

Faith Lutheran Church
Board of Directors Minutes
October 19, 2020

Present: (Zoom) Pastor Biermann, Bruce Trevithick, Sam Siegel, Scott Hans, Matt Guinn, Ken Duetsch, Heather Vance, Sarah Palmer, Krissa Zander, Marcy Montez, Jenny Mervyn, Laurie Crawford, Phillip Whitmer

Guests: None

Meeting was called to order at 7:02pm with devotion and prayer led by Pastor Biermann. Devotional thought was from Hebrews, Chapter 4 where the author is talking to the people about the importance of the people listening to God and not wandering away from him. Warning that if you wander away from the Lord then you get yourself into a lot of trouble. Pastor focused on verse 12. God's word is a powerful tool that we have that warns us of sin and cuts to the heart of the matter in that sin is wrong and not right. But His word is also a source of hope and promise. We (the congregation) need to be strong on that word of truth and that we speak in condemnation of the sin around us in the world and realize that it is not being cruel but instead it is actually an act of love. That regardless of what is going on around us that we go back to the word of God and ask ourselves – what would He have us do? That there are going to be more and more people in this world that see the hopelessness of this life and that the only real hope is in Christ our Savior.

Secretary's Report: Phillip Whitmer

- Minutes from the September 20th meeting were presented and reviewed. Pastor Biermann made the motion to accept. Phil spoke up and requested that corrections be made to the spelling of Ken's name and to also correct a typo under the second bullet point of the parochial report. Noted by Bruce who called for a second to the motion with the corrections mentioned. Ken Duetsch supported the motion to accept with corrections as noted. Motion was passed.

Pastoral Report/Notes: Pastor Biermann

Keeping better track of attendance

- Parochial Report had been distributed in advance.
 - Attendance is slightly up for the live services. Online services are maintaining at about the same pace
 - No major changes in membership
 - Lot of counseling currently taking place. Most of it one on one. Relates back to COVID fatigue in many of the sessions. Pastor refers to it as COVID Depression.
 - Calls and cards have gone out recently. Sarah, Jenny and Heather all shared their most recent activities involving calls and contacts.
 - Pastor stated that the staff have been involved in getting others involved in reaching out.

- Pastor has entertained conversation from both points of view concerning the limits of the live services and overall sees no reason to change what we have been doing. Stated that if we start maxing out at all three services then additional services are a possibility.
- Highlighted other aspects of the report.
- Discussed the preschool and how it has been a tumultuous start to the year. Currently all staff and students are back in session.
 - Has been dealing with a disciplinary problem with one of the staff members and stated that it is currently in hand and he is counseling with the person. Shared in some depth with the Elders last week at their meeting and has two of the elders willing to assist him if and when needed.
 - Please pray for our preschool.
- Discussed starting in January (1/1/2021) and challenging the entire Faith family to band together to keep each other accountable and read the Bible in two years. Do this by reading 2 or so chapters a day for six days out of the week. There is an outline in the Lutheran Study Bible that will help with this. Elaborated on more of the process.

Elders: Matt Guinn (prior family obligation)

- Elders will help with Bible reading plan
 - Track groups
 - Follow what is going on
- Preschool – will help and support Pastor
- Elders continue to be the conduit for how the congregation feels – no change in current process

President's Report: Bruce Trevithick

- Discussed emergency action plan (copy was provided to all)
 - Laurie had a question regarding what & who the “teams” are that are referenced. Pastor provided some detail that defined what was being referenced. Laurie also mentioned how overwhelming the whole document is and who would know all that which is contained inside of it. Pastor explained that elders, ushers and we as board members should know the content and be able to respond when necessary. Copies will be maintained at up to four different areas of the church for anyone to review.
 - Once approved and available in print this would be provided to the usher teams etc.
 - Krissa brought up page 12 that references to go to the basement. Her question was if there was/is a specific area that they should go to. Clarification of the exact location to be added to the plan.
 - Lockdown plan was brought up and will be reviewed to see if appropriate to add to the “EAP”.
 - Minor typos to be brought to Alicen's attention.
 - Scott made the motion to accept the Emergency Action Plan as presented along with the corrections and additions mentioned during the discussion. Motion was supported by Sarah and passed by the board.

