

Faith Lutheran Church Congregational Meeting Minutes

January 26, 2020

Voting Members Present: 125

Council Members Present

President Beth Sekera, Treasurer Jim Hall, Secretary Chris Bettin, Tammy Daugherty, Ted Flores, Phil Hartweg, Deb O'Connor, Chris Sorce, Rachel Sorce, Jane Stroh, Deb Twaddle, Pr. Shelly Satran, Pr. Joe Yucha

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by President Beth Sekera at 12:05 p.m.

Opening Prayer

Pastor Joe Yucha

Presentation of the Agenda

President Sekera presented the agenda. She explained that the Faith Church Constitution requires a special meeting for the purpose of calling a pastor to serve the congregation. Therefore, after the business of the congregation has been completed and the annual meeting adjourned, the special meeting to call Pastor Joe will be called to order.

MOTION (Tom Wendorf/Christina Warner): To adopt the agenda as presented. (Carried)

Approval of Minutes

MOTION (Ted Flores/Christina Warner): To approve the minutes of the January 2019 Congregational Meeting. (Carried)

President's Reflections and Report

After welcoming the members in attendance, President Sekera began with a reading of Psalm 28, Verse 7, which she said "captures our journey at Faith over the past few years":

"The Lord is my strength and my shield: in Him my heart trusts; so I am helped, my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to Him."

She then reflected on the many remarkable changes that occurred at Faith Church during 2019. She highlighted the installment of Senior Pastor Shelly Satran, the hiring of Kayla Feil as Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministry, and the creation of a new at-large Council position to help guide ongoing building maintenance and safety upgrades in 2020. This position will be filled by Phil Hartweg, the outgoing 2019 Property Ministry leader.

President Sekera concluded by thanking the Women of Faith who arranged a "wonderful weekend for almost 80 women at the end of January. The event was a perfect testament to the spirit of this church."

Report of the Senior Pastor

Pastor Shelly opened by saying that it's only been a little more than a year since she arrived at Faith, but it feels like home to her. She added, "The Annual Congregational Meeting is a time to talk about the state of the church. Well, my friends, the state of the church is GOOD!"

Rejoice--Holding up a copy of the Annual Report titled "Restore, Renew, Rejoice," Pastor Shelly noted there is much to **rejoice** over at Faith. Reading through the Annual Report, one can see God at work. There are gifts in abundance at Faith, with so many individuals joyously and selflessly contributing to the whole.

She thanked the staff members for their tireless efforts on behalf of the congregation: Pastor Joe, Kayla, Director of Music Ministry Todd Carrico, Office Administrator Eric Enskat, Membership Secretary/Accountant Sally Stauber, Director of Rainbow Place Eileen Glynn, and Custodian Rich Zima.

Restore—The church building, which is so important to both the congregation and the many outside entities that use it, needs some **restoration** to maintain its safety and functionality. Pastor Shelly assured the congregation that this is a Council priority for 2020.

Renew—Pastor Shelly concluded that "something good is happening at Faith," and it will be exciting to see what God has planned for Faith's continued **renewal** in the coming year.

Finance Report (2019) and Proposed Budget (2020)

Treasurer Jim Hall presented the 2019 year-end financials and the proposed 2020 budget.

Jim observed that while 2018 saw some financial struggles, 2019 was "all good." Thanks in part to a strong December, especially in regular and special envelope giving, Faith found itself in the unusual position of having a significant year-end surplus. Referring to the financial information on pages 34-36 of the Annual Report, Jim highlighted that regular envelope giving was more than \$16,000 greater than budget for the year and special envelope giving more than \$7,000. One giving campaign that appeared to have run its course in 2019 was Blessings Abound, which came in \$8,660 under budget and was not included in the proposed budget for 2020. Jim noted that instead of budgeting for this giving campaign or another like it, Council elected to wait until there was a specific need to ask the congregation for donations related to building maintenance and repairs at some point during the year, if needed.

All told, the surplus for 2019 was \$44,541.

Jim reported that the Council voted at its January 2020 meeting to allocate \$30,000 of the budget surplus to the Church Building and Maintenance Fund, bringing the Capital Maintenance Fund balance up to \$86,456 to start 2020. Other noteworthy changes proposed for the 2020 budget were a \$1,450 increase in benevolence spending including an application for Faith to host a Ministry in Context first- or second-year seminary student, and a cost-of-living increase (in general) for the Faith Church staff of 4 percent, slightly better than called for by Synod guidelines.

Jim also spoke briefly about the Missional Budget View introduced by Council in 2019, which showed 26 percent of Faith's budget is dedicated to worship, 23 percent to outreach, 18 percent to building maintenance, 17 percent to education, and 16 percent to serving/caring. A pie chart illustrating the Missional Budget View was mailed to the congregation in the fall.

As presented by Jim, the bottom line of the proposed 2020 budget shows revenues at \$826,400 (with regular and special envelope giving increased to nearly the same levels as the 2019 actuals) and expenses at \$825,691 for a balance of plus \$709.

During the question and answer session related to the budget, Tina Rudins asked whether staff salaries are in line with Synod guidelines. Jim replied that the Synod only has guidelines for pastor and deacon salaries, and Faith is in line with those guidelines. For the rest of the staff, according to benchmarks and guidelines from other churches and sources Faith is in line in most cases and working to bring anyone who is not in line up to where they need to be.

Bob Sitze caught an error on page 38 of the proposed 2020 budget, pointing out that budgeted amounts for Local Benevolence (\$4,300) and DuPage United (\$12,000) need to be reversed. Jim acknowledged that this change would be made.

