

**First Lutheran Church
Council Meeting Minutes**

Meeting Date: July 18, 2023

Location: Via Zoom

Council Members Present:

Stephanie Almeida (Vice President)
Ho Brown (President)
David Berg
Tor Berg (Pastor)
Gary Curtis
Jess Faubion
Christy Freriks
Kathy Konieczka
Jean Peterson (Secretary)
Kristi Pyne
Jacky Schnarre

Council Members Absent:

Emily Curcio
Johannes Skjonsby

Guests:

Holly Batstone (Personnel Committee)

Call to Order: 7:01 p.m.

Devotion: Pastor Berg

A reading from Isaiah. "Oh Lord, you are my God, for you have done wonderful things...". A reminder that God is with us, even though we struggle.

Approval of 7/18/23 Meeting Agenda:

Motion to Approve: Gary Curtis. Second: Stephanie Almeida
Motion approved.

Approval of 6/20 Minutes:

No changes to Draft Minutes.
Motion to approve: Dave Berg. Second: Jacky Schnarre.
Motion approved.

Pastor's Report:

- Pastor Berg shared metrics from his busy month, including hospital visits, home visits, office visits, Synod meetings, staff meetings, a funeral. Baptisms are coming up over the next 2 weeks.
- Pastor Berg brought before the Council his concerns regarding the Personnel Committee and lack of support for staff, lack of trust in the staff, lack of respect for the work done by the staff and lack of pay increases in the past four years. He cited examples to illustrate his concerns.
- The Council discussed the concerns brought forth.
- Holly Batstone and Ho Brown provided perspective from the Personnel Committee.
- Council members predominantly expressed concerns that several areas should be prioritized, including staff salaries. Several Council members offered suggestions as to what action could be taken expediently.
- Holly Batstone noted that the Personnel Committee is working on updating policies using previous FLC policies and ELCA and Synod policies as guides. Ho Brown noted that policy updates are being viewed with the goal of making them both equitable and lawful.

As the discussion involved actions by the Personnel Committee, Holly Batstone was invited to put forth two motions from the Personnel Committee. See the attached for language of the motions.

The first motion adds five days of vacation to each service level attained by personnel. The motion was approved.

The second motion adjusts the method by which the Pastor is compensated. Pastor Berg requested a shift of his existing salary level from Salary to Housing Allowance. This request is for tax reasons and does not affect the combined budgeted amounts paid to the Pastor. The motion was approved.

Following presentation of and voting on these motions, discussion resumed concerning the concerns brought forth by Pastor Berg. No specific recommendations were adopted by the Council. Input from the discussion will be carried to the Personnel Committee by Holly Batstone and Ho Brown.

Committee Reports:

Tabled due to time.

Old Business:

Tabled due to time.

New Business:

Tabled due to time.

Council Corner:

- Pastor Berg confirmed that we will resume two services on Rally Day (September 10).
- Pastor Berg advised that the decision to change to one service throughout the year needs more time for conversation. The Personnel Committee is planning a congregational survey and the question of moving to one service will be incorporated into their questionnaire. The Council will have an opportunity to review the questionnaire before it is published.

Spotlight on Volunteers:

- Confirmed that Christian Education will be highlighted in September (due to Kris Smith by 8/15) and Fellowship will be in October (due to Kris by 9/15). The Action Register contains the full schedule for Spotlight on Volunteers.

It was noted by Ho Brown at the end of the meeting that in the interest of keeping meetings shorter going forward, the previous standard Committee Reports will be discontinued. Committee Liaisons may request to have time on the agenda when they have a specific item to bring before the Council.

Stewardship (Gary Curtis)

Gary advised that the Stewardship Committee has reached out to the Endowment Committee and they mutually agreed that these two committees could join forces. They would like to make a presentation between services on or about 10/1 with a follow up campaign in February. Pastor Berg asked to be invited to their next meeting to assist in those plans.

Next Meeting:

Tuesday, August 15th, from 7:00 p.m. to 8:15 p.m. via Zoom.
Council Retreat, August 27, immediately following service and coffee time.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jean Peterson
Secretary