

ALL MEETING ITEMS ARE OPEN TO ALL MEMBERS EXCEPT ITEMS DESIGNATED AS CLOSED

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Pastor and Executive Committee:

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|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pastor Paul Svingen (Interim) | <input type="checkbox"/> Doug Cudd (Property) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pastor Jeff Smith (Interim Associate) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tyler Linton (Stewardship) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teri Odegard (President) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> David Bell (Personnel) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jim Ashbach (President-Elect) | <input type="checkbox"/> Megan Franklin (Connect) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Angel Egan (Secretary) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vicki Olson (Grow) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steve Miller (Treasurer) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nicky Thompson (Invite) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steve Devine-Jelinski (Business Administrator) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tom Bauer (Worship) |

Committee Chairs:

- Open* (Service and Mission)

1. CALL TO ORDER

- A. Teri called the meeting to order @ 6:30 p.m.

2. DEVOTIONS – Teri Odegard

- A. From *Grace for the Moment*. – Max Lucado
i. “Led by an unseen hand; the heart of Jesus is spiritual.”
B. *John 5:19*

3. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND THANK YOUS

- A. Staff in attendance – Leslie Benoy and Barb Kuss.

4. ROUND TABLE

- A. Council Introductions.
B. *An Empowerment Process* Introduction – Pastor Paul
i. *Empowerment Process* is being used as a guide for the TTF: “To support our growth as a permission-giving congregation living out our vision for mission.”
ii. Responsibility, Authority, and Accountability for staff and teams. Who is responsible for what? Who has the authority to make decisions? Who is accountable for the decisions that are made?
C. Council covenant – Pastor Paul to bring a copy to review ahead of Council retreat.

5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- A. **Moved and seconded (David Bell/Tyler Linton) to approve February 15th, 2022 meeting agenda with additional motions for Service & Mission and Connect Teams; motion approved unanimously.**

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Angel Egan

- A. **Moved and seconded (Steve Miller/Vicki Olson) to approve meeting minutes from the January 18th, 2022 Council meeting; motion approved unanimously.**

7. TREASURER’S REPORT/APPROVAL OF FINANCIALS – Steve Miller

EZEKIEL LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – FINAL (APPROVED 3/15/22)

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15TH, 2022

6:30 – 9:00 PM ROOM 200

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A. **Moved and seconded (Steve Miller/Tom Bauer) to approve the January 2022 Treasurer’s Report; motion passed unanimously.**

B. General Fund 2022 – Monthly Summary:

- i. Ezekiel uses an actual vs. accrual basis of accounting.
- ii. Income was extremely high in January as several families paid their yearly pledge.
- iii. January expenses reflect approximately \$13,000 under budget due to change in payroll timing.
 - a. With approval from personnel, a switch was made to biweekly payroll vs. semi-monthly at the beginning of 2022 as a more efficient way to handle hourly employee payroll. Employees will receive 26 checks per year vs. 24.
 - b. Because of this change, January only reflected one actual payroll period.
 - c. Most months will have two pay periods; two months during the year will have three pay periods.
- iv. Rental units:
 - a. Rental payments were received in February vs January.
 - b. Paid full year of property taxes – (\$10,679).

January Income	\$ 76,481
January Expenses	\$ 44,134
January Cash Flow	\$ 32,347

C. General Fund 2022 – YTD Summary:

2022 YTD Income	\$ 76,481
2022 YTD Expenses	(\$ 44,134)
2022 YTD Cash Flow	\$ 32,347

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

2022 YTD Fund Balance	\$ 167,127
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E. Checking Balance:

January Checking Balance	\$ 253,601
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F. Mortgage Summary:

Mortgage Loan Balance	\$ 567,113
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G. Total Endowments & Other Investments:

Total Endowments & Other Investments	\$ 910,156
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H. Shine the Light! Campaign

- i. The Shine the Light! appeal campaign began in 2019 with a goal of \$ 840,000.
- ii. Funds are divided among:
 - a. Mortgage: 75%
 - b. Ministry: 15%
 - Ministry funds are used to launch new staff and programs/initiatives.
 - c. Mission: 10%
- iii. Pledges committed as of 1/31/2022: \$ 530,178 with 48 families pledging.
- iv. As of 1/31/2022, 69% of the appeal is complete; 76% of pledges (\$ 405,355) have been received.

