



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

## **McFarland Lutheran Church Council Minutes**

February 27, 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, treasurer Mike Devine

**Absent (excused):** Doug Buechel

**Guest:** Aaron Geisinger

**Devotions:** Matt referred to Pastor Pete Byma who reflected that the Lenten season reminds us that Jesus chose to ride on the back of a donkey to show humility. Being a king is about service. We should serve the Lord and one another – this makes us kings and queens in heaven.

### **Call to order and Guest Speaker.**

Scott opened the meeting at 6:30 pm and invited Aaron Geisinger to speak. Aaron said he had good news for us. Wayne moved to go into executive session at 6:35 pm. Jon seconded the motion. Motion carried. At 6:50 pm, Wayne moved to go out of executive session. Sarah seconded the motion. Motion carried. Wayne moved that the MLC Council accept the recommendation of the Call Committee and that a congregational meeting be scheduled for the purpose of calling a senior pastor for McFarland Lutheran Church. Paul seconded the motion. Motion carried.

### **Minutes.**

Paul moved and Carri seconded the motion to approve the January 30<sup>th</sup> minutes. Motion carried.

### **Pastor Kelli's Report**

February 4<sup>th</sup> was Scout Sunday and the Troup 53 boy scouts assisted in many ways. There were Ash Wednesday services at 11:30 am and 6:30 pm with a total attendance at about 140. For Holy Week, Palm/Passion Sunday will be at all three weekend services, March 23 and 24. One Maundy Thursday service on March 28 at 6:30pm with hand washing. Two Good Friday services on March 29, one at Noon and then Prayer around the Cross at 7:30pm. Easter services will be at all three weekend services, March 30 and 31. The giving quilts will be blessed this Sunday (March 3). The Feed My Starving Children event to pack food had all 20 spots filled with volunteers. We will bless the Uganda missionaries March 9 and 10 and they will give the sermon upon their return. March 17 the Kids Choir will sing. We had one baptism and one funeral – Marty Quinlan, Carol's husband.

### **Finance Report**

Mike said that we have \$200,000 in our checking account. We received a \$50,000 payment from the school district and \$22,000 of our mortgage was paid down. Church giving was \$46,000 below

budget. Income remains better than budgeted by about \$100,000 mainly because of staff vacancies. Property Committee expenses were down because snow removal costs and heating costs were less than predicted. Global missions had a fundraising event that brought to mind the fact that the Finance Committee prefers cash or credit cards and not the use of Venmo. There is a QR code in the bulletin that takes you to the online giving section of our website. Sarah explained that people can put their designation in with their donation.

### **Stewardship Committee**

The committee tackled the question of how to recognize substantial special gifts for the church. They decided that donors should remain anonymous but the gift and what that gift made possible should be recognized. Rita will know the name of the donor and can send a thank you card that the council signs. The card will explain that the council does not know the name of the donor but that the gift is greatly appreciated. The committee suggested their recommendation be called a practice rather than a policy but after discussion, the council members agreed that exceptions may be made by the council. Paul moved and Carri second a motion that McFarland Lutheran Church adopts the policy that monetary gifts and gifts in kind are recognized publicly but that donors remain anonymous and are not identified publicly by the church. Motion carried. Regarding the giving page on the MLC website, the committee agreed on final recommendations for content updates, and formatting of the Tithely link to improve user experience. These changes may need to wait pending decisions on the overall MLC website. The committee proposed a new initiative to signify online giving during collection time and enable real-time gifts via the QR code. They will present their scripts gift card fundraising initiative to Finance and gain input from Rita.

### **Document Housing Project**

Jon said that documents should simply be sent to Heather, and she will upload them on our local server. Council members may request documents from Heather. Rita and Pastor Kelly will provide backup for this task when Heather is not available. Dennis Knutson assured Jon that we have a good back-up and security system in place. Heather has begun a project to better organize documents and will create a table of contents that can be placed in council members' binders.

### **Director of Music Position Description**

Sharon said she will meet with representatives from the choir, bells, praise band and John to receive their input on the skills, knowledge and experience needed for the position of music director. This information will go to the Personnel Committee that will write the position description. Jane Blank from the Personnel Committee will attend the meeting of these representatives.

### **Market Analysis for MLC Staff**

Jane Blank, Kathy Buechel, Sharon and Katherine Miller will be discussing how to do a market analysis for MLC staff. Sarah thought we should broaden the field to churches in Dane County of similar size to ours rather than just Lutheran churches.

