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January 16, 2024 | Nazareth Council Minutes

Present: Kristie Lehman, Julie Creeden, Wayne Jacobson, Chris Hansen, Craig Blanchard, Kristina McBurney, Ron Martin, Nathan Greiner, Mike Brost, Tim Boettger, Kaylene Hoskins

Opening Devotion: Psalm 25:5

Meeting called to order: 6:20 p.m.

Recommendation to approve Council minutes:

Wayne motioned and Julie seconded the approval of the December minutes. Motion carried.

Congregational Input: n/a

Council President's Report:

Annual meeting, Sunday, January 28, 2024 at 12:30 pm

The council reviewed the 2023 Annual Report and meeting agenda.

Interim Pastor's Report:

Ministry update-discussing confirmation and junior high ministry

CHAOS volunteer recruitment

10 sign-ups for new member class.

Welcome Desk volunteer recruitment

Financial Update:

Craig motioned to approve the December 2023 financial report. Motion carried.

Craig motioned to approve the renewal of the \$250,000 Line of Credit at Banklowa. Motion carried.

Ann Carlson reviewed the 2024 proposed budget.

Committee Updates & Reports:

Blessed Beginnings-Next meeting tbd.

Building & Grounds-Next meeting tbd.

Endowment-Next meeting will be Tuesday, January 30th.

Personnel-Needs new committee members. Next meeting tbd.

Local Missions- Next meeting will be Monday, January 22nd.

U.S. & World Missions- Next meeting will be before the end of the month.

Stewardship-Needs new committee members. Next meeting tbd.

Seminary Committee-Is going to pause their meetings until Naz's affiliation with the ELCA is determined and there are new seminary applicants.

Old Business/New Business

Julie moved and Wayne seconded to approve Kristen Swenson for the Personnel committee.

Chris connected with New Aldaya and Dan Deery to work on an updated parking lot contract.

Upcoming Marriage Retreat: February 10th, 2024.

Core team discussion with Sue Roberts regarding a video proposal

Meeting adjourned:

Nate moved and Craig seconded to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 9:23 p.m.

February 20, 2024 | Nazareth Council Minutes

Present: Julie Creeden, Wayne Jacobson, Chris Hansen, Craig Blanchard, Kristina McBurney, Ron Martin, Nathan Greiner, Cindy Wilson, Beth Harris, Mike Brost, Kaylene Hoskins, Tim Boettger

Via Conference Call: Mike Francis, Kristie Lehman

BB Committee: Barb Witzel, John Lehman, Phil Plourde, Ashley Yuska, Robin Voster, Peg Merfeld, Stephanie Johnson, Alyssa Rakotoarivelo, Danielle Terrell

Meeting called to order: 6:17 p.m.

BB Discussion:

John Lehman shared some background and financial information about Blessed Beginnings from the past three years. In 2023 BB lost \$94,000 and BB currently has \$92,000 in cash. If BB does not begin operating in the black they will be out of funds by the end of 2024. BB needs to add students, especially older kids to sustain the program. Phil shared BB is seeing a demand for the school age program, especially for summer. Phil shared they've recently had 25 staff applicants and they are actively working to get the rooms staffed. Phil shared his appreciation for the recent support of the church council and asked for the continuation of that support. Stephanie shared her passion for faith-based child care and brought several ideas to bolster support for BB staff and parents. Asked for council and BB committee to provide support and discuss next steps and advocated for a parent committee to form as a sub group to the BB committee. BB is currently running at a less than %50 capacity and was running at approximately %74 capacity pre-COVID. Barb Witzel emphasized the importance of being faith based and asked how we know if BB is a faith-based ministry. She agreed with more parent participation and shared some history of BB and the BB committee. Barb shared her concern regarding toxicity in the program and the need for the BB committee to understand their purpose.

Julie Creeden motioned, seconded by Kristina, to form a subcommittee under the BB committee with Stephanie Johnson as a leader. Motion carried.

Recommendation to approve Council minutes:

Nate moved and Ron seconded to approve the Jan 16, 2024. Motion carried.

Congregational Input: n/a

Council President's Report:

New Business:

Julie motioned to approve the list of new committee members pending their sign off on the confession of faith and speaking the truth in love document. Kristina seconded. Motion carried. Kaylene will share the volunteer list with committee members and ask them to provide their Committee Chair and meeting schedule. Julie will write a short paragraph explaining why the council is asking for committee members to sign off on the confession of faith and speaking the truth in love document.

The council discussed communication strategies for April affiliation vote

Interim Pastor's Report:

Mike shared that he continues to see movement and progress being made in Naz becoming a healthy church with a cohesive team and clarity around mission and ministry. Tim shared some words of encouragement with the council and affirmed the honest conversations happening within the council.

Financial Update:

Craig gave an overview of the January financial report.

Committee Updates & Reports:

Blessed Beginnings
Building & Grounds
Endowment
Personnel
Local Missions
U.S. & World Missions
Stewardship
Seminary Committee

Old Business/New Business

- Chris shared some words of appreciation for and Mike Francis Craig Blanchard for their service on council. Wayne expressed his appreciation to Chris Hansen for serving as Council President.
- Council discussed Naz's current practice or policy for security at Naz.
- Craig motioned and Nate seconded to move to executive session. Motion carried. Wayne moved and Kristie seconded to move out of executive session. Motion carried.
- Kristie brought up that Jordan would like to update the address directory and has asked for some direction in how to update it.
- New Council members will be recognized on Sunday, Mar 17, 2024.

Meeting adjourned: 10:20 p.m.

Craig motioned to adjourn, seconded by Kristie. Motion carried.

February 24, 2024 | Nazareth Council Annual Retreat Minutes

Present: Wayne Jacobson, Kristie Lehman, Chris Hansen, Nate Greiner, Kristina McBurney, Julie Creeden, Craig Blanchard, Ron Martin, Mike Brost, Cindy Wilson, Beth Harris

Call to Order at 8:30 a.m. | *Wayne Jacobson*

Wayne welcomed everyone and thanked us for attending. He shared scripture from Proverbs 19:21 and Proverbs 16:9. The Council was also directed to Proverbs 15:22 and Matthew 7:7-11.

Devotion & Prayer | *Mike Brost & Craig Blanchard*

Pastor Brost shared scripture from Luke 12:35-40. Craig opened in prayer.