- Nomination for a lay delegate from Faith to attend the December 1st Circuit Forum meeting is needed. Pastor shared that either Scott Hans or Greg Baer would be willing to serve in this role.
 - Motion made by Pastor Biermann that Scott Hans be our delegate for the December 1st meeting. Motion was supported by Sarah and was passed.
- Nomination for the next Circuit Visitor is needed.
 - Pastor Biermann has indicated that he would be willing to continue in this role
 - Laurie asked the Pastor why he would want to do it again. Pastor replied that there is likely no one else in the Circuit that would have the experience or time to perform in this capacity.
 - Ken made the motion to nominate Pastor Biermann for the position of Circuit Visitor. Motion was supported by Laurie and then passed.
- A Lay Delegate from Faith for the Michigan District LCMS 2021 District convention needs to be selected and approved by the FLC Voters' Meeting in January. Bruce indicates that we don't have to do this at this time.
 - The Convention will be in person in late June at Concordia University in Ann Arbor. Delegate needs to be named by end of February 2021.
 - Delegate nominated is to be put to congregation's vote at congregational meeting in January.
 - Other positions also that we should present to the congregation for official nominations in January include:
 - District President
 - V.P. North & East Region
 - District Secretary
 - Board of Director (North & East)
 - Lay person
 - Commissioned Worker
 - Pastor
 - Church Extension Fund Board (up to 4 nominations)
- Document was received detailing changes to the circuit alignment in Michigan. Does not impact us at this time. Pastor Biermann will let us know if anything changes.
- Covid policies were brought up by Bruce and at this time the plan is to stay the course.

V.P. Property & Maintenance: Sam Siegel

- Had to remove a pine tree (1 of 3) from the Memorial Garden due to disease
- Normal maintenance of property continues
- Gym to be open Sunday for flu shots
- Roof leaks under control at this time. Analysis of roof was completed and the company rep states when necessary it can be done in sections.
- There were no questions for Sam at this time.

V.P. Salary & Personnel: Scott Hans

- Ken and Scott continue to work with Alicen as they transition the Faith financial management away from Marge to in-house. They are evaluating staffing needs in relation to this change.
- Krissa and Pastor Biermann were briefly taken out of the meeting. Scott brought up medical insurance coverage and due to recent changes there is a negative impact to our “called” staff reflected in increased personal out of pocket expenses. The executive committee is recommending that the board approve an additional \$1,000 be added to their HSA accounts each year.
 - Bruce added that the old plan was going to cost about \$3500 more this next year which is why the change was made. The new plan will actually be about \$300 less but comes with increased co-pays.
 - Recommendation for \$1,000 be added to each of the “called” staff’s HSA accounts officially put forward to the board.
 - Laurie made the motion to accept the executive committee’s proposal. Motion was supported by Sarah and was passed.

V.P. Finance & Stewardship: Ken Duetsch

- Discussed the transition from Marge to in-house money management and that a lot of the efficiencies recognized will come through the new software upgrade and new processes. Plan is to run new software parallel to current system starting November 1st.
- September expenses and income were almost matched. Income was 90,000 and expenses were 91,000.
 - Actual net income is about a negative \$15,000 but compared to what we had budgeted this was expected and we are actually \$55,000 better or more positive when compared to the projected budget.
 - Reviewed cash on hand balances which remains stable.
 - Reviewed the chart that illustrates where the various boards are at with regards to actual versus budget.
 - Laurie stated that hers appears to be wrong. Ken explained that it was actually hard to pull the numbers up and determine exactly what each board had spent to date. Laurie’s statement shows that she has spent \$12,000 to date, which is wrong. Her figure is \$3,141. Ken will work with Marge and Laurie to get it right
 - Sarah likes the itemized report which will help her going forward.
- Budget process was discussed. Both Phil and Pastor Biermann shared their experience with Ken, outlining where the projections come from and a time table for when it all has to be completed. First draft of 2021 budget needs to be ready for discussion at the November board meeting. Following that meeting, a revised budget proposal is put together based on the board’s discussion and presented at the December board meeting, hopefully for a final discussion so that a final draft can be voted on at the January board meeting.
 - Ken asked for the chairs to provide budget numbers to him within two weeks.
 - Scott provided suggestions on how to cope with putting the various board budgets together and told them not to make it a daunting task.

