

Advent Lutheran Church
Minutes of Church Council Meeting

January 20, 2011

Attending: Pastor Brown, Carlos Lopez, Djamillah Samad, Karen Cantrell, Nicole Johnson, Julie Hagen, Erin Anderson, Elba Cabrera, Lauren Johnson, Kelly Kandler, Rose Tresgallo.

The following minutes summarize the council meeting. More complete information can be found in the handouts referred to in each section.

Devotion: Julie Hagen led a devotion about the need to focus on opportunity to both offer and accept hospitality because “Jesus appears at unexpected times, and we should not forget to be ready.”

December Minutes: Unanimously approved.

Pastor’s Report: PB reported on the following:

- Matt Jones is being moved to the Isabella Geriatric Center. PB and Shelley Jones toured the facility on January 20 and approved of it.
- Bill Ellis is doing well, back at work, and travelling again on the subway. Rose Tresgallo and Charles Miller have been in touch with him.
- Kees Kooper is going to stay in his apartment. People from Advent are visiting and helping him, including helping to catalog all the programs for concerts in which he has played.
- Sandra Kirby was hospitalized with an asthma attack. Amy Ripley, a resident at St Luke’s, visited her.
- Tracy Keats had a lymphoma scare; Memorial Sloan Kettering immediately began treating her.
- Sarah Brown is doing well after her knee replacement, but her Addison’s Disease made things rough for her the weekend after the surgery. She has been inspired by Kathy Matson.
- Julie Hagen has been approved to be rostered as an ELCA Associate in Ministry (AIM). The Metro Synod bishop’s office will coordinate the Commissioning and Installation service.. Rev. Eric Shafer, who has had extensive experience with Associate in Ministry candidates, will chair Julie’s committee, and Jane Huerta, Linda Kelly, and Anne Ofstedal will serve on the committee. Julie will be commissioned in word and service. There will be a special congregational meeting in April or May to extend the call. The ELCA Website has more details about the rostering process under “Who We Are.”
- Because Advent ended 2010 with a budget surplus of \$25,000, Council unanimously approved the following gifts:
 - \$275 to Equipo El Salvador to pay half of the airfare for Christian Charvarria, a leader in the Lutheran church in El Salvador, to travel to New York to speak to the congregation about the Lord’s work in El Salvador. Two delegations are going to El Salvador this summer.

- \$500 each to Alisa Joyce and Marc Stutzel as gifts since they are each giving Advent 15-20 hours a week and have been very involved.
- \$2,500 to the ELCA as a tithe of our budget surplus and to show our support to the ELCA in light of the 666 defections in part due to the 2009 action of the Churchwide assembly.
- Staff Salaries also need to be looked at to make sure that we are in line with peer congregations. PB will ask the Personnel Committee to investigate what other churches in our area are paying their staff, especially the musicians.
- Council Officer elections will happen at the February meeting. PB reminded everyone that we would be electing the president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer next month. Although Hans Kriefall will be going off council because of his outside obligations, he will continue to act as treasurer until we replace him and to ensure a smooth transition.

Children, Youth, and Family: Julie Hagen reported on the following:

- The middle school youth had a skating party as their monthly fellowship. Three people brought a friend. The middle school youth will also have a week-long leadership camp this summer, focusing on service projects in NYC.
- The high school youth are currently fund raising for a mission trip.
- Julie is still working on how to better welcome children and incorporate them into the service. The children are also sharing stories about why it is worthwhile to be part of a Christian community. During one of these sharings, a boy that has been coming to Bible Explorers via the Kelly family invoked the story of the Lost Sheep to explain that “God is always with me, so I am never lost.”

Treasurer’s Report: See Hans Kriefall’s email of January 13, 2010 for complete details. Hans submitted the year-end financials, which were presented at the meeting by Linda Kelly and Nicole Johnson. Hans also recommended hiring a professional bookkeeper to work an average of 3 hours per week in order to offload the treasurer’s responsibilities now that Advent has grown to be so large. PB will take the suggestion to the Personnel Committee to determine Advent’s needs. For example, what sort of training or other qualifications should be required? How many hours per week? What duties?