Team Building | *Mike Brost*

Election of Officers | *Wayne Jacobson*

- Nominate Julie Creeden as secretary: Moved by Wayne, seconded by Nate, vote passed
- Nominate Cindy Wilson as treasurer: Moved by Craig, Seconded by Kristie, vote passed
- Nominate Kristina McBurney as vice president: Moved by Julie, seconded by Nate, vote passed

Committee Assignments | *Wayne Jacobson*

It is the desire of the Council that our standing committees will meet regularly at the times they have established throughout the year and promptly report back to the Council. This will be done through the sharing of minutes and reports back from each committee's Council representative following each committee meeting. Kristina suggested implementing a possible "minute template" so that minutes are consistent across committees. Please see the following link: [NELC Committee Meeting Minutes Template](#). The following standing committees and their Council Representatives are established per the NELC by-laws:

a. **Finance:** Cindy

b. **Local Mission:** Ron

c. **U.S. & World Mission:** Kristie

d. **Blessed Beginnings:** Julie

e. **Stewardship:** Julie

f. **Building & Grounds:** Nate

g. **Personnel:** Chris

h. **Worship & Music:** Wayne

i. **Endowment:** Chris

1. Considering the institutional memory that has been lost in some committees, Pastor Brost shared an idea to form an endowment, finance, stewardship subcommittee for a short-term to help all three committees see how the money should actually flow and the purpose of each committee. No decision was made on this suggestion at this time. Julie reminded everyone that both John Larsen and Paul Creeden have offered to come to the next endowment committee meeting in order to help fill in some of the institutional memory for that committee.

The following committee is required per NELC by-laws; however, it has not existed for several years. It is the desire of the Council to re-establish this committee to be in compliance with the NELC by-laws, however moving forward, depending on current staffing, the outcome of the affiliation vote, and processes that have changed over the years, pending a future by-law amendment, it may eventually function differently.

j. **Education:** Beth

Blessed Beginnings follow-up | *Julie Creeden*

Due to further conversations and clarification from the original request, the Council followed-up on an action item taken at our last Council meeting. Wayne will share this decision with Phil, and then Phil will reach out to Terri.

Action items

Under current circumstances in the Blessed Beginnings School Age Building, we will make an exception in the Holding policy (waive requirement of notification 4 weeks in advance) for Terri Packard found in the BB School Age Handbook and charge her the 25% holding fee to be paid during the BB normal billing cycle per the standing policy.

Moved by Julie, Seconded by Craig

Amended:

Moved by Ron, seconded by Chris, vote passed

Congregational Council Updates | *Wayne Jacobson*

1. Beginning this Sunday, February 25th, an update on Blessed beginnings will be given to the congregation at both services by Wayne and Phil, BB Assistant Director. Wayne and Phil will provide some background and current challenges, in addition to sharing the positive solutions that emerged from the recent Council meeting attended by the BB Committee and guest parents. Wayne will also share the current short-term need for volunteers at BB: van drivers and adults in classrooms for extra support. Phil's contact info will be on the screens with instructions for people interested in volunteering to contact Phil directly. Phil will take care of all required background checks so that volunteering can proceed as quickly as possible.
 - a) This update will also be posted verbatim on the naz.org website and in the Naz News for those unable to attend Sunday's service.
2. Once a month, Council members will take turns offering a brief update at both services leading up to the April 17th vote. Their updates will also be published verbatim in that week's Naz News, as well as posted on the Nazareth website and possibly social media.
3. A convenient spot directly outside of the Larsen Chapel will be utilized by available Council members between services for two purposes: Any congregation member who would like to pray with the Council will be able to do so, and any member who would like to ask a question of the Council may do so.
4. Kristie will prepare a sign-up sheet for Council members to assure adequate coverage each Sunday between now and April 17th with the exception possibly of Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday.

ELCA/NALC vote: Wednesday, April 17th, 6:30 pm | *Wayne Jacobson*

The WHY? What does Nazareth stand for? What do we say we believe in our Confession of Faith?

1. Create a communication team of congregation members to carry the message to the congregation. Our congregation has heard from the Council. Hearing clear and concise perspectives from other congregation members might be very effective. Wayne will reach out to members who are gifted communicators and may have interest in sharing why they believe the NALC is much more closely aligned with Nazareth's beliefs than the ELCA. Those who agree to serve on this team will be invited to the Council's next working meeting to determine next steps: Saturday, March 2 from 8:30 - 11:30 a.m. The first hour will be for the Council only, with the second hour including the members of this new communication team.

2. Other possible ideas that will be discussed at this next March 2 meeting:
 - a. Communication team members visit NELC committees and small groups to share this message.
 - b. Include the Four Core Values of the NALC – which align perfectly with the values of NELC.
 - c. Implement Sunday morning “3-minute Talks” by communication team members to share reasons to leave ELCA and join NALC at each service on March 3, 10, 17, and April 7.
 - d. Ask Kim Albertson and Meg Husted to help share this message with our young families in a method they think will be the most effective.

Communicate the Strategy – other ideas for ways this information can be disseminated:

1. Create content that answers why the NALC is better aligned with Nazareth than the ELCA in a small bulletin format for dissemination on Sunday mornings. “*Why leave the ELCA?*” on one side, and “*Why join the NALC?*” on the other side. Include the answers to “*Why now?*” across the bottom of the bulletin.
2. Other ideas:
 - a. Sunday services
 - b. Small groups
 - c. Social media
 - d. Naz News
 - e. Direct phone calls
 - f. Emails
 - g. Direct mail – letter from the Council

ELCA requirement – written notification to the NE Iowa Synod Bishop:

Chris will take care of notifying Bishop Jones in writing at least 30 days prior to our upcoming vote on April 17th.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Next meeting: Saturday, March 2nd, 2024, 8:30-11:30 am, Room 301

March 2, 2024 | Nazareth Council Minutes

Present: President Wayne Jacobson, Cindy Wilson, Beth Harris, Kristie Lehman, Chris Hansen, Nate Greiner, Kristina McBurney, Julie Creeden, Ron Martin, Wayne Jacobson, Tim Boettger

Communications Team: Dave Deaver, Craig Johnson, Meg Husted, Amy Lockard, Craig (Swen) Swenson, Kristin Swenson

Conference call: Mike Brost

Call to Order at 8:36 a.m. | Wayne Jacobson

Wayne welcomed everyone and thanked us for attending. The Council opened with the Lord's Prayer.

