

**First Lutheran Church  
Council Meeting Minutes**

*Adopted 1/16/2024*

**Date:** December 19, 2023

**Location:** First Lutheran Church | Library and via Zoom

**Council Members Present in Person:**

Ho Brown (President) *(Personnel Committee Liaison)*

Tor Berg (Pastor)

Gary Curtis *(Stewardship Committee Liaison)*

Christy Freriks *(Fellowship Committee Liaison)*

Jean Peterson (Secretary) *(Worship and Music Committee Liaison)*

Kristi Pyne *(Preschool Committee Liaison)*

Jacky Schnarre *(IT/Communications Committee Liaison)*

**Council Members Present via Zoom:**

Stephanie Almeida (Vice President) *(Membership Committee Liaison)*

David Berg *(Christian Education Committee Liaison)*

Emily Curcio *(Finance Committee Liaison)*

Kathy Konieczka *(Social Ministries Liaison)*

**Council Members Absent:**

Jess Faubion *(Building & Property Committee Liaison)*

**Guest:**

Holly Batstone *(Personnel Committee)*

**Call to Order: 7:00 p.m.**

**Devotion: Pastor Berg**

Pastor Berg reminded us that Luke wrote his Gospel before he wrote Acts. He ends the Gospel with two followers on the road to Emmaus...they are waiting and will meet Jesus. Jesus greets them with a word: Peace. This concept of waiting segued into our discussion of When Church Stops Working, Chapter 4. We are waiting together, but in an anxious church, people can feel isolated. There are always people who can't wait and then are upset that no one is following. Go-getters have good intentions, but may miss God's word in their mission to get things done. Sometimes they are working on their own agenda because they think they know what is best, as opposed to working through processes and being patient in how we make decisions. Sometimes we forget that it's God's story we're living into. We are participants in the work God has put before us.

Pastor Berg closed the discussion with a prayer.

**Approval of 12/19/23 Meeting Agenda:**

Motion to Approve: Christy Freriks

Second: Gary Curtis

Motion approved.

**Approval of 11/21/23 Council Meeting Minutes:**

Motion to approve: Gary Curtis

Second: Kristi Pyne

Motion approved.

**Pastor's Report** (*Pastor Berg*)

Pastor Berg expressed his disappointment in the behavior of congregants surrounding the Cold Weather Shelter proposal. It caused people to use “us and them” language and spread half truths, which he found disheartening. He noted that the County’s proposal was poorly presented and lacked statistics.

There are several concerns for people who may need to go into hospice in the coming year. Pastor Berg is working with the chaplain at the UW campus to prepare Eucharistic Ministers so that they can be trained to be of service in these situations.

Pastor Berg requested approval to use four days of Continuing Education budget to attend the Byberg Preaching Workshop in Oregon January 22-24. Time and money are allocated in the budget for Continuing Education.

Motion to approve Pastor Berg to attend this workshop: Christy Freriks

Second: Gary Curtis

Motion approved.

The Pastor’s Report is attached herewith for reference.

**Committee Action Items for Council Consideration:**

- Jean Peterson noted that committee minutes are not being regularly submitted and requested that liaisons remind their committees to send the minutes. Final or draft is ok; it is helpful if “Minutes” can be in the subject line of the email to [jean@dogwoodindustries.com](mailto:jean@dogwoodindustries.com) to help locate them in her e-mail inbox.
- *Fellowship* – Christy Freriks
  - Christy noted that Soup Suppers for Lent will begin February 21. Fellowship Committee will host the first supper; the Finance Committee and Choir will join to sponsor on February 28. The group responsible will set up and clean up as well as fill in with extra soup if sign ups are low. A sign up in the Narthex will be posted for the other Wednesdays in Lent.

- Fellowship will be working to integrate our Instagram and Facebook accounts to help bring people together when single services start January 8. Pastor Berg can make Emily Curcio an admin for the Facebook account to allow her to post across both platforms.

○ *Personnel* – Holly Batstone

Holly brought a request to the Council from the Personnel Committee to standardize the accrual of sick leave. Holly noted that the existing software platform “Church Windows” does not accurately track sick time and vacation time and thus causes Kris to constantly make changes to correct the employee records. The Personnel Committee requests approval to change the current personnel policies to incorporate this language for sick time:

**10.1 Sick Leave**

*Washington State law requires that an employer provide one hour of paid sick leave for every 40 hours worked by an employee, regardless of full-time, part-time, temporary, or seasonal status. In addition, paid sick leave must be made available to new employees no more than 90 days after their employment begins.*

*It is the policy of this Congregation that full-time employees will accrue 8 hours of sick leave for each calendar month worked. Part time, temporary and seasonal employees will accrue a prorated portion of the 8 hours of sick leave per calendar month, based on their percentage of regularly scheduled hours of work as compared to a full-time, 40-hour-per-week position. Likewise, part-time, temporary, and seasonal staff can only expend the number of hours of sick leave in any given day that is less than or equal to their regularly-scheduled hours for that day.*

Motion to approve the language proposed by the Personnel Committee: Jacky Schnarre  
 Second: Gary Curtis  
 Motion approved.