### **Facilities Usage Agreement Task Force**

Scott said this was updated in October of 2022, but it needs to be reviewed again. We need to better define our mission for the facility. Scott discovered children playing hide and seek in the sanctuary and people not connected to the church using the Family Life Center. These pose concerns about safety and liability as well as custodial issues. Sarah, Scott, Carri and Paul agreed to serve on this task force but did not wish to be the chair. This task force will need to communicate with various church committees. Paul moved and Sharon seconded a motion to establish a Facility Usage Agreement Task Force. Motion carried.

### **Nominating Committee: Council Members**

Sharon said that generally four members go off the council and four new people go on each year. Our constitution now provides that council members can elect to remain for a second three-year term. Wayne explained that the change was made to promote institutional memory. Paul said that Nominating Committee members Carri, Sheryl Brown, Rick Hall, Tanya Lancaster and himself have talked with people at church and have some folks willing to consider serving. Paul feels they have some strong candidates. Sharon said it is everyone's responsibility to look for potential new council members.

### **Adjournment**

Paul moved and Sarah seconded a motion to adjourn at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jane Licht, Secretary

### **Other Committee Reports:**

#### **Solar Implementation Taskforce**

SITF is pleased to report that in the first month of use, the MLC solar array generated more than 1870kWh of energy, 87% of which was used directly by the facility. The remaining 13% excess was sold to Alliant resulting in about \$10 in credit. Solar-generated power saved MLC nearly \$300 on the past month's utility bill. We'll continue to provide updates on the contribution of solar power to MLC.

#### **Welcome Team**

The committee is concerned about the absence of new member orientation sessions that have not occurred since before the pandemic. The committee agreed the orientation sessions may be conducted by members of the Welcome Committee. The plan is to have the "member orientation" done in May with announcements being made on both Palm and Easter Sundays inviting anyone to attend. To be more inclusive of those that had become members during past couple of years, the name will be changed from New Member to "Welcome to McFarland Lutheran" orientation. New members will be recognized at Saturday evening service and both Sunday morning services as in the past, but it will be optional to the new members if they would like to be acknowledged by standing in front of the congregation to be recognized. The requirement for a new member to have a sponsor will be eliminated. May 7<sup>th</sup> was selected as the first orientation session. Tom Scharine, Paul Hundt, Sandy Franklin, Carol Munch, Sandy Hall and Huldah Ellested agreed to lead the sessions. Additional sessions will be offered between Sunday morning services.

#### **Local Missions Committee**

We've requested to participate at Brat Fest and will hear if we are selected on March 1st. Participants are paid \$10/hour for working with those proceeds going to MLC. Thanks to those who donated to Pride Pantry. We are volunteering for Feed My Starving Children March 9. Twenty people volunteered so all slots have been filled. Next year we will increase our number of slots. We discussed our budget needs. All are welcome to our meeting March 11 at 6 pm in the Narthex.

#### **Child Life Ministry Committee**

Summer and fall registration went well. Most classes are full and have a waiting list. The three-year-old preschool had a few openings as of 2 weeks ago, and staff is working to fill that class.

### **Care of Creation Committee**

Regarding campus planning, the committee will view the backyard next week to make more specific recommendations using the map made by Gary Landerud. Nina may take the map to students in landscape architecture. We discussed the schedule for 2024. Saturday, March 16 is the Lenten Fair for children. Jane showed the butterfly activity they will use, and Dawn will bring the sunshine cookies. Sometime in April, depending on the weather, we will remove the plastic tarps and rototill the gardens. We will need help from church members to do the rototilling. Wednesday, May 1<sup>st</sup> we will work with first communion children and parents to make wafers. May 11 and 12<sup>th</sup> we plan to have a blessing of seeds and plants. June 30<sup>th</sup> at 3 pm we will sponsor a canoe trip down the Yahara River. On August 4, we will have flower arrangements and treats from the church garden on the refreshment tables in the gathering space. We will also offer prairie tours that day. On August 21<sup>st</sup> we will do the wheat harvesting followed by threshing. At some point, we will set out a tub for shoe recycling for the Lions Club as per Ernie Thieding's request.

### **Family and Children Ministry Committee**

Our last meeting focused on planning for the Spring Lenten Event, and overall committee and succession planning. The objective of this discussion was to solidify plans and ideas around how we run the committee to make it easier for future leaders to continue the good work that we do.