NELC Sign-off Statement review | Wayne Jacobson and Ron Martin

Discussion occurred on narrowing the specifics of the NELC sign-off statement. Possible edits may include:

1. Biblical references in paragraph one from our Confession of Faith found in Article II of our NELC bylaws
 - i. *Confession of Faith: This congregation accepts all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as a whole and in all their parts as the divinely inspired, revealed, and inerrant Word of God and submits to this as the only infallible authority in all matters of faith and life. – Remove paragraphs two, three, and four.*
2. Article I in our NELC bylaws - Purpose: *The object and purpose of this congregation shall be to proclaim and propagate the Christian faith through the Means of Grace and to cooperate in the work and service of the Lutheran Church.*
3. All three creeds.
4. Instead of the Speaking the Truth in Love document, which was a reactionary response to the ELCA Social Statement on Human Sexuality, proactively list the Core beliefs of NELC, which can be found on the naz.org website.

In order to keep this NELC Sign-off Statement very simple and clear, discussion also occurred around the wording of what it means to sign-off. That language may also be edited for clarity.

At this time, the Council decided to pause on this requirement, taking time for these clarifications and edits. Once this is done, careful communication will be key to provide clarity and purpose for this sign-off statement for anyone in a leadership role at NELC. The Council will address this topic again at the next regular meeting.

Council updates for the congregation | Wayne Jacobson

Wayne reported that members were happy to have the opportunity to come meet with approximately five available Council members between services this past Sunday, February 25th. This practice will continue between services in the area directly outside of the Larsen Chapel between now and the vote on April 17th. Pastor Brost suggested to the Council members to wear their identification lanyards during this time.

The next brief update during both services will take place on Sunday, March 24th. This update will cover a brief summary of discussion items from the most recent Council meeting on Tuesday, March 19th in addition to the Four Core Values of the North American Lutheran Church (NALC): Christ-Centered, Mission-Driven, Congregationally-Focused, and Traditionally-Grounded. The Council member making this update is yet to be determined. This update will be written and approved by the Council no later than March 20th. The update will also be distributed verbatim in the Naz News and Naz.org website. The sermons preached after this update will also expand on these four core values.

Blessed Beginnings Update | *Mike Brost*

Mike shared that he and the Blessed Beginnings staff are currently having bonus meetings twice per month. Ashley (Interim Director) is also planning regular staff meetings that Mike is attending and indicated that future training is in the works. Mike is available at Blessed Beginnings every Tuesday morning to begin their day with prayer and connect with the staff. He also reported that Kaylene (church administrator) and her hiring committee have interviewed one person for the director's position and there are two more currently scheduled. Mike also reported that volunteers and recent hires are proving to be extremely helpful.

Formation of Prayer Team for Vote | *Wayne Jacobson*

In order to bathe this process in prayer and involve as many congregation members as possible, as well as to create energy and a positive message around the vote, the Council will be seeking members who will commit to praying specifically for our church throughout this process. Wayne shared Luke 11:1-13 and Philippians 4:4-7. Ron will make some calls to get volunteers for this team. An announcement will also be made by the pastor this Sunday. The Council would like for this team to commit not only to praying individually, but to also commit to corporate prayer in the Larsen Chapel. Current members of the NELC prayer chain are also encouraged to join this team. Ron will coordinate these corporate prayer times in order for any Council member to join them if they are available.

Approval of new committee members | *Julie Creeden*

Approve Joyce Barbatti and Laurie Larsen to serve on the Stewardship Committee.

Moved: Julie

Seconded: Kristina

Vote: Pass

ELCA/NALC vote: Meet with newly formed Communications Team | *Wayne Jacobson*

Wayne welcomed our guests and thanked them for attending and agreeing to serve on the Council's Communications Team. Introductions occurred: Kristin and Craig (Swen) Swenson, Amy Lockard, Meg Husted, Craig Johnson, and Dave Deaver.

This time together was opened with a short devotion by Wayne which focused on Romans 6:11 and 2 Corinthians 5:20. He encouraged us to always remember our primary message: I was once dead in my sins, but now I am alive in Christ. This is an incredible message that we ALL should be very excited to share with everyone who will listen!

The reason for the formation of this team is to seek help in conveying the Council's recommendations leading up to the April 17th vote. Discussion and brainstorming occurred regarding the most positive and effective ways to share the Council's message.

1. We must clearly communicate our reasons.
 - a) Why leave the ELCA?
 - b) Why join the NALC?
2. After discussion, the group decided on the creation of the following:
 - a) **A written flyer/brochure** will be the most helpful to our members. One side of the flyer will include the positive outcomes of joining the NALC – the other side will include FAQs from our members. We must attempt to cast a vision of what Nazareth can be when we realize full alignment of our beliefs with the NALC rather than distraction and very little alignment of our beliefs with the ELCA. What will be possible for our church when we have the freedom and time to live out the great commission? The thought of this is exciting!
 - b) **A short video** showcasing members from multiple generations from within our congregation.
 - c) **Slides** that will accompany further Council updates during each service for clarity. Content will be created as we proceed.
3. Strategies – what are potential strategies? Wayne shared the bulleted list from the retreat.
4. Timelines – Who does what and when? Our window of time is March 3 - 17
 - a) **Content must be created by 3/10.**
 - i) Amy, Kristin, and Julie will create the content for the flyer/brochure and short video. This content will be approved by the Council and Communications Team. Kristina will recruit people from multi-generations from our congregation for the video.
 - ii) After approval of content, Wayne will ask Sam to use our content to create the flyer/brochure.
 - iii) Wayne will call Sam Madson to update him on this process. Sam's expertise will lend itself to a very professional looking product – for both the flyer and slides. Wayne will also attend the next staff meeting to update the staff.
 - iv) Craig J and Swen will create the video. Both are very experienced in this area.
 - b) **Congregational mailing will be mailed by 3/15 including the following:**
 - i) NOTICE OF SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING OF NAZARETH EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF CEDAR FALLS, BLACK HAWK COUNTY, IOWA, ON April 17, 2024
 - ii) RESOLUTION OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL OF NAZARETH EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
 - iii) 2024 Congregational letter to accompany ELCA disaffiliation resolution
 - iv) Flyer/Brochure created by Communications Team and Sam Madson
 - c) **Realistic process for strategy:**
 - i) Meg and Dave will complete along with a timeline for roll out.
5. Council and Communications team will meet together again on March 19th at the regularly scheduled March Council meeting. The two groups will gather first at 5:30 for pizza prior to the meeting.
6. Wayne is the point person for both the Council and the Communications Team.
7. The Council and Communications Team are advancing to this second vote with a sense of faith, peace, conviction, and an unwavering confidence that the Lord is with us. Pastor Brost closed us in prayer.

Meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m. | Next meeting: Tuesday, March 19th, 2024

March 3, 2024 | Nazareth Council Minutes

Present: President Wayne Jacobson, Cindy Wilson, Beth Harris, Kristie Lehman, Nate Greiner, Julie Creeden, Ron Martin

Via text: Chris Hansen, Kristina McBurney

Call to Order at 10:30 a.m. | *Wayne Jacobson*

Discussion occurred on the exact wording of the resolutions that the Council recommends to bring forth to the congregation at the Special Meeting that is scheduled for Wednesday, April 17th, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. Discussion also occurred on the preparation of the docs that need to be delivered to the Bishop prior to March 16th.

Recommend to the congregation to vote to pass the Council's two resolutions:

- 1) RESOLVED, that Nazareth Evangelical Lutheran Church intends to terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America following two legally called and conducted special meetings of the congregation; and
- 2) RESOLVED, that Nazareth Evangelical Lutheran Church intends to establish an affiliation with the North American Lutheran Church (NALC). Nate Julie Pass

Moved: Nate

Seconded: Julie

Vote: Pass

Meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

March 5, 2024 | Nazareth Council Minutes

Present: President Wayne Jacobson Cindy Wilson, Beth Harris, Nate Greiner, Kristina McBurney, Julie Creeden, Ron Martin

Absent: Chris Hansen, Mike Brost, Tim Boettger

Conference call: Kristie Lehman

Call to Order at 6:30 p.m. | Wayne Jacobson

Wayne welcomed everyone and thanked us for attending. Wayne opened the Council's work with prayer.

Revisit the Council Resolutions | Wayne Jacobson

The Council reviewed the resolution and decided to make slight edits for clarity purposes.

Action items:

1. Withdraw the motion regarding the Council's resolutions made on Sunday, March, 3rd, 2024.
Resolution "b" will now read as follows:
RESOLVED, that in the event the congregation votes to terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), Nazareth Evangelical Lutheran Church intends to establish an affiliation with the North American Lutheran Church (NALC).
Moved: Ron
Seconded: Kristie
Vote: Pass
2. Amend Resolution "a" to read as follows:
RESOLVED, that Nazareth Evangelical Lutheran Church intends to and shall begin the process of terminating its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) following two legally called and conducted special meetings of the congregation.
Moved: Wayne
Seconded: Julie
Vote: Pass
3. Approve the entire resolution as amended and edited.
Moved: Nate
Seconded: Kristina
Vote: Pass

Content from the Communications Team subcommittee for informative flyer

The Council reviewed and approved the content that was created for the informative flyer from the subcommittee made up of Kristin Swenson, Amy Lockard, and Julie Creeden, that will accompany the congregational letter leading up to the vote. The purpose of this flyer is to help the congregation understand why the Council has made its recommendations to disaffiliate from the ELCA and affiliate with the NALC. Julie will get this content to Sam Madson, NELC's Communications Director, so that he can prepare and print the flyer for distribution. The FAQs content that was created will be added to the end of the congregational letter in addition to be placed in the Naz News as soon as possible.

Approve the job description for the Jr. High Ministry position | Wayne Jacobson

Kaylene requested the Council's approval for the Jr. High Ministry position job description. The Council approved pending three minor edits which Julie will share with Kaylene.

Action item:

Approve Jr. High Job Description pending three minor edits to be made by Kaylene prior to distribution.

Moved: Cindy

Seconded: Beth

Vote: Pass

Meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m. | Next meeting: Tuesday, March 19th, 2024

March 19, 2024 | Nazareth Council Minutes

Present:

Wayne Jacobson, Cindy Wilson, Beth Harris, Kristie Lehman, Chris Hansen, Nate Greiner, Kristina McBurney, Julie Creeden, Tim Boettger, Mike Brost, Kaylene Hoskins

Communications Team:

Dave Deaver, Meg Husted, Amy Lockard, Craig (Swen) Swenson, Kristin Swenson

Guest: Sam Madson

Executive Session Guest via Zoom: John Lehman, Financial advisor to the Blessed Beginnings committee

Absent: Ron Martin, Craig Johnson

Call to Order at 6:15 p.m. | Wayne Jacobson

Wayne welcomed everyone and thanked us for attending. Mike Brost shared scripture from Psalm 119:13. Council members reflected on the most recent time they had shared their faith with someone else. Mike opened the meeting in prayer.

Communications Team Updates | Wayne Jacobson

Wayne asked for updates from each sub-committee within the Communications Team:

1. Flyer/brochure: Amy, Kristin, and Julie reported that the content had been created for the flyer and that Sam Madson had done a great job creating something that is concise and easy to read. Distribution to the congregation on Sunday mornings has begun. The Council thanked Sam for sharing his unique gifts in this area.
2. Congregational letter: Amy, Kristin, and Julie shared the draft of the congregational letter/FAQs with the Council and appropriate edits were made. Mike Brost added that the Nazareth pastoral staff is in full support of the Council's recommendations and that he, Tim, and Andy would like to add their names to the bottom of the letter. The Council agreed and is very grateful for this support. Sam Madson will also place all components of this mailing onto the Council page of the Naz.org website.
3. 1st congregational email: Meg shared the draft of the 1st congregational email with the Council and appropriate edits were made. Meg will send the email to all Nazareth members on Wednesday, March 20th.
4. 1st video: Swen reported that the first video is complete and will be ready to be shown to the congregation this Sunday, March 24th, 2024. The Council watched the first video and is very thankful to Swen, Kristin, and Craig J for its creation, and also to Samantha Wingert, who is featured in the 1st video. Additional videos will be taped soon featuring Meg and Randy Husted in one and Dick and Helene Bond in another. A 4th video is yet to be determined. Sam Madson will also place each video on the Naz.org website for those members who might miss seeing them in church on a Sunday morning.
5. Logistics/process: Meg and Dave reported their logistical plan to the Council including all next steps that will be done between now and the vote. These steps are very important to help the congregation understand the critical nature of this vote for the future of Nazareth, and the importance of voting YES to both resolutions. This plan will help everyone; Council, staff, and Communications team, to know what is coming and when, so that no one is caught off guard...

In addition to the reminder emails, a reminder postcard will also be sent to all Nazareth members no later than April 10th for those members who prefer that method of communication. Meg will reach out to both New Aldaya and the Western Home to inquire what type of transportation they can provide, if any, for those Nazareth members who live there and want to come vote. Meg and Dave also encouraged the Council to reach out by phone to any friends/family who may not realize the critical importance of this vote and share it with them.

