

## **Council Meeting Minutes- January 18, 2021 at 6 pm Via Zoom**

**Attending:** Gail Lund, Morgan Wright, Beth Reavis, Mary Ballard, Laura McArthur, Pastor Steve Troisi, Carol Norris, Alan Hauser, Charlie Wallin, Janice Koppenhaver, and Sandy Moretz, Emory Maiden

**Call to Order** - Mary called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.m

**Devotion** - Morgan gave a devotion from a Southern ELCA pastor from the Bible verses Isaiah 43:14 and the fall of Babylon. It calls for us to not dwell on the past, but look for the future. Thinking about "Remember When," we often look at things with rose colored glasses. Through Isaiah, God says don't focus on the past, but on the new things. Look upon God's work today and to be grateful, not stuck.

**Review Updated Council Ground Rules** - Mary reviewed the ground rules.

- Please raise your hand to indicate that you would like to speak.
- Please give your name and state your views on the matter under discussion, including any questions or concerns you may have.
- In order to allow others ample opportunity to join in the conversation, please keep any subsequent comments by you on this issue/motion succinct and to the point.
- Please remain quiet when others have the floor so everyone can hear.
- Please be respectful of those voicing differing opinions.

**Congregational Input** - Pastor Steve said he is excited how many members have gotten the COVID vaccine.

**Approval of Council Meeting Minutes** - Charlie moved to accept the minutes. Gail seconded. Motion carried.

**Strategic Visioning** -

a. 2020-2021 Council Goal Setting

- i. Planned Giving Meeting Workshop (Jan or Feb) - Pastor Steve said that we're going to do brainstorming, collect ideas and then meet again
- ii. Constitution Update, Financial Policy Update (begin in Jan)
- iii. Audit what we've done during COVID (May)

**7. Policy** -

a. Policy Updates: Constitution Update (Postponed until March)

## 8. Monitoring and Oversight

### a. Reports:

i. **Senior Pastor Report** - Pastor Steve added that his family was supposed to take vacation, but then had back issues. He is doing better after a cortisone shot.

1. **Engagement Report** - Pastor Steve pulled information for the Cantata and Christmas Eve services. The Cantata had many viewers. He also noted that now more people are watching on Youtube than Facebook, and than those watching on Youtube watch on average about half of the whole worship service. This is compared to Facebook where the average is about 1-2 minutes.

2. **Christmas Eve Services** - Weather impacted the outdoor services, but those who attended were appreciative.

ii. **Campus Ministry Coordinator Report**

iii. **Music Ministry Report**

iv. **Administrative Secretary Report** - Internet equipment is on order and will be installed when everything is in.

v. **Facilities Manager Report** - Painting the Fellowship Hall is in progress. The hallway to the Fellowship is being cleared out to open it up more space.

vi. **Treasurer Report** - Adjusted Monthly Giving/Cumulative Giving - Pastor Steve pointed out that that December giving was strong -- over \$33,000. For the year, we're behind about \$3,200 compared to our budget. One thing he noted is that during COVID giving has been more consistent, month-to-month. Plus, the expenses have been consistently lower than the budget. At the end of December, we have a surplus of \$11,000. What has also been amazing is how folks are responding to the Capital Drive. The Council House mortgage is now down to about \$12,000. Student Parking reservations for the Spring have been slow to come in, with only 31 spaces reserved so far. With the delay in the start of in-person classes, there is still a good chance that most of the spots will be reserved.

### b. Old Business:

i. **Security Protocol Group** (Sandy and Carol) - No update

ii. **Fire Alarm System** (Pastor Steve and Jeff) - Grace has received a \$10,000 Gift.

iii. **Wilkes Property** (Pastor Steve and Jeff) - Pastor Steve said he had talked with the family that he will need to circle back with them again.

iv. **Growing Grace Capital Campaign Update** (Pastor Steve) - \$70,000+ received so far! Total pledges and gifts are at about \$150,000 against our goal of \$200,000.

vi. **Parking update** - There are still parking spaces available.

c. **New Business**

i. **Updates on adjustments to schedule related to COVID-19** - Alan asked that we discuss the recent events. Mary said given the new stay at home orders that we can't say that we could meet. Alan made a motion that we not open yet and for the Council to look at it again at the February Council meeting. Gail seconded. Motion carried.

For small groups, the limit will continue to be set at 10 people. To this point the quilters were the only group meeting other than the group of 5 that gathers to record worship.

Alan requested that we discuss the recent events and domestic terrorism. Mary has gotten an email from Bishop Tim regarding threats to churches. Pastor Steve hasn't heard of any vandalism in churches in Watauga county. Wednesday, Jan. 20th is expected to be another day that there are heightened alerts for vandalism. Pastor Steve reported that the plan is to have the staff park in the middle lot. Mary said that she's more concerned about the Temple. Alan read a few statements from the UCC Bishop that 'liberal' churches may be more of the focus. Bishop Tim suggested taking a break from any group gathering. Alan stated that we shouldn't have anyone at the church during this very dangerous time. Sandy noted that we should consider moving the Communion worship service on the 20th. Alan and Sandy both said that we can't replace people, so it's better to take a safer route. Mary said there is no reason to take the chance with any staff and recommended not to have any staff in the building during this week. Pastor Steve will meet with the staff and come with a plan for leading the Communion service from home. He will ensure that all staff work from home on Jan. 20th.

ii. **Filling Vacant Council Seat** - The Committee has a list of 6 people and Pastor Steve will begin calling. Pastor Steve will send out an email vote once the final candidate is put forward from the Nominating Committee with the hopes of having this new member present at the February meeting.

iii. **Internet Upgrade** -- Updated above.

iv. **Intern for 2021-2022** - Pastor Steve has done the paperwork, but edited the previous form to reflect changes. Charlie made a motion to approve the application of the intern. Alan seconded it. Motion carried. Pastor Steve said it looks promising that we'll get interns for the next two years.

v. **Brainstorming for the Future of Grace** - Pastor Steve shared the summary of brainstorming ideas for Grace Dreaming 2021 (include link) for four areas, including estimates of costs.

Learning  
Serving - outreach and visitation  
Worshipping - types of services  
Welcoming - LSA

Pastor Steve said next steps would be to decide what goals would be identified first and how to tackle them. Pastor Steve will update the presentation and bring back to the next Council meeting for review.

**Next Meeting:** February 15, 2021 at 6 p.m.

Devotion: Laura

**Adjourn Meeting with the Lord's Prayer** - Carol had suggested that we try having the person who does the devotion lead us in the Lord's prayer with all others on mute. Morgan led us in the Lord's Prayer.

#### **Upcoming Devotions**

Mar - Gail

Apr - Carol

May - Emory

June - Beth

July - Janice

Aug - Charlie