



**SHARE GOD'S WORD SHOW GOD'S LOVE SERVE GOD'S WORLD**

## **McFarland Lutheran Church Council Minutes**

January 30, 2024

**Present:** Pastor Kelli Smidt, Wayne Corey, Jon Schadeberg, Paul Hundt, Scott Potts, Jane Licht, Sarah Schutt, Erin Kraemer, Matt Lancaster, Sharon Mylrea, Carri Wolff, Christina Hughey, Doug Buechel, treasurer Mike Devine

**Guest:** Aaron Geisinger

**Devotions:** Jon Schadeberg explained that national park rangers have observed that Alaskan huskies don't know when to stop as they are always in motion and never seem to rest. The Sabbath was made for God and for humankind. It is important to take a day of the week to rest and reflect.

### **Call Committee Report**

Aaron Giesinger stated that the Call Committee members have worked for nearly two years. Before them, the Transition Committee set the stage for the Call Committee. The Ministry Site Profile (MSP) was prepared. The Synod gave the Call Committee five names (suitable for the senior pastor position). Two of the five soon withdrew. Later they received a sixth candidate that committee members approved unanimously. That person accepted but later withdrew. The committee sponsored three open forums for members of the congregation and these were well received. Some of the comments received were concern for Pastor Kelli's workload and the fact that the process is taking so long. The Synod has found two additional candidates and presented their Rostered Minister Profiles (RMP). The committee will conduct phone interviews because the candidates are out of state. There are three pastoral openings in Dane County and more open positions than candidates nationwide. Sarah thanked Aaron for his efforts in communicating with the council and the congregation. Aaron said they will do temple talks and have more open forums when they have more information.

### **Finance Report**

Mike said that at the end of December there was about \$125,000 in our checking account which is up \$8,000 from November. Our savings account was down a bit because of the solar project expenses. Church giving was \$8,500 below budget. Overall, after deducting expenses from income, there is net income of approximately \$64,000. The reason for this large positive number is because there are a few church staff positions that remain open. These positions, coupled with the related employment expenses, give the Church the positive net income amount. This has put the Church in a good position financially, however a difficult position from a leadership perspective. Scott said that committee chairs will be receiving their budget worksheets for the next fiscal year. These completed worksheets should be returned to Rita as soon as possible, so that she can prepare the first draft of next year's budget.

## **Minutes**

Paul moved and Doug seconded a motion to approve the November meeting minutes as corrected to omit the Recognition of Gifts section phrase "voted on at the next meeting" and replaced with the phrase "a future council meeting." Motion carried.

## **Pastor Kelli's Report**

Our new assistant administrator Heather Wedan is progressing very well. Carrie was doing website updates and Huldah was creating power points for worship services but Heather has taken on these jobs. She is eager and willing. For Advent, Kelli worked with her Worship Committee who planned prayer stations. For example, worshipers wrote prayers on paper links. This activity was well-received. Thanks to Vicki Holten and Paul for the advent suppers. Christmas Eve services were held at 10 am, 3 pm and 5 pm. They were equally attended and totaled 640 people. On December 31<sup>st</sup> was the Christmas Letters and Carols service with five adult readers and five youth readers. A new way to sign up for worship service assistants was developed. There were two funerals and one baptism. A Kids Chorus was initiated that is separate from Sunday School. The kids rehearse for two weeks and sing at a church service the third week. The Solar Panels are operational and there will be a celebration this February 3 and 4. Ash Wednesday falls on February 14 and the Worship Committee suggested making ashes in the shape of a heart. There will be Lenten services at 11 am and 6 pm but no meals on Ash Wednesday. After that, there will be midweek Lenten services at 6:30 and supper at 5:30 pm. There will be two classes in May for 2<sup>nd</sup> graders. The COC will include them in making communion wafers. May 4-5 will be their first communion.

## **Solar Report**

Ron Vandeburg recently received the paperwork for a federal grant. He will fill out the application. Sarah said that we should continue the Solar Implementation Taskforce until we get the grant. Church members with smart phones can get an app that displays the amount of energy that is being produced.

## **Document Housing Project**

Jon reported that it is in its test form. We have a Google account and Sharon sent him 16 policy documents that were successfully transferred. The question of how many accounts are appropriate was discussed. Heather can be the point person and we can request access to the documents from her. The council president can be the second point of access. It could be part of his/her responsibility as president and passed onto the next president. Jon said that a more robust and comprehensive set of policies can be established over time. Scott said that just having the policies in the minutes does not provide easy access so this project is important.

## **Music Updates**

Todd Bolstad informed Scott that our sets of handbells and chimes need to be refurbished. There is money in the budget for this. However, we do not know how many instruments need serious repair. The company being used will review and let us know their estimates. Scott asked Todd and Jerry Hrovat to review as well. If there is too much wear, the instruments cannot be tuned.