Action items:

1. Approve content of congregational letter:
Moved: Chris
Seconded: Kristie
Vote: Pass
2. Approve content of FAQs:
Moved: Kristina
Seconded: Nate
Vote: Pass
3. Approve content of 1st email:
Moved: Kristie
Seconded: Chris
Vote: Pass

Executive Session: Blessed Beginnings | Wayne Jacobson

The Council entered an executive session to discuss Blessed Beginnings. John Lehman, Blessed Beginnings committee member, shared a PowerPoint presentation via Zoom with the Council including the financial outlook for the Blessed Beginnings ministry.

End of Executive Session | Wayne Jacobson

Due to the financial situation of the Blessed Beginnings ministry as shared with the Council by John Lehman, over the next few weeks the Council will need to take a look at what will be in the best interest of Nazareth Lutheran Church in relation to this ministry and what the ministry will look like moving forward.

Action item:

Suspend the operation of Blessed Beginnings with the goal of keeping it open through May 10th, depending on staffing levels, giving the Council time to discern the future.

Moved: Chris
Seconded: Kristina
Vote: Pass

Amended

Moved: Nate
Seconded: Kristina
Vote: Pass

Old Business | Wayne Jacobson

Approval of Minutes: Wayne asked for motions to approve the minutes from prior Council meetings that took place on 2/20, 3/2, 3/3, and 3/5.

Action items:

1. Approve minutes from 2/20:
Moved: Julie
Seconded: Nate
Vote: Pass
2. Approve minutes from 3/2, 3/3, and 3/5:
Moved: Nate
Seconded: Kristina
Vote: Pass

Welcome Home Fund: Chris reminded the Council that bids for further work on the parking lot will need to be received very soon so that this work can be continued this summer. As the Building and Grounds Committee Rep, Nate will reach out to Marc Rath to get this process started as soon as possible.

Safety/Security at Nazareth: Wayne shared a resource that Kristie brought to his attention. There is a course available through the Cedar Falls Police Department called "Citizens' response to active shooter situations." The Council will add this to our agenda in the very near future.

Financial Report | Cindy Wilson

Cindy gave an overview of the February financial report. She mentioned that Anne Carlson and Susan Dean have both been extremely helpful and supportive of her new role as Council treasurer. The Council is very grateful to both Anne and Susan for sharing their unique gifts, and for their dedicated service to our church in the area of finances. The Council is also grateful to Cindy for taking on the office of treasurer.

Action item:

- Accept Financial report as presented.
Moved: Chris
Seconded: Kristie
Vote: Pass

Interim Pastors' Report | Mike Brost and Tim Boettger

Mike B reported that he and the committee he appointed to work on strengthening our confirmation program are making good progress. The likelihood of confirmation reverting back to a three-year program is high. The current confirmands are working on their required papers. On April 3rd and 10th, the 8th graders will be presenting their papers. Mike invited all Council members to attend if they are able. Meg has received helpful responses from the student survey that was sent out. Confirmation Sunday for this year is scheduled for April 28th.

Mike and Tim both praised the staff for their efforts of preparing for Holy Week. They are both also beginning to look over applicants for the Jr. High Ministry position. New visitors continue to come to Nazareth, with about 30 of them becoming members in the past few months. Both Mike and Tim are very optimistic and hopeful about the direction that Nazareth is taking, and the cautious but good momentum that is building. All Glory goes to God! Tim closed the meeting in prayer.

Meeting adjourned at 10:32 p.m. | Next meeting: Executive Session – Wednesday, March 20th at 7:00 p.m. in Room 301

April 15, 2024 | Nazareth Council Minutes

Present: Wayne Jacobson Cindy Wilson, Beth Harris, Kristie Lehman, Chris Hansen, Ron Martin, Nate Greiner, Kristina McBurney, Julie Creeden, Tim Boettger, Mike Brost

Absent: Kaylene Hoskins

Call to Order at 6:30 p.m. | Wayne Jacobson

Wayne welcomed everyone and thanked us for attending. Mike Brost shared scripture from Ephesians 6:10-20 and led us in prayer.

Executive Session: Blessed Beginnings | Wayne Jacobson

The Council entered an executive session to discuss Blessed Beginnings. See notes in separate file.

Old Business | Wayne Jacobson

Preparation for the Special Meeting on Wednesday, April 17, 2024: The Council went through their check-list for the upcoming vote:

1. Ballots are done
2. Tellers are notified – 10 total – Jill Hanus will be the captain teller and will bring paper and pencils. Wayne sent the emails of the other tellers to Jill and she will gather ahead of time to instruct them in the process of counting the votes. Julie has reserved room 156 for their work.
3. Wayne acquired the parliamentarian for the meeting: Luke Zahari is a local attorney.
4. Jordan has completed the sign-in sheets and shared them with the Council.
5. Check-in process:
 - a. Tables and chairs with music stands for displaying the alphabetic lines (13 stations)
 - b. Check-in helpers:
 - i. Staff in chairs behind check-in table: Meg, Kim, Jordan, Sam, Susan
 - ii. Council members and staff floating behind: Cindy, Nate, Kaylene
 - iii. Council greeters: Chris, Kristie, Beth, Ron
 - iv. Council up front: Wayne, Kristina, Julie
 - v. Nathaniel to oversee sound and tech – Mike will speak with Nathaniel
 1. Video instructions and slides
 2. Someone ready in the sound booth to edit slides if necessary and display on screens
6. Video is under production for instructions and closing if both resolutions pass (next steps) – Swen and Craig Johnson
7. Update the script – Julie worked with Luke Zahari to complete the script.
8. Verify quorum: Bylaws state that a quorum is 10% of the average weekly attendance from the prior year. 2023 average attendance was 547.2. This year's quorum is 55 people.
9. Time-keeper – Nate (in the event there is discussion)
10. Instead of 2 mics set up in the front, Nate will hold one mic and go to the person wishing to speak, if necessary.