8. MINISTRY TEAM REPORTS

***Information reflected is summarized/extrapolated from ministry team reports received ahead of the February 15th council meeting.**

A. Personnel: David Bell

- i. Personnel Team met on Thursday, February 10th.
- ii. Diane Bjornstal provided an overview of the status of the Transition Task Force (TTF).
 - a. The committee discussed ways the Personnel Committee could support this work.
- iii. The committee reviewed and clarified the supervisory duties for program staff.
- iv. The committee discussed support to add a maximum of 5 days paid time off if an employee tests positive for COVID.
 - a. Jacob's Ladder and Ezekiel staff would be eligible.
 - b. The additional time off would only be approved if the staff member tests positive and needs to quarantine. The employee would not be eligible to take this time off if a spouse, child, or other member of the household tests positive.
 - c. The time could only be used during the public health's recommended quarantine.

B. Stewardship: Tyler Linton

- i. The Stewardship Team met briefly in person on Sunday, February 6th.
- ii. Team discussed the possibility of promoting March as Stewardship Awareness and Volunteerism month to coincide with the roll out of the new PushPay system.
 - a. During March we would plan weekly communications in front of the members during service and or in between services. First message would highlight the new PushPay software and what it will allow Ezekiel to accomplish with regards to electronic giving, meeting coordination, information dissemination, volunteering opportunities, etc.
 - b. Other direct communications to members might include featuring the Endowment and Mission and Service Teams and their activities and initiatives, as well as all or select teams and our groups (Altar Guild) in dire need of new or additional volunteers.
 - c. The month could end with a Volunteer Sign Up Sunday for members, with donuts and coffee. Format could be in the form of a Volunteer Opportunity Fair with representatives from the various teams and groups available to address questions in person.
 - d. Team spoke to Steve Miller and Steve D-J about the plan, as well as Council President Teri Odegard. All agreed such a plan is worth doing at this point in time. Details to *Following Jesus, Living a Giving Faith Overflowing With Love*

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follow. The committee would like input from Pastors Paul and Jeff on the idea and welcomed other suggestions from Council.

- Pastor Paul suggested waiting until the six weeks during the season of Easter leading up to Pentecost to promote it as a time of celebration. It would also give more time to think about the best messaging method to reach the most people.
- Council representatives were asked to go to their committees to discuss their needs and best ideas to promote their individual missions; will bring back to Council in March.
- e. Also would like to involve youth and identify methods to reach our “virtual” congregation.
- iii. New appeal to begin later this summer. Will begin to think about planning in the coming months.

C. Connect: Megan Franklin

- i. Connect Team met February 14th.
- ii. Pen Pals
 - a. 13 adults are signed up so far to participate. Plan in place to supply a 5th grade Sunday school class with writing prompts and labeled, stamped envelopes to mail the first letter in. If successful, plan is to move on to adding younger grades.
- iii. Volunteers of the Year
 - a. The 2021 Volunteers of the year, Rory Opatz & Jenna Juetten, were selected at a previous Connect meeting. They were recognized at service, awarded certificates and the plaque is currently being engraved.
 - b. 2022 Volunteers of the Year will be nominated this fall, so keep an eye out for possible nominees!
- iv. Relay for Life
 - a. Relay for Life will be Friday, April 1st at the River Falls High School.
 - b. Ezekiel’s team raised \$4,361 at its previous event. The plan is to do similar fundraisers this year by selling luminaries, flowers and butterflies to adorn the Fellowship Hall windows, hold a Penny War (Cats vs. Dogs), as well as individual relay team member Facebook fundraisers. A fundraiser will be planned at a future meeting for the night of the Relay that is in line with the theme of the event (which is has not yet been announced for this year).
 - c. **Moved and seconded (Steve Miller/Angel Egan) to approve Relay for Life fundraiser (Selling luminaries, flowers & butterflies after 3/20 and 3/27 services; motion passed unanimously.**
 - d. **Moved and seconded (Angel Egan/Vicki Olson) to approve Relay for Life Penny Wars fundraiser to run concurrently to above luminaries, flowers & butterflies sale; motion passed unanimously.**
 - e. **Amended motion via email on February 18th to include a Chili Cookoff Fundraiser on March 23rd during the Lenten Soup Supper, with proceeds benefiting Relay for Life (all other Lenten Soup Supper Donations will still be designated for Youth Programs as approved in the above motion); motion approved via majority email vote.**

