

## **Church Council Meeting December 20, 2022 - MINUTES**

**Present:** George Nederhoff, Bob Saathoff, Craig Blanchard, Maureen Hanson, Lisa Arenholz, Mike Christiason (Zoom), Danielle Terrell, Julie Creeden, Chris Hansen

**Staff Present:** Angie Rath, Julia Voss

**Prayer:** Ron and Teresa Martin prayed over Council prior to the meeting.

**Opening Devotion:** Maureen Hanson taught on the Apostle “James the Just” and ended in prayer.

**Council Basics:** Maureen shared a PowerPoint with Council that Pastor Brian had used at the Council Orientation last March. This was a good reminder to the present Council and also to the new Council members. It was mentioned that this is a good reminder to give all new Council members as they come on Council if they miss the March Orientation. Council thanked Maureen for sharing.

**Call Meeting to Order:** George Nederhoff called the meeting to order at 6:24 p.m.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

- A motion was made (Christiason) and seconded (M. Hanson) to approve the minutes from the November 8, 2022 Council meeting. Motion carried. Approved.
- A motion was made (Saathoff) and seconded (C. Hansen) to approve the minutes from the special Council meetings on November 14 and November 22. Motion carried. Approved.
- A motion was made (C.Hansen) and seconded (M.Hanson) to approve the minutes from the special Council meeting on December 5 and the Special Congregational By-Laws minutes from December 11. Motion carried. Approved.

### **Recommendations:**

- A motion was made (Saathoff) and seconded (M.Hanson) to approve Anne Carlson be appointed to fill the vacant seat on the Nazareth Personnel Committee. Motion carried. Approved.
- A motion was made (M. Hanson) and seconded (Christiason) to authorize the Financial Secretary to pay the regular monthly and quarterly bills that are over \$10,000 including the following for 2023: Salaries, Cedar Falls Utilities, Portico (employee benefits), Professional Lawn Care (grounds maintenance), U.S. Bank Credit Card, and all reimbursements and insurance. Motion carried. Approved.

Questions were raised about the confidentiality of salaries and sharing this information with the Council. Angie Rath explained that according to the Church Policy Handbook this information is not shared with the Council or the Congregation.

**Financial Update:** John Lehman gave a Financial update on current finances and pledges for 2023. We have a shortfall of over \$800,000 for the 2023 budget. He reported we are still hopeful but cautious that pledges continue to come in by the 1<sup>st</sup> week in January so that a budget can be presented at the Annual Meeting.

He reported that the pledges have been decreasing every year since 2020. He reported that tough decisions by Finance and Personnel may be forth-coming in January. Council thanked John for his update.

Craig Blanchard gave an update on the October Financials. A motion was made (Blanchard) and seconded (Terrell) to place the October Financials on file. Motion carried. Approved. November and December Financials will be discussed and approved in January.

**Congregation Input:** Ken Lockard and Wayne Jacobson, members of Nazareth, talked to the Council about the urgency of finding an Interim and then a Senior Pastor for Nazareth. They reiterated that the Council has the authority to call an Interim Pastor immediately. Jacobson and Lockard both were in strong favor of disaffiliating with the ELCA because of the following symptoms: budget shortfall, attendance declines, lack of unity. Lockard and Jacobson both recommended that Informational Sessions on the ELCA affiliation be held in January; they asked that Danielle Terrell recuse herself from any ELCA vote among Council due to a conflict of interest. They would like printed in the Naz News the upcoming preaching schedule – 6 Sundays out. They reiterated that “preaching” is our single most important issue right now. They encouraged Council to make the tough decisions now – not wait until after this school year. Ken and Wayne thanked Council for letting them speak.

Council thanked Ken Lockard and Wayne Jacobson and their ongoing support of Nazareth.

**President Report:** George Nederhoff gave an update on the Pastoral search. He reported that the pastoral candidate name given to us by Bishop Kevin Jones last month has already accepted another call. George is waiting on a call from the Bishop about another possible name. Chris Hansen has been in contact with Hope Lutheran in Des Moines and they are open to helping us if at all possible.