New Business | Wayne Jacobson

1. Committee Reports:
 - a. Worship & Music – did not meet
 - b. Blessed Beginnings – did not meet
 - c. Personnel – did not meet
 - d. Finance – See Financial Report below

- e. Endowment – did not meet
 - f. Stewardship – did not meet
 - g. Local Mission – did not meet
 - h. US/World Mission – did not meet
 - i. Building & Grounds – Nate’s report: (See attached file from B&G Committee)
 - i. Roof over the coffee shop and part of the gym needs to be replaced. Marc has a bid for \$71,500.
 - ii. Phase 2 Curb and Gutter – Marc’s diagram shows that we have done area 1, we still need to do area 2 – Marc’s bid for this work is \$39,308
 - iii. Phase 2 Asphalt – Marc’s bid for this work is \$141,503
 - iv. Welcome Home Funds will be used for all of the above.
2. Financial Report – Cindy Wilson
- a. Cindy gave an overview of the March financial report. She also mentioned that the inner-officestaff is wondering if we can remove at least some of the black offering boxes that were set up during Covid now that the offering plate is being passed again.
3. New members of Stewardship Committee – Julie Creeden, Stewardship Comm Council Rep
- a. Julie brought forth two names of volunteers who wish to serve on the Stewardship Committee: Randy Husted and Tia Davis. Now that the committee has enough members to be in compliance with the By-laws, Julie will call a meeting sometime in the month of May to begin working.
4. New video lead-in for online sermons – Cindy Wilson
- a. The Council will request that Sam cease from using the old video and create a new one. In the meantime, Sam will be asked to create a “Welcome” slide and remove the old video from the online sermons beginning with the newer ones.

Action items:

1. Accept the recommendation as presented from the Building & Grounds Committee:
 - Moved: Nate*
 - Seconded: Chris*
 - Vote: Pass*
2. Accept Financial report as presented:
 - Moved: Kristie*
 - Seconded: Chris*
 - Vote: Pass*
3. Remove all of the black offering boxes except for the one that sits in front of the Information Desk in Fellowship Hall:
 - Moved: Chris*
 - Seconded: Beth*
 - Vote: Pass*
4. Approve the service of Randy Husted and Tia Davis on the Stewardship Committee:
 - Moved: Julie*
 - Seconded: Ron*
 - Vote: Pass*

Wayne shared Proverbs 19:21 with the Council and closed the meeting in prayer.
 “Many are the plans in a person’s heart, but it is the LORD’s purpose that prevails.”

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m. | Next meeting: Tuesday, May 21st at 6:00 p.m. in Room 301

April 17, 2024 | Special Congregational Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Cindy Wilson, Beth Harris, Kristie Lehman, Chris Hansen, Ron Martin, Nate Greiner, Kristina McBurney, Julie Creeden, Wayne Jacobson, Mike Brost, Tim Boettger, Kaylene Hoskins, NELC staff, and congregation: 551 voting members

Call to Order at 6:30 p.m. | Wayne Jacobson

Wayne welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending. Pastor Brost shared scripture from Psalm 119 and led us in prayer.

Action items:

1. Limit discussion on Resolution A to 10 minutes. Requires 2/3 majority:

Moved: Kristina

Seconded: Julie

Vote: Pass - Show of hands

2. Motion to adopt Resolution A:

RESOLVED, that Nazareth Evangelical Lutheran Church intends to and shall begin the process of terminating its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) following two legally called and conducted special meetings of the congregation.

Requires 2/3 majority:

Moved: Kristina

Seconded: Julie

Vote: Pass

450 yes

100 no

1 invalid

82% in favor

Ballot vote

There was no discussion on Resolution A. Tellers gathered ballots and counted the votes. During the ballot tabulation, the congregation spent this time singing hymns together, and Pastor Brost told an exceptionally funny joke.

Action items:

3. Limit discussion on Resolution B to 10 minutes. Requires 2/3 majority:

Moved: Kristina

Seconded: Julie

Vote: Pass - Show of hands

4. Motion to adopt Resolution B:

RESOLVED, that in the event the congregation votes to terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), Nazareth Evangelical Lutheran Church intends to establish an affiliation with the North American Lutheran Church (NALC).

Requires simple majority:

Moved: Kristina

Seconded: Julie

Vote: Pass

450 yes

81 no

85% in favor

Ballot vote

There was no discussion on Resolution B. Tellers gathered ballots and counted the votes. During the ballot tabulation, the congregation spent this time singing hymns together.

Wayne asked the congregation to show our gratitude to both of our pastors for their faithful service to our church: Mike Brost and Tim Boettger. They received a standing ovation from the congregation.

Pastor Boettger shared scripture from the book of Isaiah and closed the meeting in prayer. Meeting was adjourned.

Action items:

5. Adjourn Meeting:

Moved: Dave Deaver

Seconded: Nate Greiner

Vote: Pass – Voice Vote

April 23, 2024 | Nazareth Council Minutes

Attendees: Cindy Wilson, Beth Harris, Kristie Lehman, Chris Hansen, Ron Martin, Nate Greiner, Kristina McBurney, Julie Creeden, Wayne Jacobson, Tim Boettger, Mike Brost, Kaylene Hoskins

Call to Order at 6:30 p.m. | Wayne Jacobson

Wayne welcomed everyone and thanked us for attending. He shared scripture from Philippians 4:4-7 and led us in prayer.

Old Business | Wayne Jacobson

Blessed Beginnings Update:

Wayne reviewed for the Council how the suspension of operations of Blessed Beginnings on May 10th was communicated to all stakeholders. It appears that all full-time workers have agreed to stay through May 17th in order to organize and store supplies and equipment. It was suggested to have someone from the Blessed Beginnings Committee walk through the area with Phil and Ashley and take inventory so that it can be decided what should be kept, what should be donated, and what should be thrown away.

Since the Brightwheel app will be deactivated on May 10th, Kaylene will be downloading and mailing all necessary tax documents to parents from Brightwheel prior to deactivation. She will communicate this with all parents.

New Business | Wayne Jacobson

Pastors' reports:

- Mike Brost – Mike encouraged the Council to build momentum through summer to head into fall. He reported that the Worship and Music team is working very hard. There are also some very positive changes happening in our confirmation program. The next hire will be for the Jr. High Ministry position.
- Tim Boettger – Tim shared that there is an enthusiasm building within staff to move forward with energy. He shared that there are programs in the works for the fall that will provide a Bible overview, Catechism overview, and also a course on apologetics and life application for the congregation. This will mirror the newly updated Confirmation program that will begin this fall. Recently, in Andy's absence, Mike and Tim have been making hospital visits.

Action item

Approve three sets of Council minutes from 3/19/24, 4/15/24, and 4/17/24

Moved: Chris

Seconded: Kristina

Vote: Pass

Nazareth Signage:

Wayne reminded the Council that a member of our congregation has donated money for the specific purpose of providing a new electronic sign for Nazareth Church in memory of his late wife. More conversations will need to take place both within the Council and at the city level in the near future regarding this generous donation to our church.