- Salary and benefit process was also reviewed.

Board Reports & Requests:

Outreach & Evangelism: Sarah Palmer

- Mailed out 52 handwritten cards to members of the congregation that have not been seen as of late.
- Pumpkin Palooza was held. Lanniey Williams was in charge. Unfortunately, only about 15 attended.
- Have had conversations with Pastor Scott and they plan on getting something sent out monthly.
- Working with BCM's Trunk-r-Treat she has come up with a pumpkin treat in a clear bag. Poem is attached which she shared with the group.
- Stated she is still exploring other ways in which to reach out to both the congregation as well as outside of the church. Pastor Biermann said that the 2 year Bible reading would be an excellent venue to use to reach out and invite non church members to join them along with the various groups within the church.

Worship: Laurie Crawford

- Better communication between the altar guild, the elders and the office for things such as weddings would be appreciated. Recently altar guild had decided to not do the setup for Sunday on the day that a wedding was taking place and instead come in early on the Sunday. When they got there on that Sunday the elders were trying to put it together and things were not as they should have been. More and better communication needed so that problems like this don't occur again.
- Wednesday night cleanup for the altar guild. The member that does this can't be there after the service and usually plans on coming in the day following. Elders have been cleaning up on Wednesday evenings – Laurie stated that this is not their job and that they don't always do it exactly the way that it should be done. Requested that they just set it aside and that the altar guild member will come in the following day and take care of it.

Laurie shared with us that she ran into a former member of the church who told her that she no longer attended at Faith because she needed financial assistance a few years back to help out with a funeral and was never helped out. Laurie wanted to know if there are funds set aside specifically to help those persons with special needs. Pastor stated that he'd have to know more about the circumstances because no member is refused assistance for a wedding, a funeral and so on, if they ask.

Communication & Publicity: Krissa Zander

- Keeping up with Facebook.
- Consulted with another person at another church and answered questions regarding Facebook usage.
- Pastor indicated that they will be more than happy to call upon her expertise to assist the elders and others with the Bible reading program coming in January.

Congregational Ministry: Heather Vance

- Trunk-r-Treat to be held this upcoming Friday.
 - Sub committees being created to chair different events.
 - All families K-5 were contacted and invited.
 - Short on High School volunteers; at this point only one has stepped forward.
 - Best decorated trunk award/acknowledgement.
 - Discussed process that will be used to distribute the candy.
 - Canopy to be covered @ 1S for the event. Kelly Cradit is in charge of that.
- WoJo's Greenhouse – Porch Pot project for the holidays. Work with Sarah with this. Fellowship and possibly outreach aspects of this project are under consideration.

Social Ministry: Marcy Montez

- Discussed the usual process followed with Social Ministry.
 - Call goes into the office.
 - Office informs her and she handles the situation/task.
 - Office needs to let her know or she is not able to do her job.
- Working on Thanksgiving Baskets. Thought is that instead of preparing actual baskets that they will distribute gift cards instead. Same as what they did at Easter.
 - Sarah asked if there was an option to do either. Marcy responded that many have issues related to health and that at this time a gift card is the best option.
 - Baskets go to families referred to us by members of our congregation.
- Angel tree to still take place this year.

Youth Board: Jenny Mervyn

- Had to leave early – Bruce reported that youth forum was held. Low attendance but they plan to continue with it going forward.
- Scavenger hunt went very well.

Roundtable & Announcements:

No other issues were presented.

Motion to adjourn meeting was made by Laurie, supported by Sam and passed.

Closed with prayer from Pastor Biermann. Meeting adjourned at 9:24pm.

Next meeting is November 16, 2020 @ 7:00pm via ZOOM.

Respectfully submitted,

Phillip W Whitmer