## **Director of Music Position**

Pastor Kelli and the Executive Committee recommended to move ahead with filling the position. The job description needs to be redone. Representatives from each music group will be asked for their input. Sharon agreed to facilitate the initial meeting of the music group representatives where they can present their ideas on appropriate skills and tasks for the director. These recommendations will be submitted to the Personnel Committee whose members are responsible for writing the position

description. Motion by Paul and seconded by Doug to convene a group of music ministry stakeholders to provide input about the music director position and make recommendations to the personnel committee. Motion carried.

### **Employee Handbook**

Scott said the Personnel Committee was looking at the policy on snow days and noticed inconsistencies in the Employee Handbook. They are working on it. Each employee receives a handbook when they are hired.

### **Committee Recruitment Policy**

Sharon sent out a draft policy. Committee Chairs can use the Nominating Committee to help fill vacancies on their committee. There are operational committees and programmatic committees that should be treated differently. The council members approved Sharon's draft by email. This policy will be sent to committee chairs. Questions may be directed to Paul. Sarah suggested that Heather set up a group list of all committee chairs.

### **Facility Usage Agreement**

This document needs to be reviewed. Heather can email us copies of the current agreement. We receive many requests from both members and outside groups but our mission should be foremost. Sharon said that we may want to fold facility usage in with our Security Committee.

### **Fundraising Policy**

Sharon and Sarah worked up a draft that was discussed and tabled. Pastor Kelli would like to see it remain on the agenda.

### **Communication and Marketing Taskforce**

Sharon indicated that our website needs a facelift. It is on an archaic platform that is difficult to manage. We also need to renew the content. Currently, we use Facebook for church service while YouTube might be a better choice. There are both short-term and long-term projects. We need to get the word out that members with expertise are needed to serve on this taskforce.

### **Stewardship Committee**

Stewardship Committee met on December 11. The inaugural Day of Giving on Tuesday, November 28, 2023, yielded donations of \$2600 from 8 donors. The committee has made recommendations for modifications and enhancements to the Giving page on the MLC website. Pastor Kelli is working with Rita and Heather on exploring and implementing those changes to have more visibility for giving and create a more seamless giving experience, aligned with priority needs of the church. There also was a discussion about whether it's time to eliminate or greatly reduce the production of giving envelopes and more information will be gathered from Rita about usage and costs so a recommendation can be made. The committee is still considering Scripts gift cards as a possible ongoing fundraiser and is gathering more information about the human resource needed to manage such a program. The committee will begin working on the gift recognition policy at our meeting on January 28. A proposed process for requesting impact stories from committee chairs for an ongoing communications plan will be developed and brought to Council in the next couple of months. The next big initiative will be a way to encourage time and talent opportunities.

### **Global Missions Committee**

The Guatemala / Outreach for World Hope mission trip participants presented at all 3 services this weekend. Park shelter for Walk-4-Water is reserved on Sept 21. Tom Eggum will be visiting and presenting at the services on Sept 14 and 15.

### **Local Missions Committee meeting minutes from 1/10/24**

We are going to work Brat Fest this year. All the proceeds will go to MLC. More information to come, but each worker is paid \$10/hour and that amount goes to the church as a fundraiser.

We are going to gather donations for the Pride Pantry in February. Look for this in the newsletter January 31<sup>st</sup>. We also plan on participating in the "Feed My Starving Children" event again this year. The date this year is March 9<sup>th</sup>. As an FYI for a future agenda item – would like to discuss with the council about additional funding for triangle ministry food meal donation.

### **Child and Family Ministry (CFM) Committee**

Our meeting on 1/2/2024 discussed feedback from our Christmas Program this year. The general feedback was that the Program itself was very well received, but the group verified the need to double check equipment beforehand. Discussion then shifted to planning our Lent event scheduled for March 17th. The stations will be similar to last year, with the addition of a table set up by Care of Creation.

### **CLM Committee January Meeting Update:**

In-house registration for the fall opened on 17 January. Public registration starts Feb 1. Sara will see how it goes and may have a 2 day/week offering if needed. Otherwise, all is well!

### **Property Committee Meeting Notes:**

The property committee met on January 16. A furnace in the lower level should be replaced and someone has stepped forward and offered to pay for the replacement. We are so blessed and currently pursuing quotes. Regarding a campus plan for future landscaping, a large-scale drawing of the MLC property which includes all buildings, trees, gardens and beds has been developed by property committee member Gary Landerud. A copy of this drawing was presented to Dawn Bolstad of the COC committee to mark up their future wishes. Hallelujah! - The solar panel project has been completed and it's up and running. Let the sun shine!

### **Care of Creation (COC)**

The COC (Care of Creation) committee met January 15. They decided to join the Sunday School Lenten Fair and have a table devoted to butterflies since the new life theme fits nicely with Lent and Easter. Chair Dawn Bolstad met with the Properties Committee and presented the COC ideas for campus planning. The COC plans were well received.

**Next meeting: March 19 instead of March 26<sup>th</sup>**

### **Adjournment**

Paul moved and Carri seconded a motion to adjourn at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jane Licht, Secretary