**Advent Lutheran Church – Church Council Meeting – February 19, 2020 Minutes**

**Present – Voting (n=11)**: Pastor Danielle Miller, David Richards, Michael Hammett, Miriam Sitz Grebey, Deanne Walters, Jon Dohlin, Hans Kriefall, Damaris Maclean, Juan Minier, Blessing Tawengwa, Bree Vandenburg

**Present – Not Voting** **(n=3):** Rebekah Anderson, Kevin Bowen, Abby Ferjak

1. **Call to Order**

The Council partnered up in pairs to pray.

1. **Consent Agenda**

The Church Council accepted the consent agenda consisting of meeting minutes, staff reports, and financial statements.

* **Pastor’s Report** — Details pastoral concerns and provides updates about ministry, administrative, building, scheduling and other items.
* **Meeting Minutes** — Notes from the January Council meeting.
* **Financial Reports** — January 2020 Statement of Activities.
* **Communications & Youth Report** — Provides updates about communications and outreach efforts and youth activities.

**Action** ***(Motioned, Seconded, Approved)*:** The Church Council voted to accept all items of the consent agenda as indicated above.

1. **Strategic Discussions: Presentations, Feedback, and Actions**

**Welcome of New Members and Review of Council Responsibilities and Council Covenant**

David Richards welcomed new Council members Damaris Maclean and Hans Kriefall.

Pastor Danielle Miller read aloud the Council Responsibilities, and David Richards discussed the Council Covenant. The Council affirmed both documents.

**Affirmation of Code of Ethics**

David Richards invited an affirmation of the Code of Ethics (required annually) from the Council.

**Action** ***(Motioned, Seconded, Approved)*:** The Church Council affirmed the Code of Ethics.

**Election of Officers.**

The following officers from 2019 were open to serving again: David Richards, President; Michael Hammett, Vice President; Miriam Sitz Grebey, Secretary; Deanne Walters, Treasurer. The Council agreed to affirm the same slate of officers for 2020.

**Action** ***(Motioned, Seconded, Approved)*:** The Church Council elected the slate of officers as presented for 2020.

**2020 Meeting Dates.**

David Richards presented the following schedule of 2020 meeting dates, which the Council affirmed:

March 18

April 15

May 13

June 17

July 22

No August meeting

September 16

October 21

November 18

December 16

January 20

**Implementation of Ministry Plan (incl. overview of Financial and Spatial Planning Teams).**

At the annual meeting, we presented a Mission Plan with 3 stages of development: Focus on Sundays, Small Groups, Community Centers. Part of our job is to ensure we’re catalyzing and implementing that Plan. What are the next steps?

At the Vision Retreat, we shared a calendar with proposed dates for conversations around our space and finances. The calendar includes dates for Listening Groups (modeled off open ended questions used during the Visioning process) and for Meetings (which are intended to give updates around strategic planning). Should we to move forward with Round 1 Listening Groups?

The Spatial Planning team is tasked with giving guidance to a congregational discussion about what is necessary for our ministry to thrive, from a spatial point of view. The Financial Planning team is tasked with developing a plan for a sustainable budget within 5 years, that would allow us to stop borrowing from ourselves; identifying the immediate concerns; and understanding what are the long-term development needs to support our ministries.

Bree Vandenberg presented six values that the Spatial Planning team has identified:

1. Accessible to all people

2. Culturally inclusive of all people

3. Flexible

4. Open

5. Safe

6. A cohesive aesthetic that embodies our Mission & Vision

The conversations taking place in Listening Groups at this point should build off those six values. (Also, perhaps have an online survey for people who can’t attend in person.) Those Listening Groups would be more meaningful after the March 22 meeting.

The Council agreed that the March 22 meeting should be a presentation of the six values of the Spatial Planning team and a plan for a sustainable budget within 5 years from the Financial Planning team.

Kevin Bowen also opened a discussion of how to launch the first component of the Mission Plan: Focus on Sundays. When does that officially begin? He proposes Easter, a celebration Sunday. He could provide the Council with a concrete plan by the March meeting. The Council discussed doing a “soft launch”—rolling out various initiatives—prior to then, and having a more official launch after Easter Sunday, during the Easter season.

**Mission Grant Policy.**

Pastor Danielle Miller reported that the Mission Fund committee has been instructed to delay the application date to June 1, which is in line with the policy passed by the congregation (locating the cycle in the calendar year), because the Strategic Financial team is looking at all avenues of income to create a proposed strategy moving forward, including placing a hiatus on external granting (making that decision would require a Congregational vote) in order to grow the dividends for future use by the church. If there is even a remote possibility that we will not be engaging in external granting, it is not fair to the potential applicants; we want to make certain everyone’s time is respected.

Damaris Maclean and Hans Kriefall reminded the Council that the original intent of the donor whose bequest that created the Mission Fund was to support Advent Lutheran Church. It is not a restricted fund (other than the restrictions placed on it by the Congregation—which could be changed by Congregational vote).

After discussion, the Council agreed that rather than listing a June 1 deadline, the website should be updated with a message indicating interested parties should check back on June 1 for more information on the Mission Fund grant process.

**Review of Annual Meeting & Main Takeaways**

The Council agreed that the 2020 Annual Meeting was a great and informative time of togetherness. The following items were discussed:

* The bilingual service was a great success
* Having various Council members present different parts was good and introduced faces to the Congregation who they may not have known
* Next year, we should hire a professional translator
* Having so much printed information was good; avoid the reading of that same information
* Everyone—including Council members and presenters—should wear nametags
* Note that we will pray before each vote
* Creating all the scripts was a very heavy lift on staff; next year, if any Council members are able to pitch in more, it would be a great help

**Financial Update**

Deanne Walters reported to Council that the Council must annually affirm a Housing Allowance. After discussion, there was concern about specific language: “Advent does not provide The Rev. Danielle Miller with a parsonage…” before explaining how funds are allocated as a housing allowance. The Council tabled conversation and will follow up with Pastor Charles Miller to understand if this language should be revised in some way to indicate that while Advent does not *own* a parsonage for the senior pastor, it does provide one via a rental unit.

Deanne Walters will provide the Council with finalized 2019 numbers.

**Call Committee Update**

Juan Minier reported that the Call Committee’s top candidate, who previously was unavailable due to immigration paperwork issues, has now received his Green Card. He is open to continuing conversations with Advent, but needs to remain in his current Synod for several more months.

Pastor Danielle Miller will follow up with the Synod as to whether they will honor a $40,000 grant for three years, as originally indicated, or for just one year, as most recently mentioned.

1. **Next Meeting**

The next Council meeting will take place on **Wednesday, March 18, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.**

**Adjournment — Closing Prayer.**

The meeting closed in prayer.

***Respectfully submitted by M.S. Grebey, 03/18/20***