Committee Reports:

1. Stewardship – Julie will be gathering the newly-formed Stewardship Committee soon for their first meeting to begin their work. Kristie requested that they include the Missions Committee when discussing the necessary updates to the Time & Talent Sheet.
2. Worship & Music – Mike reported that this committee has been meeting every two weeks since November. They are currently considering the possibility of promoting unity and energy in worship by combining the 9:00 and 10:45 services during the summer months only, from Memorial Day through Labor Day, to one service to take place at 9:30. This would be a blended service of both traditional and contemporary worship styles and opportunities.

The Council closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m. | Next meeting: Tuesday, May 21st at 6:00 p.m. in Room 301

May 21st, 2024 | Nazareth Council Minutes

Attendees: Cindy Wilson, Beth Harris, Kristie Lehman, Ron Martin, Nate Greiner, Julie Creeden, Wayne Jacobson, Tim Boettger, Mike Brost

Via conference call: Chris Hansen

Guests: Craig Johnson, Meg Husted

Absent: Kristina McBurney, Kaylene Hoskins

Call to Order at 6:30 p.m. | *Wayne Jacobson*

Wayne welcomed everyone and thanked us for attending. Mike shared scripture from Matthew 5:43 and 48 and led us in prayer.

Old Business | *Wayne Jacobson*

The Communications Team that had been assembled leading up to the first affiliation vote was asked to reconvene to again help the Council communicate to the congregation leading up to the second vote. That team consists of: Craig and Kristin Swenson, Amy Lockard, Dave Deaver, Craig Johnson, and Meg Husted. They were invited to attend the first portion of this Council meeting. Due to schedule conflicts, only Craig and Meg were able to attend from this group. Discussion occurred and a short list was made of Council and Comms Team goals leading up to the second vote on August 28th. This will be communicated with those who were unable to attend tonight's meeting.

Congregational Input | *Arlene Schwarzenbach*

The Council welcomed Arlene to share her thoughts. We listened and thanked Arlene for reaching out to talk with us in person.

Pastors' Reports | *Mike Brost and Tim Boettger, including report from Meg Husted*

At the pastors' request, Meg has spent time meeting with our student ministry staff and partners in order to share the logistics behind this partnership with Orchard Hill Church. Meg shared what she has learned with the Council and answered questions. Mike also shared that he and Tim have recently visited with a possible candidate for the Jr. High ministry position. He and Tim also shared their vision for the fall with the congregation this past Sunday that has been very well received.

Action item

Approve Council Minutes from 4/23/24

Moved: Ron

Seconded: Beth

Vote: Pass

President's Report | *Wayne Jacobson*

- If the second vote passes and Nazareth disaffiliates from the ELCA, immediate work on updating the By-laws will need to take place. This work will possibly start directly following a successful second vote with recommendations ready for the Council by the end of this year. Final approval of updated By-laws must happen at a specially called meeting of the congregation with ultimate congregational approval.

- Inquiries have been made regarding the leasing of the former Blessed Beginnings spaces. No action will be taken on these requests by the Council at this time, however this may be revisited in the future. Discussion occurred regarding the possibility of the formation of a team to research and make recommendations to the Council regarding the future of space and equipment. The Building & Grounds Committee should also be a part of this conversation at some point in the future.
- The entire staff of Blessed Beginnings ended their time well. The Council hosted a luncheon for the staff showing their appreciation for their work. Many thanks to Kristie Lehman for putting together this luncheon.
- Blessed Beginnings signage has been removed from the Nazareth grounds, and the posts will also be removed soon. Marc Rath is also assessing the current value of the vans prior to any Council decision regarding future options. In Kaylene's absence, there was no update on the organization, inventory, and storage of Blessed Beginnings supplies and equipment. This will take place at next month's Council meeting.
- The question arose regarding a possible change in snow removal needs with the suspension of operations of Blessed Beginnings – Chris Hansen will also inquire with Dan Deery on the possibility of sharing some of the snow removal.
- Electronic signage update – Wayne will make contacts with the city and have further discussions for options. We currently have a bid from Nagle Signs and will also get another bid from Signs and Designs.

Treasurer's Report | Cindy Wilson

Cindy shared the most recent minutes from the Finance Committee. As Mike and Tim had shared with the congregation this past Sunday, Nazareth's giving is surpassing expenses by 1% currently, which is positive.

A question arose within the Finance Committee about how much of the budgeted money (\$2500) should be given to the current EPIC scholarship applicant. Since there is only one applicant this year, the committee recommended giving the entire budgeted amount to the sole applicant. The Council agreed that this should be done.

Discussion occurred about the need for more volunteers to serve as cash counters on Monday mornings. This item will be added to the Time & Talents Sheet this fall.

Since the Council did not receive the April Financials in their Council packets this month, approval of the April Financial Report will be deferred to next month's meeting.

Action item

Disperse the entire budgeted amount of \$2500 to the single EPIC scholarship applicant.

Moved: Cindy

Seconded: Kristie

Vote: Pass

Committee Reports | Council Reps

Blessed Beginnings – no report – this committee is suspended indefinitely.

Building & Grounds – Nate:

Sidewalk and roof work will proceed as we approved at the last meeting – some of the curb work has been started. Some portions of the parking lot were put on hold due to BB closure. Trees will be planted along Main Street by the Willing Workers.

Endowment – Wayne:

A question arose about how to move the Blessed Beginnings designated endowment money to a usable account as approved by the Council at last month's meeting. Wayne will follow up with Anne and the Endowment Committee.

Personnel – Julie:

Kristin, Julie, Kaylene, and Mike met with Peg Merfeld to inquire about the status of her current role in Barb Burbridge's absence. Peg is doing a remarkable job of taking on the responsibilities that used to fall under Barb's job description, in addition to continuing her own responsibilities. She is very happy to do so at this time, and will let Mike, Kaylene, and the Council know if something changes. For now, the search for a replacement for Barb's job will be put on hold.

Local Missions – Ron:

The committee met, but there are no recommendations for the Council at this time.

US World Missions – Kristie:

The committee met via Zoom to pray for individual missionaries supported by Nazareth. Discussion is also occurring within the committee for possible mission trips in the future. There is some interest in an Ethno-venture trip to India through the Navigators, and a possible trip to Panama next year to support the Schmidts. Some of our missionaries may be visiting Nazareth over the summer months.

Stewardship – Julie:

The committee met in early June and set goals to be completed at their July meeting. The singular focus of this committee will be to set a course for Biblical stewardship to be practiced at Nazareth beginning this fall. Future recommendations will be sent to the Council after the July meeting.