Other names were discussed regarding sermons on Sunday mornings. It was stated that we need seasoned speakers up front on Sunday morning until an Interim Pastor is hired. The teaching schedule through the first part of March was shared with Council. George Nederhoff and Julie Creeden will talk to the Teaching Team (Pastor Bob, Andy Walser, Derrick Akers, and Kristin Sauerbrei) as soon as possible regarding other names for the sermons to help relieve current staff from this responsibility. The Council is very thankful of the extra work the Teaching Team has been doing to get over this hump with no Senior Pastor, along with doing their regular jobs at Nazareth. They would like to have new names discussed: Matt Reisetter, Enrique Ochoa, Tim Boettger, and Steve Kramer on the teaching schedule to fill in as supply pastors until an Interim is found.

A recommendation was made (Arenholz) and seconded (Creeden) to begin a search for an Interim pastor within the LCMC. Motion carried. Approved. (8 aye; 1 opposed)

A motion was made (Arenholz) and seconded (Creeden) to add Tim Boettger, Matt Reisetter, Steve Kramer, and Enrique Ochoa to the Teaching Team by January 22 pending availability. Motion carried. Approved.

Julie Creeden will contact Steve Kramer and Matt Reisetter. George Nederhoff will contact Enrique Ochoa; Lisa Arenholz will contact Tim Boettger. George and Julie will contact the current teaching team to inform them about these upcoming changes in the preaching schedule. The council will create a new preaching schedule and share it with the congregation through the Naz News so that they know who will be preaching when, and the preaching topic for each Sunday through the next couple of months.

Julie Creeden read 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 6:14-18.

Discussion took place on the planning sessions to prepare for the Informational ELCA Meeting on Sunday, January 8. The planning sessions will be January 3 and January 5 at 5:30 p.m. Maureen will start preparing slides with Council input on ELCA facts with Julie Creeden doing the Nazareth history with ELCA. This will be discussed and finalized on January 3 and January 5.

**Administrator Report:** Angie reminded Council of the Annual Meeting January 29 at 12:30 p.m.; she and Julia Voss are gathering reports this week to put in the final Annual Report.

**Committee Reports:** Minutes from Committees were in the packet for Council to review. Chris Hansen offered to fill the Council spot on the Personnel Committee and Julie Creeden offered to fill the Council spot on the Worship and Music Committee. Julia Voss will notify the chairs of each committee to let them know Chris and Julie filled the Council openings on their committees.

**Old Business:** George read the recap of the staff meeting with Craig Blanchard and Maureen Hanson and went over the list of staff concerns.

George Nederhoff will contact Bishop Kevin regarding the Letter of Dissent and ask if he would like to attend a Council meeting to discuss the letter that was sent by Council.

**New Business:** A motion was made (Nederhoff) and seconded (Creeden) to not approve the Worship Planning Team's recommendation to give a 2022 celebration highlight and 2023 pledge update on Christmas Eve. Motion carried. Approved.

George Nederhoff read an email and shared with all Council a list of grievances from a staff member. Discussion took place.

A recommendation was made (M. Hanson) and seconded (Creeden) to bring to the Congregational Annual Meeting on January 29, 2023 the revision of Article 8 & 9 in the By Laws and replace Article 8 and add Article 16, revising #1. Motion carried. Approved.

**Reminders:**

- The planning meetings for the ELCA informational sessions will be January 3 and January 5 at 5:30 p.m.
- The first of two informational meetings for the congregation regarding our ELCA affiliation will be Sunday, January 8 from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. in Bethel Hall. The first two meetings will be INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATIONS ONLY and will be identical in content. Members need only to attend ONE of the two meetings. Topics will include a brief history of Nazareth's affiliation with the ELCA, concerns with the ELCA that have prompted discussions to disaffiliate, and a list of ELCA strengths prepared by Pastor Brian King prior to his departure from Nazareth.

- The informational presentations will be followed by TWO OPEN FORUM Q & A sessions to allow members ample time to ask questions and share concerns.
- The next regular Council meeting will be Tuesday, January 10 at 6 p.m. in Room 160. Craig Blanchard will speak on Apostle Simon the Zealot.
- The Annual Meeting is Sunday, January 29 at 12:30 p.m. in the Worship Center.

**Adjourn:** A motion was made (Blanchard) and seconded (Saathoff) to adjourn the meeting at 10:52 p.m. Motion carried. Approved.

**Closing Prayer:** The Council prayed The Lord's Prayer.

**Minutes submitted by Julia Voss**  
**Executive Secretary**