow himself to be "thanked" during a two-hour window next Thursday from 2-4 PM out in front of the church office.
- iii. Paul's replacement, Steve Devine-Jelinsky, is moving to River Falls with his three children the week of April 26th.
 - a. Assistance has been organized to assist with moving and meals.
 - b. Steve was in the office last week and will be in again next week.
- iv. Pastor David Almie will be retiring on May 30th.
 - a. This will be another position that will be posted; accounted for in the budget.
 - b. Pastor David has a list of about 50-60 members upon whom he calls and/or checks in.

Following Jesus, Living a Giving Faith Overflowing With Love

- c. Will be looking to acknowledge him in some way.
- E. PD discussed bible study.
- F. Josh decreased to 10 hours per week through the end of the school year.
 - i. He will be hosting Fireside with high schoolers until he leaves.
- G. Held in-person day retreats with both 6th graders and 9th graders.
 - i. 9th grade confirmation students completed the tie blankets for the Senior blessing on May 12th.
- H. Solar Panels – in process with Mike Noreen from the city. In line between projects with city and Steiner Plumbing. No specific date yet, but timeframe is likely late summer.
 - i. Jeff Bjork to follow up with Paul Moe ahead of his departure.

7. BUSINESS

- A. Approval of Nominating Committee Description
 - i. Thank you to Diane Bjornstal for researching and compiling the Nominating Committee description.
 - ii. **Moved and seconded (Patti Graf-Palmer/David Bell) to approve Nominating Committee Description; motion approved unanimously.**
- B. Approval of Senior Pastor Review Process
 - i. Thank you to Ed Schramm for providing background information on previous processes.
 - ii. **Moved and seconded (Tyler Linton/Tom Bauer) to approve Senior Pastor Review Process previously reviewed and approved by the Personnel Committee; motion approved unanimously.**
 - iii. Patti Graf-Palmer provided information regarding priorities that were put together during the Ministry Site Profile during the last call process.
- C. Informational: Call Committee for Associate Pastor Hiring Process
 - i. Agenda place holder as it involved call process.
 - ii. Ezekiel's constitution calls for Congregation Council to elect a six-member Call Committee.
 - iii. Suggestions to be sent to Executive Committee for suggestions of Associate Pastor Call Committee members during a set period of time; Ezekiel Executive Committee will then select members.
 - iv. Ezekiel will work a lot with the Synod.
 - a. We could be open to a Deacon (Diaconal Minister), but it would be a rostered position; Ministry Site Profile would be completed, approved by Council, and sent to the Synod.
 - v. Will need to reach out to Rev. Randy Olson from the Synod ahead of the next Council Meeting.
 - a. Council is asked to prayerfully consider candidates to share at the next Council Meeting.
- D. Informational: Reviewed Pastor Wrightsman & Ezekiel Agreement from October 4, 2019.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- A. Paul Moe
 - i. Steve Miller provided a selection of hand-crafted wood gifts; Council chose a vase.
 - ii. April 22nd "thank you" opportunity.
- B. Also selected gifts for Pastor David Almlie and Kris Bjerstedt.
- C. Will also brainstorm departing gift for Josh, perhaps a walking stick.
- D. Maintenance painting by "Bjork and Associates".
- E. Year of Ministry for Wednesday Meals – get list of names from PD.
 - i. Will sign cards at next Committee Meeting.

9. DATES TO REMEMBER

- A. Full Council meetings every 3rd Thursday of the month at 6:30pm.
- B. May meeting in room 200 with Zoom option TBD.
- C. June – will need a substitute Secretary as Angel will be unavailable.

10. NEXT MONTH:

- A. Business items: TBD
- B. Devotions: Jeff Bjork

11. CLOSING PRAYER – Pastor David

12. MOTION TO ADJOURN: (Patti Graf-Palmer/Tom Bauer); meeting adjourned at 8:57 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Angel Egan, Secretary