

Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church
65th Annual Congregational Meeting – January 26, 2025

Called into community, gifted to serve.

Glorifying God through love in action.

The 2024 Annual Report had been previously emailed and hard copies were available at this meeting.

Jeff Gerstenberger opened our meeting in prayer. We met in person, with options for Zoom and via phone. Jeff explained the logistics of the meeting. People with questions would be given a microphone so everyone could hear their questions. The Zoom participants could ask questions via the chat feature and they would be read to the congregation. All confirmed members were eligible to vote. Jeff projected spreadsheets that were also included in our handout.

In person voting was done by paper ballot. Zoom participants voted via chat. Phone participants voted vocally.

- **Approval of minutes** - Breanna Dauphinee made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of our February 4, 2024 Congregational Meeting as written in in the Annual Report, and Sheri Treadwell seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.
- **Pastor's Reports** – Pastor Aileen referenced her printed report and asked if anyone had any questions for her or Pastor Hans. Pastor requested that everyone read the reports from Pastor Hans, Music Ministry, President's report and all the individual ministries. There were no questions or comments.
- **Council Elections** – We have two council positions to fill: Outreach and Adult Faith Formation. Mark Sutliff agreed to continue leading Outreach. Jan Pios is leaving the Adult Faith Formation Ministry. We thanked her very much for her service. We do not have anyone to take her place at this time.

Council terms were up for three council members; however, they graciously agreed to continue service: Mark Sutliff, Sheri Treadwell and Andy Mitchell. *(Voting results recorded below.)*
- **Synod Assembly Representatives Election** – We need two lay people to attend the 2025 Synod assembly which will be virtual this year. Both Breanna Dauphinee and Carol Dunn have agreed to attend and they need congregation approval. *(Voting results recorded below.)*
- **Sunday 5 pm Worship** – Pastor explained that very few people attend the Sunday evening service. She talked to the few members that attend this service and they agreed that February 23, 2025 would be the last one. In the past, this service included the Praise Band and provided a different service option. It has evolved to be similar to the Sunday morning service. Sunday morning service attendance has increased by 5% over last year and there are about 25-30 people who attend online each week.

- **Endowment Fund Update** – Jeff said with the new Endowment Fund rules approved last year, we are allowed to use 10% of the accrued earnings (\$15,382) for funding new grant opportunities. There will be more information to follow regarding how to apply for those funds.

Year End balance	\$198,357
Principal	<u>\$ 44,543</u>
Accrued earnings	\$153,823
Available to use	\$ 15,382

- **2024 Financial Highlights** – At 2024 Year End we had a surplus of \$21,018. We transferred \$5,000 to the Concord Fund, \$11,200 to the Greater Messiah Fund, and \$4,818 to the Carry Over Fund. In addition, our Unbudgeted Benevolences contributions for 2024 was \$34,554. We unexpectedly spent \$6,299 on Bee extermination. Jeff explained the money transfers so there was transparency.
- **2025 Proposed Budget:** Pledges in 2024 were \$361,780 and \$368,500 in 2025; that is a 2% increase. We used the non-pledged offering estimate of \$51,000 which is the same as last year for our budgeting purpose. The synod reimburses us for 25% of Pastors salary, the data from 2024 was higher because it included one payment rolled over from 2023. The synod assures us that 2025 will have the correct 4 payments.

In 2024 we invested in CDs and expect to realize a return of \$7,700 in 2025; we plan on moving more of our cash from Canandaigua National Bank to Vanguard to further increase our interest income in 2025.

The budget target is \$368,500 as detailed in the Annual Report.

The Staff salary increase will start on February 1, 2025 because the congregation needs to approve this as part of the budget. Please note that we added \$1,000 financial support for Breanna as she enters seminary. We also made the decision to decrease our contribution to the Southwest Mission.

Jeff reviewed and discussed the proposed budget, detailing the increases and reductions with explanations. Jeff asked if there were any more questions, not addressed at the Annual Meeting or the Finance Forum, and there were none.

Jim Hartmann made the motion to approve the proposed 2025 budget of \$386,500. Karen Treadwell-Collins seconded the motion. *(Voting results recorded below.)*

- **Messiah Policy Document:** While we waited for the vote tallies, Jeff discussed the Messiah Policy Document listed on our website and the useful information there that members should be aware of.
- **Voting:** The vote for Synod Assembly representatives was 53 yes and 0 opposed votes. The Council Member vote was 54 yes and 0 opposed, and the 2025 Budget passed with 59 yes and 0 opposed.

- **New Business** – Pastor thanked Gene Ligtenberg for his service on the Finance Team and gave him a small token of appreciation. No other new business was initiated.

Pastor Aileen closed our meeting in prayer

Submitted by Laurie Simonson