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- v. Journey House
 - a. Ezekiel was originally signed up for the January Journey House meal, but it was cancelled.
 - b. We will cover the next meal scheduled for March 7th.
 - c. May coordinate volunteers with another local church interested in helping but does not have enough volunteers on their own.
 - vi. Donut Sunday
 - a. Motion to recommence Donut Sunday on March 6th included in larger motion under business action items to once again offer meals/meals for youth fundraising opportunities.
- D. Invite: Nicky Thompson
- i. Invite Committee met February 8th.
 - ii. Discussion continued with Pastor Paul regarding 40 Days/40 Ways, lay visitation ministry plan, that has worked well in other congregations to cultivate fellowship. The plan to have groups meeting during Lent, with the specific purpose of cultivating fellowship.
 - a. Brainstormed Ezekiel members to contact and ask to be “hosts”; goal is to have 5-10 pairs of “hosts.”
 - b. Training sessions for “hosts” tentatively set for February 22nd.
- E. Worship: Tom Bauer
- i. Worship Committee met on February 8th.
 - i. Future worship schedules: April 10th – one service at 10:00am for Palm Sunday. Will revert to normal communion then. Instead of having an Easter vigil, a prayer vigil will take place on Saturday. The times and length of the vigil will be determined by the Prayer Team. Easter Sunday services will be held at the normal worship times.
 - ii. Committee discussed using LED or wax eternal flame. A unanimous decision was made to purchase and use wax candles.
 - iii. Committee discussed safety restrictions during Covid. It was determined that we will leave the seating and continue to monitor the case numbers. Keeping with current guidelines it was determined that masks are optional if fully vaccinated.
 - iv. Communion-to-Go: after worship members that wish to commune together can meet in the fireside room and take part in communion with others present.
 - v. The prayer team will be in the fireside room after worship for those who wish to meet with prayer team members.
 - vi. Organ survey was discussed; based on results, the recommendation is to repair the organ and ask that individuals who wish to donate help cover the \$33,000 estimated cost.
- F. Property: Doug Cudd
- i. LED candles suggested at Christmas to avoid any wax spillage on pews.
 - ii. Awaiting pricing on bottle fillers for water fountains.
- G. Service and Mission: Open (Report from Michael Hofland)

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- B. Our church staff is both functioning and well and relating well as a team. Staff interviews have been held and at next Tuesday's staff meeting, a member of the TTF Staffing Team will present a preliminary report of their findings insofar as the overall staff team and its current and past levels of functioning.
- C. A brief new Mission Statement has been proposed to the full TTF by the Mission/Vision team. We will continue to examine its appropriateness for the future once the data from the February 27th Congregational Self-Study Survey has been received, tabulated, and initially assessed as to directions it might give towards a Vision for Mission.
- D. Congregational Self-Study Survey to be offered as a part of our Sunday morning worship services on February 27th. Members not in attendance will receive a hard copy of the questionnaire by mail the following week.
- E. Lenten and Easter Services:
 - i. Ash Wednesday service on March 2nd is the beginning of our 2022 Lenten Journey. Ashes will be offered to those worshipping at the 7:00pm service. The 1st of 6 "Conversations by the Cross" will be included in the service.
 - ii. Thanks to members who have agreed to participate in each of the six mid-week dramas. Each service will conclude with communion.
 - iii. On Palm Sunday, April 10th, we will offer one Sunday morning service at 10:00am. We will be offering an interactive service between congregation and readers: Pilate, Judas, Peter and the Narrator. The service includes a Palm Sunday Palm Processional and Holy Communion.
 - iv. Maundy Thursday – Holy Communion and stripping of the Altar.
 - v. Good Friday Tenebrae (readings from scripture and veiling of the cross).
 - vi. Holy Saturday Prayer Vigil (PM).
 - vii. Easter Sunday Festival Worship (two services).
- F. Then comes summer...