Nominating Committee (*Holly Batstone*)

Pastor Berg is the acting Chair or convener of the Nominating Committee. Holly is a member of the committee and reported that there are six (6) names that the Committee will put forth.

Protocol for announcing the nominations are:

Two Sundays before the annual meeting, a verbal announcement is made at the service (January 14)

Ten days before the annual meeting, written communication is sent out via email and regular mail to those without email (January 18)

The status of outgoing or resigning Council members is below:

<b>Council Member</b>	<b>Term Expires</b>	<b>Eligible for 2<sup>nd</sup> Term</b>
Stephanie Almeida	1-28-2024 (6 yrs)	No

Ho Brown	1-28-2024 (3 yrs)	Yes
Emily Curcio	1-28-2024 (1 yr)	Yes <sup>Note 1</sup>
Kathy Konieczka	1-25-2026 (3 yrs) Resigned on 11-4-23; effective 1-28-2024	N/A – 2 years on term remaining
Johannes Skjonsby	1-28-2024 (5 yrs) Resigned on 8-15-23	N/A

*Note 1: Emily Curcio's current term is for 1 year, completing the last year of Craig Lichtenstein's term, who resigned from council on 1/23/2023.*

The council must have 12 members minimum and 15 members maximum.

In view of the work contemplated by the Council in 2024 and the vacancy rate experienced in 2023, Gary Curtis made a motion to expand the Council to 13. Stephanie Almeida seconded.

Discussion: There are five seats open on the Council as of the January 28 Annual Meeting, to return the Council to 12 people. If all six nominees receive at least 51% of the vote, it would mean the Council would have 13 members, which is within the mandated amount. It is possible that nominations are made from the floor at the Annual Meeting. It is also possible that a motion can be made to suspend the rules and vote "The Slate" of nominated candidates. With these noted possibilities, the Motion was rescinded.

The vote for Nominees will be by private ballot.

### **Old Business:**

#### *Voting by Email (Pastor Berg)*

As clarification regarding our recent e-mail vote concerning health insurance benefits for the staff, Pastor Berg noted that the Constitution allows for electronic meetings but not voting. In an emergency situation where time is critical, it is ok to vote by email, so long as the vote is recorded in the next meeting minutes. The vote is affirmed at the meeting. A Council member can change their vote if new information emerges. These actions must be in the minutes and everyone on the Council must agree unanimously to vote electronically. If there is not unanimous agreement, the process would stop and a zoom meeting could be convened if needed.

#### *Summary of Time & Talent Surveys (Pastor Berg)*

Pastor Berg has made digital copies of survey responses and provided them to Gary Curtis and Kendahl Adjorlolo. Tabulating the data is going slower than anticipated due to the 88 pages of data and responses. Names of persons interested in serving on committees will be forwarded to the committees for further action.

#### *Membership Reconciliation (Pastor Berg)*

Pastor Berg reported that although he and Kris have not reviewed the information, they do have the lists. They expect to removing several people from the 2-year list (people who have not worshipped [taken communion] or given offering for 2 years). To verify

that these people no longer wish to be voting members of the church, Council members will need to call these people prior to the Annual Meeting. Pastor Berg or Kris will forward the list to Ho for dissemination to the Council soon. Pastor Berg reminded us that in asking people this question, we must assure them that they are once and forever a child of God and a member of the body of Christ; however, the church is a legal entity and to vote on church business, you must meet the membership requirements.

### Coffee with Council

January 7: Christy Freriks and Jacky Schnarre  
10:30 a.m. in the Landing after service.

#### Publicity:

- o Homepage scroll & narthex monitor – Christy/Kris
- o Instagram - Emily
- o Calendar & Sunday bulletins – Pastor Berg/Kris
- o Sunday announcement – Hosts or Pastor Berg

### New Business

#### Nominees for Committee Vacancies Appointed/Elected by Council

Committee	Member	Term Expires	Eligible for 2 <sup>nd</sup> Term
Audit	David Osborne	12-31-2023 (1 yr)	Yes
Personnel	Dan Bormann	12-31-2023 (1 yr)	Yes

These above Committees have a vacancy.

