

Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church
Council Meeting Minutes – December 7, 2023

*Called into community, gifted to serve.
Glorifying God through love in action.*

Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81482283301?pwd=SG5MZDZKYlc2VWNVM29YM1haS1ZCUT09>

Present: Pastor Aileen Robbins, Joanne Niemi, Andy Mitchell, Sheri Treadwell, Janet Graves-Wright, Amy Trichanh, Paul Williams, Mark Sutliff, and Jim Hartman. Laurie Simonson and Shelly Knapp were absent.

We met via Zoom.

Devotions and Opening Prayer – Joanne started our meeting with devotions and prayer. According to “The Wire,” we always need to be on the lookout for what the people need.

Joanne led the meeting.

Agenda Review – Nothing new added.

November 9 minutes - Approved unanimously. September 14 and October 12 minutes are pending.

Council Nominating Committee: Mark Sutliff, Shelly Knapp, Larry Dennis, and Judy Merritt-Speed have submitted five names each for the two upcoming Council openings, Worship and Music & President. Council unanimously approved Pastor Aileen to move forward with the committee’s lists.

Janet Graves-Wright is actively seeking a replacement for finance director. She, along with our financial team volunteers--Wayne Reabold, Martha Littlejon, Don Littlejon, and Ladd Dromgold--will support the new person. However, this process will not begin until after this budget cycle.

Ministry Team Reports

- **Extended Ministry Report – Finance.** Janet led an extensive discussion of our current income, expenses, and 2024 budget recommendations. See her spreadsheet for line item notes and explanations.

Financial reporting is only available through September at this time. Janet will work with Julie and Gene to access our latest data before the January Council meeting.

Conversation around the Food Pantry, its separate accounting, and how to represent this data in PowerChurch

Suggested increase to Hospitality line item

Proposed increasing funding for Youth Gathering Fund to begin planning for 2028 trip expenses. Approved.

Discussed significant 2023 building and grounds expenses, decided to hold off on approving final 2024 budget numbers until more up-to-date data is available.

Confirmed there is a designated Library Fund.

Proposed increasing Communication line item to pay for updated Messiah Lawn sign. Approved.

Discussed other giving platforms, recommended direct deposit and bill pay. The Stewardship team will plan and educate the congregation on various (free) giving options.

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Tim Hutton has compiled 2024 financial giving pledges. 62 processed (10 “as able”), 3 just received, 22 families who pledged last year have not pledged in 2024. Both Jim and Janet discussed this importance of pledging in the December Herald.

Final budget proposal likely won't be finalized until **mid-January**.

- Mutual Ministry, Staff Compensation Recommendations -- Aileen was excused for this conversation. Council agreed with the recommendations, pending final budget amounts.

Other Business:

- Youth Fundraising: Christmas tree lot discussed.

Fat Tuesday Pancake Dinner reinstated. **February 13, 2024** date confirmed. Amy will recruit youth to help. Sheri will also support this event.

- Suggested compiling a new Church Directory in 2025.
- Suggested updating our website with a more up-to-date look and theme to draw in new members. Acknowledged that time-sensitive content is consistently updated by Dave Best for current members.

Looking Ahead:

- The Mutual Ministry team has written a new Harassment Prevention policy for the Council to review and approve (tabled this month).
- **February 2024**-Review and discuss congregational goals

Upcoming Dates:

- **January 21** Financial Forum
- **January 28** Annual Meeting and Luncheon

Next Meeting:

Council Meeting – Thursday, January 4, 2024. Also keep Thursday, **January 11, 2024** open for additional business as needed.

Devotions & prayer – Laurie

Extended ministry report – Communication

Closing Prayer – *Joanne closed our meeting with prayer.*

Submitted by Andy Mitchell