MOTION (Wally Becky/Mickey Wendorf): To approve the 2020 budget as corrected. (Carried)

Building Maintenance and Safety Update

Outgoing Property Ministry Leader Phil Hartweg presented an update on the maintenance and safety of the Faith Church building. Research and meetings concerning possible changes to the building as required by recently updated fire safety codes began in earnest in April 2018. Phil noted that the building was up to code when Rainbow Place was established 40 years ago; however, there is now a nationwide code for fire safety doors in churches which at a minimum would impact the hallway leading into the preschool. According to the fire marshal, Faith will not be held to a strict time constraint so long as it continues making progress toward full compliance. Phil noted that ideally all bids will have been obtained and work will commence in 2020.

Illustrating his presentation with a series of Power Point slides, Phil explained that presently the design of the church creates a “chimney effect” in the center of the building. New code requires that any pathway for a fire to go straight up needs to be changed in order to contain fire in smaller areas of the building. He presented various changes under consideration for the second-floor hallway and windows that would help mitigate the chimney effect.

With regard to the lower level of the church, the coat rack area outside Luther Hall would be converted into a large closet with a fireproof ceiling. In addition, the current boiler room doorway would be sealed off and some of the existing exhaust louvers on the east wall of Luther Hall would be removed to accommodate a new entryway below the louvers to the boiler room. Fire doors would be installed at the entrance to the lower level classroom hallways, and the doors to Luther Hall would be placed inside Luther Hall and open into the foyer without obstructing anyone’s movement.

On the main floor, the side door by the stairwell to the second floor would be sealed off, and fire doors would be installed at the south end of the hallway behind the narthex. These doors would be open during worship services.

In the ESSE hallway, fire doors would be added to create smaller spaces to help contain a fire in such an event. Two of the three nursery doorways would be sealed off for fire safety purposes.

Finally, the main floor ceiling would need to be changed to seal off the open space between the hanging tiles and the original ceiling at strategic points to prevent fire from traveling within that space.

Phil noted that two estimates have been received for the proposed work, but the bids are considerably higher than previously anticipated. Both estimates so far are in the \$200,000 range (in total, before contributions by ESSE and Rainbow Place), with another bid currently being sought from a third company.

Phil opened the floor to questions:

Sally Stauber asked, "How long will it take to complete the work?" Phil responded that the work would take up to four weeks and it is anticipated that work could begin this summer.

Enoch Anderson asked, "Do we have a master plan from someone in the building or interior design field, and is there a focus on broadening Faith's outreach to the community through our building?" Ron Guastaferrri, who has worked with the Property Ministry on this project since the beginning, responded that an architect was involved from the outset and has met with the fire marshal to develop an overall strategy for updating the building. The next step is to finalize the bids, select a contractor, and have the contractor develop a final plan for the work that needs to be done. Any plan would need to be approved by the Village of Glen Ellyn.

Sandy Becky said, "Rainbow Place is a paramount ministry for our community. If this is what we need to do, then we need to do it."

Paula Serfling Nugent asked whether the floor plan would change the elevator in any way, and Phil responded, "No."

Deb Hornell inquired whether the fire doors would be left open on Sundays to make the church more welcoming. Ron responded that the doors would remain open and be tied to the alarm system for automatic closure in the event of a fire.

Lois Evans asked, "Plans keep changing every time we meet with the fire marshal. Is this the final plan?" President Sekera reiterated that a third bid is being obtained, and once a contractor is chosen a final plan will be developed.

Mickey Wendorf asked, "Is the door from the outside to the church offices locked due to Rainbow Place?" President Sekera responded that only the Rainbow Place doors are locked, not the outside door to the church by the offices.

President Sekera closed the discussion with the acknowledgement that this is a major change for the church, it is going to need to happen, and the Council will keep the congregation informed every step of the way. Ron added that work is ongoing and invited members who have questions to call him, Phil, or President Sekera.

Elections

President Sekera recognized the slate of candidates and thanked the Nominating Committee for its hard work. The Nominating Committee members included Council appointee Deb Twaddle, and Deb O'Connor, Jim O'Connor, Kathy Zima, Pr. Shelly, and Pr. Joe.

The vote counters were Council members who were not up for re-election: Deb Twaddle, Tammy Daugherty, Rachel Sorce and Chris Sorce.

After the ballots were collected, and while the votes were being counted, Secretary Chris Bettin recognized outgoing Council members Ted Flores (At-Large Administration), Deb O'Connor (Service), and Jane Stroh (Stewardship) for their gracious contributions of time and talent to the Council and the Faith Church congregation.

The election results were as follows:

Total ballots cast: 106

Secretary (second term)—Chris Bettin, 104 votes

At-Large Safety (first term)—Phil Hartweg, 105 votes

At-Large Service (first term)—Debbie Rohla, 104

Property (first term)—Mark Pedersen, 104 votes

Stewardship (first term)—Sandy Becker, 105 votes

Endowment Committee (first term)—Brett Bartelli, 106 votes

Synod Delegates

Bob Sitze—105 votes

Chris Sitze—104 votes

Lois Walter—103 votes

Nominating Committee

Jane Stroh—105 votes

Craig Warner—105 votes

2020 Council Member—To be appointed by Council

Scholarship Committee (appointed by Council)

Rob Herbold

Tom Harty

Rachel and Chris Sorce

Audit Committee (appointed by Council)

Rob Magnesen, first term, first year

Jodi Herbold, first term, second year

Financial Secretary (appointed by Council)

Carl Henninger, Secretary

Lynn Lullo, Assistant Financial Secretary

Adjournment

MOTION (Beth Nyland/Susan Sekera): To adjourn the annual meeting of the congregation at 1:25 p.m. (Carried)

Respectfully submitted by:

Chris Bettin, Secretary

