

**Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
**61<sup>st</sup> Annual Congregational Meeting – January 21, 2021**  
*Called into community, gifted to serve.*  
*Glorifying God through love in action.*

We met remotely via Zoom during this time of COVID-19 social distancing. People were using Zoom and could see the presentation; there were 6 additional participants on the phone.

**Opening Prayer** – Jeff Gerstenberger opened the meeting with prayer.

**Meeting Logistics** - Jeff went over logistics for the meeting. The microphones were muted to eliminate background noise; however, we could use Chat window to ask a question. We could also raise a hand if on camera. Based on Zoom attendance, we had a quorum.

Voting would be done by Zoom Meeting Poll; any confirmed member could vote. The poll had two questions; number of votes in favor and number opposed. Both questions needed responses. There was verbal voting for members who called into the meeting.

We practiced the voting process, so everyone was comfortable with the poll questions and technology.

**Approval of Minutes** - We approved Minutes from the January 26, 2020 Annual Meeting, the May 3, 2020 Congregational Meeting, and the July 12, 2020 Congregational Meeting. There were no corrections or additions. Susan Roth made the motion to approve as written and they were approved with visual voting.

**Pastor's Report** – In addition to the written report, Pastor Aileen thanked Rod Speer for his many years of service leading the Property team.

**Pastoral Assistant Report** – In addition to his written report, Pastor Hans thanked everyone for their partnership and assistance in the past year.

**Music Director** – Willie LaFavor also thanked people, he said we would not have had such a successful year without the support and contribution from many people who shared their talents and skills.

**President's Report** - Jeff spent some time explaining how our Synod Mission benevolence contributions are used. He showed a video that included a Latino church, hurricane relief in Puerto Rico, and other ways illustrating the Lutheran Church responses to the needs of others, and that we are a church body that helps. We put faith in mission support.

Jeff detailed the congregational goals that were met: food ministry, racial justice, serving others, Facebook devotions, Council meetings, stories of faith, etc. The only thing we did not accomplish was an emphasis on having fun. A party is planned for the future when we can all meet and celebrate with each other in person.

**Ministry Reports (written)** - Jeff referred the congregation to the written reports in the Annual Report for details.

**Council Elections** – Shelly Knapp agreed to continue as Worship and Music Ministry Leader, Joanne Niemi agreed to continue as Ministry Leader for Stewardship, Paul Williams is nominated for Property Team Leader.

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Thanks to Rod and his team for enthusiastically responding to the flood “disasters” as well as the everyday upkeep of the facility. We also welcomed Paul Williams to the Council.

The congregation voted for the slate of nominees. The congregation responded to both questions, there were 80 Yes and 1 No vote, including those via telephone.

**Synod Assembly Representatives Election** – We nominated Tarra Hartman and Shelly Knapp to represent Messiah at the 2021 Synod Assembly. We voted and approved their election with gratitude for accepting this service.

**Endowment Fund Board Elections** – We nominated Wayne Reabold and Tom Johnson for the Endowment Fund Board and they were approved by visual voting.

**2021 Budget Approval –**

- Jeff shared a PowerPoint slide that summarized the 2020 financial highlights and answered all questions.
- The proposed 2021 budget is \$344,425 which is a 4% increase over last year’s budget. There are no significant changes.
- We reviewed the conversation from the Financial Forum on January 24, 2021 and reinstated funding for the South Wedge Mission based on congregational input at the Finance Forum.
- Sandy Moncrief made the motion to approve the 2021 budget and Janet Graves-Wright seconded the motion. We voted by poll and telephone. The vote was 70 Yes, 0 No and 2 people abstained.
- Jeff gave an update on the Capital Campaign Fund. We used \$127,751 of Capital Campaign funds in 2020 and the remaining \$9,145 will be transferred to the Greater Messiah Fund. We discussed what improvements are still necessary, particularly HVAC and exterior painting.

**Sanctuary Vision Update** – A small team (Joanne, Shelly, Pastor Aileen, Sandy Volta, Ellen Meyer) has been working with the Worship and Music team. Their mission has been “What enhancements do we want for our worship space?”. Nothing will be done without Council and Congregational approval.

**New Business** – Jeff asked if there was any new business. A question was asked and answered about a second PPP loan; we are not eligible to apply again.

Pastor Aileen thanked everyone involved in getting us on Zoom. Expressed gratitude to Jeff and Julie, Willie; the musicians growing their technology and Zoom skills. Pastor thanked the Council for meeting weekly and to everyone for their support.

**Closing Prayer** - Pastor Aileen closed the meeting with prayer.

Submitted by Laurie Simonson