Rachel Jackman has accepted a nomination to serve on the Personnel Committee. Jean Peterson read for the record a statement from Rachel providing her qualifications.

Motion to appoint Rachel Jackman to the Personnel Committee: Gary Curtis  
Second: Kristi Pyne  
Motion approved.

The Audit Committee meets annually to perform a review of financials. A full audit is not due for 5-6 years. The Committee has a chair (Ryan Stute) and another member, Derrick StaRosa. Another person is needed for this Committee. Open item.

#### Nominating Committee Vacancies (*Pastor Berg*)

##### Nominating Committee Vacancies

Member	Term Expires	Eligible for 2 <sup>nd</sup> 1-Year Term
Holly Batstone	1-28-2024 (1 yr)	Yes
Lloyd Condra	1-28-2024 (2 yrs)	No
Karen Johnson	1-28-2024 (1 yr)	Yes
Tom Payne	1-28-2024 (2 yrs)	No
Carsten Thode	1-28-2024 (2 yrs)	No

*Note: Members of this committee are elected during the annual meeting. The term is 1 year; and members may not serve more than 2 consecutive years. Per C13.02.01, two*

*members of the Nominating Committee, if possible, shall be outgoing members of the Congregation Council.*

Persons leaving the Council can serve on the Nominating Committee; this committee does not need to be announced prior to the Annual Meeting. In fact, people volunteer to serve at the meeting. Stephanie Almeida volunteered to be on the Committee when her Council term ends.

#### Wells Fargo/102 Main Apartments

There is a deadline of 12/22/23 to register with the City of Bothell as an interested party for the permitting process of this project adjacent to the church. Some members of the congregation have concerns about this project and its impact to the church. Pastor Berg noted that the project, if there are no code variations, will likely be approved. Individuals, if they are interested, can take action. The congregation is not of one mind as to the positive or negative impact of this project. By consensus, the Council has approved the President of the Council to be an interested party and so register. The Council will take no direct action. The Building and Property Committee will be asked to take photos of the south side of the building to serve as a record of condition in the event any construction activity negatively affects the building.

Annual Meeting Planning (*not discussed but a part of the agenda and included here for reference due to time sensitive content*):

- Due Dates:
  - Nominees resumes into annual report – to Kris by 1/3
  - Verbal & written notices to the congregation – Verbal due on 1/14 & 1/21 & written (mailed & emailed) NLT 1/18.
    - **C10.03.** *Notice of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays and by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law, to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting.*
  - List of nominees for Council (& Nominating Committee) published:
    - **C13.02.05** *The list of Congregation Council nominees shall be announced to the congregation in conjunction with the announcements of the meeting of the congregation at which the elections are to take place.*
- Elections to Synod Assembly – **Pastor Berg**
  - Saturday, May 18 at Grace Lutheran church in Des Moines
  - Seat allotments (5): 2 Females; 1 Male; 1 Youth; and 1 Young Adult
  - Nominations taken in advance of the meeting and from the floor.

#### Spotlight on Volunteers

##### REMINDER:

January – due to Kris by 12/15 (Membership)

February – due to Kris by 1/15 (Stewardship)

#### Upcoming Meetings

Council Budget Review (Zoom only) – Thursday, Jan. 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Emily was asked to lead this meeting.

The next regular Council meeting will be Tuesday, December 19 from 7:00 p.m. to 8:15 p.m. in person at First Lutheran Church. Dan and Ann Bormann will attend to answer budget questions.

The Preschool Task Force will be on the agenda for January to discuss continued support for the Preschool.

Meeting adjourned: 8:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
 Jean Peterson  
 Secretary

**November Statistics**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Attendance In person / Zoom</b>	<b>Pledges &amp; Loose Offerings</b>	<b>Capital Improvement Fund</b>	<b>Total</b>
11/6/2022	114/30	\$15,301	\$1,928	\$17,229
11/13/2022	110/25	\$10,348	\$1,057	\$11,405
11/20/2022	137/30	\$0	\$0	\$0
11/27/2022	137/30	\$15,516	\$5,050	\$20,566
	<b>125/29</b>	<b>\$41,165</b>	<b>\$8,035</b>	<b>\$49,200</b>
11/5/2023	139/28	\$13,201	\$683	\$13,884
11/12/2023	100/26	\$15,669	\$1,080	\$16,749
11/19/2023	139/23	\$8,076	\$625	\$8,701
11/26/2023	94/30	\$3,380	\$360	\$3,740
	<b>118/21</b>	<b>\$40,326</b>	<b>\$2,748</b>	<b>\$43,074</b>