

First Lutheran Church Council Meeting July 27, 2022 Draft

The meeting was called to order by President Ari Johnson at 5:15 PM.

Council members present were Cindy, Gretchen, Joy, Marcia, Kevin, Jan, Laura and Jennifer. Also present were Pastor Paul, Ardyce, David and Celeste Berg, Michon Sax and David Sanford.

Pastor Paul gave a lesson based on when Nehemiah heard the walls of Jerusalem were destroyed. He convinced people to rebuild, as we need to rebuild our congregation. We ended the lesson with a prayer for strength and knowledge to help rebuild.

Approval of Agenda: Gretchen motioned to approve, Jennifer 2nd, motion carried.

With members of our congregation present wishing to discuss the Parish incorporation, we jumped to Old Business.

Old Business: Area Parish Incorporation. Ari requested each Council member to report on any conversations they had with members of our church. Members that spoke to Ari wanted the Parish incorporated. Cindy's member wanted the country churches to get their own pastor, Jan's members were against the corporation, Jennifer's were willing to accept the decision of Council. The rest of the council members had not been approached. Jennifer is concerned of the number of votes First Lutheran gets when we pay the majority of the expenses. Each church has 2 members on Area Parish while First Lutheran pays 83% of the shared expenses. Also, the two country churches tend to vote the same on decisions or motions. A review by the Parish is being done at all congregations to adjust the financial obligations. Michon asked if the Parish was already incorporated. Ari explained it is not incorporated. Somehow an EIN was received for the Parish as an unincorporated association, which is now known not to be recognized as an entity by North Dakota law. Currently our Parish is not an incorporated legal entity that would be able to directly employ and pay employees. David Sanford asked if the country churches are in favor of the incorporation. Ari reported that they are in favor and also want to adjust the financial burdens so it is fairly distributed. The two country churches have held their meetings to discuss this earlier this spring. Ari said that they were awaiting our decision.

Currently, the Bishop has put our call for a pastor on hold until a decision is made. If First Lutheran left the Parish after a call was issued, the call is null and void. We would have to begin the call process again. Pastor reported it is easier to find a pastor for 1 church than 3 unless it is a husband/wife team. Michon asked if we left the Parish, would Banks and Garden continue as a Parish. Ari commented that that would be their decision to make.

Pastor was asked to give an estimate on members.

Confirmed members:

First: 300; Banks: 100; Garden: 50

Actively giving confirmed members:
First: 80; Banks: 30; Garden: 20

Discussion was held concerning how to split the financial expenses and number of votes per church in Area Parish. Ari recommended having a special congregational meeting to decide how to proceed between First Lutheran and the Area Parish. Area Parish is to meet tomorrow, July 28th.

Ari would like to have three proposals for the congregational meeting as such:

1. Continue current arrangement where First Lutheran has 2 voting members on Parish Council.
2. Leave the Parish
3. Continue in the Parish and seek adjustment in representation.

Gretchen expressed concern of having members, that are not "Voting Members" aka actively giving and present in church, of wanting to vote. It is in our constitution that members must be active to vote at this meeting and this would be explained at any special meeting on the topic.

Joy motioned to call a special congregational meeting for August 10th at 6:00 PM. Laura 2nd, motion carried.

President Ari asked for a motion to incorporate. Laura motioned to incorporate the Parish, Kevin 2nd. The motion carried by a vote of 7 yea and 1 nay.

At this time, David and Celeste Berg, Michon Sax and David Sanford left the meeting.

Approval of minutes: Gretchen corrected the previous minutes to say that the Rothe Investment will fund 25% of educational purchases not 20%. With that correction, Cindy motioned to approve, Joy 2nd, motion carried.

Staff Reports: We had 1 baptism and 1 funeral. Attendance is down but Facebook views are increasing. Juanita has been dismissed. Matt Rolfson has been hired for the Family Coordinator position and to start on August 14th.

Parish Reports: A written report was presented, with reports from all 3 churches. Discussion was held on incorporation of the Parish. Garden and Banks are in favor, First has not made that decision yet. Bible School was a success. Determination of financial obligations of each congregation was discussed and is in progress at all 3 churches. Laura reported that Youth and Education is working better due to the assistance of Banks and Garden.

WELCA: no report

Finance: The Iverson account currently shows \$90,000.00 in checking and \$500,000.00 in the investment account. A decline due to the purchase of the new parsonage. The Rothe currently

has \$1,900,000 in its operation. Laura commented that the Rothe may contribute 100% of the AV project since it is education based. Gretchen had approached the Trust Committee to contribute to the parsonage but was declined as the matching contributions need to be from individuals not another investment.

A request for financial assistance from UMM was received. They are in desperate need of repairs to the roof.

Jennifer motioned to approve the financial report, Cindy 2nd, motion carried.

Property: The bell tower renovation is in progress. The deck and sliding glass door at the new parsonage need to be preserved. Lawn care at the church and 2 parsonages was discussed and a list given to Kanyon Tschetter. Glen is requesting bids from 3 landscaping companies to repair the yard at the old parsonage. Kevin has followed up with Steve Sanford about getting an estimate together for the parsonage renovation.

Worship: no report

Stewardship and Evangelism: no report

Youth and Education: Laura reported that a pre confirmation meeting was held on July 19th and only one of four families invited, showed up.

Call Committee: Joy reported that our call for a pastor is on hold until the incorporation issue is decided.

Old Business, continued:

Renovation; we are waiting on the estimate from Steve Sanford.

Tithely: Matthew will be working on this when he starts

New Business:

UMM is needing financial assistance for the roof. Jan will contact Deb Riely to create a proposal to the Trust Committee since the UMM has been teaching God's word to the youth for many years.

Comment Cards: no comments

Trust Committee: the committee is now requesting a formal application for submission of grant requests for the Rothe Trust.

The next meeting is August 24th at 5:15 PM at the church. Jan motioned to adjourn, Jennifer 2nd. Motion carried. We adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

Cindy Geiger, Secretary