10. ASSOCIATE PASTOR REPORT

- A. Pastor Jeff shared information on how he has been directing his time getting to know Ezekiel, its teams, and developing confirmation and youth programming with Ezekiel staff.
- B. Palm Sunday Breakfast?
- C. 2022 Confirmation/High School Summer trip preparations continue.
 - i. Held Christikon Trip Info/Fundraising Meeting.
- D. Final preparations underway for the 9th graders to affirm their baptism; preparation classes have been held. Affirmation of Baptism service to be held on Sunday, March 6th.
- E. Exploring opportunities for Senior High ministry. Conducted survey of senior high youth about senior high ministry possibilities.
- F. Will work with Grow Committee to create a Child & Youth Protection Policy.
- G. Shared thoughts on what Ezekiel's ministry might look like post-COVID.
 - i. As our TTF team continues to do their work, all of us might do well to consider how to reach members (partners in ministry) and non-members, where they are at in their daily lives Monday-Sunday. If fewer people will return to Sunday worship, how do we help them experience and share God's grace and Good News where they are- at home, at work, in school, at sporting events, etc.?
 - ii. Maybe our new church app will be part of that. Maybe content on social media and YouTube will be part of that. Maybe we'll have other resources for people to practice their

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faith out in the world. Maybe we'll encourage households to gather in one another's homes to watch an online worship together or do a Bible study together with resources prepared by Ezekiel. We don't have all of the answers, but now is the perfect time to start experimenting with new ways of doing God's work in this place and this world.

- H. **Pastor Jeff declared his annual housing allowance at \$3,750/month per IRS requirements; declaration accepted unanimously.**

11. BUSINESS ITEMS

A. Action:

- i. **Moved and seconded (Tyler Linton/David Bell) to approve meal service/coffee hours during church fellowship and activities (including Rotary Breakfast) effective February 27th; motion passed unanimously.**
- ii. **Moved and seconded (Tom Bauer/Vicki Olson) to approve switching mask policy to optional in the sanctuary during worship services effective Sunday, February 27th; motion passed unanimously.**
- iii. **Moved and seconded (Tyler Linton/Nicky Thompson) to approve switching mask policy to optional in the Ezekiel building complex effective Sunday, February 27th; motion passed unanimously.**
- iv. **Moved and seconded (Steve Miller/Jim Ashbach) to approve additional hours for Marci previously submitted/paid; motion passed unanimously.**
- v. **Moved and seconded (Steve Miller/Tom Bauer) to approve Covid relief payments for Ezekiel staff as presented by the Personnel Committee (a maximum of five days paid time off if an employee tests positive for Covid on or after January 1, 2022, and up to and including June 30, 2022); motion passed unanimously.**

B. Discussion:

- i. Organ repair/replace survey and recommendation from Worship Committee – Tom Bauer
 - a. Majority came back responding that the organ should be fixed.
 - b. Individuals may be willing to donate.
 - c. Major overhaul is estimated at \$33,000. Going to be mid-summer before we would be able to schedule repair company; overhaul would be under warranty for five years.
 - d. Teams to review fundraising effort.
 - e. **Moved and seconded (Tom Bauer/Steve Miller) to overhaul the Ezekiel organ with Obermeyer Organ Company; motion approved unanimously.**
 - ***Amended motion via email on February 27th for down payment approval of \$12,500 to Obermeyer Organ Company to hold a July 2022 service appointment (work is estimated to take approximately 10 weeks to complete); amended motion passed via majority email vote.***
- ii. Stewardship Month in March - Tyler Linton (see Stewardship notes and discussion included above).
- iii. Sustainability Pledge Commitment Card from Gwen Conklin
 - a. Passed around pledge information. Will review and revisit in March; will invite Gwen to come discuss with Council.
- iv. Church directory
 - a. Currently scheduled for:

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- April 11-14th & 16th
 - April 26-30th
 - b. Appointments can be scheduled via the Universal Church Directories website (www.ucdir.com).
 - v. Steve DJ will work with Laurie to schedule photos of new Council Members.
- C. Information:
- i. TTF Update
 - a. Self-study team sent out survey to past and present council members and will be sending out a survey to the congregation on February 27th.
 - b. When Staffing committee did interviews and surveys of staff, results indicated there is a disconnect between staff and council with communication.
 - Will invite staff to attend council meetings and will be included for part of the planned council retreat.
 - We can brainstorm ideas on the best way to share information.
 - ii. Please fill out the survey from the TTF Self-Study Team.

12. EVENTS

- A. Council and Staff Retreat – March 26th
 - i. Will be meeting offsite (location TBD).
- B. Full Council meetings are held every 3rd Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m.

13. NEXT MONTH:

- A. Devotions & Treats for March:
 - i. Sign-up sheet passed around for future meetings.
 - ii. March 15th @ 6:30pm
 - a. Tyler Linton

14. CLOSING PRAYER – Pastor Paul

15. MOTION TO ADJOURN: (Tom Bauer/David Bell); meeting adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Angel Egan, Council Secretary