Budget: Nicole Johnson presented the 2010 proposed budget; the numbers were based on year-to-date results through December. The budget shows which numbers are staff projection, ministry request, Per PB recommendation, and more. The budget, which was posted on the Website, was approved unanimously. A summary of the discussion is below:

- The numbers for Designated Contributions increase due to an additional Healthy NYC grant of \$1450. The other numbers are the same as last year’s budget.
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- The 13% that appears in the column for the 2011 Budget is a point of disagreement. Carlos Lopez presented the council with an email from Pastor Sudbrock, who believes we should give more than 7% to the New York Metro Synod. Kelly Kandler agreed to reply to Pastor Sudbrock. It should be noted that prior to Carlos' reading of Pastor Sudbrock's letter, the amount to the Metro Synod had been raised to 8%. There was discussion about the fact the Advent tithes its surplus money so actual charitable giving can be higher.
- There is \$15,000 in the budget for capital expenditures (5067) and if there are shared expenses with BUCC, those will be reflected in line 5045.
- For payroll, certain amounts are shared with BUCC. For those, Advent pays ¾ to reflect the fact that Advent is larger and makes greater use of those staff members. The numbers also include money to pay for background checks on employees.
- There is \$14,000 in the 2011 Budget for 5053 Finance Reserve / Strategic Initiatives.
- In 2011, the cost of subscribing to *The Lutheran* is now being reflected in the costs.
- \$1,000 has been budgeted to fund the synod assembly so that Advent will be represented.
- The office budget went over in 2010 because the staff computers were replaced; Sheldon Erb installed them, saving the labor costs.

Nominating Committee: Nicole Johnson addressed who is going off council: Kelly Kandler, who is on the Long Range Planning Committee and moving to the Mission Fund; Hans Kriefall; and Nicole Johnson. Rob Neel and Craig Schwalbe went off Council earlier in the year. The nominees for 2011: Becky Eavey (on the Maternal Health Task Force), Damaris Maclean (Personnel Committee), Brian Peck (Common Ground), and Naomi Frost (Chair of the Stewardship Committee) were asked about why they had come to Advent, what missions/activities they were involved with, and why they would want to be on the council. Formal elections will happen at the Annual Meeting.

Strategic Planning: Rose Tresgallo presented an update of the important dates for the guided conversations and a summary document of "Who We Are" and the questions that Charles Miller had developed for the guided discussion planned for the Annual Meeting. Everyone was encouraged to look at the questions before the meeting.

The Alexander: A 200-bed homeless shelter for men is supposed to open at the Alexander, 94th and Riverside Drive. Area clergy want to make the shelter smaller, and Gail Brewer has been working on it. The goal is to have an integrated community, and all illegal transient hotels must close by May. Other concerns include the lack of private baths, the small winding halls which could be dangerous, and the level of care.

Tiffany Window Rededication: The five remaining Tiffany windows are ready to be re-installed, weather permitting. Suzanne Chadwick scheduled the rededication for February 6, but concerns

about the temperature, which must be above freezing to ensure the mortar holds, have caused this event to be postponed.

Parking: Because more and more people are driving to Advent, PB has been negotiating with a garage on 95th and Amsterdam and another at 93d and Columbus to get a reduced rate for people who attend Advent.

Decisions:

- Because Advent ended 2010 with a budget surplus of \$25,000, Council unanimously approved the following gifts:
 - \$275 to Equipo El Salvador to cover half of Christian Charvarria's airfare from El Salvador to New York.
 - \$500 each to Alisa Joyce and Marc Stutzel to thank them for the 15 hours a week they have been giving to Advent.
 - \$2,500 to the ELCA to support the national church's efforts in the face of the withdrawal of 666 churches.
- **The 2010 and 2011 Budget** was approved unanimously.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Karen J. Cantrell, Secretary