Worship & Music – Wayne:

This committee meets every two weeks. Since church attendance is always down during the summer vacation months, the committee was contemplating moving to one service for June - August. However, after further discussion, it is the recommendation of this committee for two worship services to remain through the summer. The Council agreed with this recommendation.

Tim closed the meeting in prayer.

Action item

Adjourn

Moved: Nate

Seconded: Cindy

Vote: Pass

Meeting adjourned at 10:20 p.m. | Next meeting: Tuesday, June 18th at 6:30 p.m.

June 18, 2024 | Nazareth Council Minutes

Attendees: Cindy Wilson, Beth Harris, Kristie Lehman, Chris Hansen, Ron Martin, Nate Greiner, Julie Creeden, Wayne Jacobson, Tim Boettger, Mike Brost, Kaylene Hoskins

Guests: Marc Rath

Absent: Kristina McBurney

Call to Order at 6:30 p.m. | Wayne Jacobson

Wayne welcomed everyone and thanked us for attending. He opened us in prayer.

Security and Blessed Beginnings Facilities/Equipment | Marc Rath

1. **Security:** Marc shared that the NELC Emergency Procedure Guidelines were adopted shortly after he started his employment at Nazareth. He fashioned them after the guidelines from a United Methodist church in Marion, Iowa he had visited at that time. He stated that there are two overall types of emergencies, which have very different responses.
 - a. Active threat emergency:
 - There are seven entrances at Nazareth and 30+ cameras throughout the facility including one camera at each door. Some cameras could now be moved out of empty Blessed Beginnings rooms and used elsewhere in the building as needed.
 - Throughout the week, people must come in through Door 1. Door 7 is open for funerals, and occasionally door 3 is opened for larger events. All other doors remain locked.
 - Marc has the capability to unlock and lock doors via the computer for outside groups to come into the building.
 - b. Tornado, Fire, Medical emergency:
 - We do not currently have tornado signage. Marc will make sure these signs are created and installed in the proper areas. He will also make sure that ushers, pastors, and worship leaders are trained with this information for tornado, fire, and medical emergencies. Marc shared three safe spaces within the building for weather events that will also need to be conveyed to the congregation:
 1. Tunnel under the worship center
 2. Older education hallway
 3. Underground areas, if time permits
 - c. Security options the Council can consider:
 - Establish a Volunteer Security Team – Marc will reach out to other area churches who have volunteer security teams in place and report his findings back to the Council.
 - Hire a professional security person to work at Nazareth. Marc believes that this option could possibly put less liability on the church.
 - Council and/or Congregation view the active shooter video available through the Cedar Falls Police Department.
2. **Blessed Beginnings Facility Tour:** Marc took the Council on a tour to show us the facilities left empty by Blessed Beginnings. Upon completion of the tour, the Council brainstormed next steps for facilities, supplies, equipment, and vehicles that were formerly used by Blessed Beginnings. Some rooms could possibly be converted to storage rooms.

Three options will be considered to move forward: store items, sell items, donate items. No final decisions will be made by the Council prior to the following actionable items:

- a) Wayne will get bids on the Blessed Beginnings vans.
- b) Kaylene will consult with Kim and Meg to see if they desire to keep any of the smaller daycare.
- c) equipment or supplies for their programs. Anything they don't want will be included in a flyer that.
- d) Kaylene will create to send out to other area Christian Daycares for donation.
- e) Kaylene will research the possibility of selling the larger items such as strollers, cribs, etc. The Council feels it is best to store all of the child-sized tables and chairs at this time.
- f) Kaylene will get staff input for room usage of empty Blessed Beginnings rooms prior to any Council decisions. This includes the School-age Building. Options that will be considered for this building are using it for another ministry within Nazareth, leasing it to another outside ministry, razing it, or using it for storage.
- g) Kaylene will research the possibility of moving at least a portion of the current school-age playground equipment closer to the main church building so that it could be used by children on Sunday mornings. Other area church programs have already reached out to see if we are interested in selling some of the smaller equipment that is currently stored in an outside storage shed. Kaylene will contact them.

Secretary's Report | *Julie Creeden*

Action item

Approve Council minutes from 5/21/24

Moved: Chris

Seconded: Kristie

Vote: Pass

Pastors' Reports | *Mike Brost and Tim Boettger*

Mike encouraged the Council and thanked us for our work. He believes that the Council is doing faithful work, holding fast to God's Word, and shared that he has also heard this sentiment from other families at Nazareth. Tim shared that he and Mike have met with a few candidates for youth ministry. They will share more information as they continue with other scheduled meetings within the next few weeks. He reported that Meg is still paying attention to the Nazareth/Orchard Hill partnership and will keep the Council informed. Both Mike and Tim commented that VBS was very well done and joined the Council in giving a special thanks to Kim, Meg, and all of the many other staff members and volunteers who helped make this week so meaningful and powerful for children.

Treasurer's Report | *Cindy Wilson*

Cindy shared the most recent minutes from the Finance Committee. She was very encouraged with the state of Nazareth's finances and complemented both Susan and Anne for their work in this area.

Action items

- Approve May Financials
Moved: Chris
Seconded: Julie
Vote: Pass
- Approve recommendation from the Finance Committee to invest up to \$300,000 from Banklowa low interest-bearing account into CDs.
Moved: Cindy
Seconded: Beth
Vote: Pass
- Let it be noted here that after having received copies from Susan Dean, the Council approved the April Financials via email on May 29, 2024. (Action Item via email 5/29/24)
Moved: Cindy
Seconded: Beth
Vote: Pass

Committee Reports | Council Reps

Blessed Beginnings follow-up – Kaylene

Kaylene reported that there is essentially a neutral balance in the Blessed Beginnings account after all final expenses of Blessed Beginnings are paid. Copiers have been picked up, phones have been shut off, and Andy has been able to utilize one of the BB laptops for his Route 66 Bible study.

Building & Grounds – Nate

The parking lot improvements are waiting for a span of time with no rain. The roof on the coffee shop is complete, and the gym roof has new tin.

Endowment – Chris

Arlan Parrish spoke with Community Bank and Trust and realized that in order for the Blessed Beginnings endowment funds to be moved to the General Fund as was approved by the Council, the bank needs a formal written request. Kaylene wrote this and included the Council executive session minutes from 4/15/24 that included this approval. Chris also mentioned that the committee is working to update the Endowment brochure. They also are looking into having some sort of endowment content put on naz.org.

Personnel – Chris

No report – The Committee did not meet.

Local Missions – Ron

Ron reported that the committee has been working on their portion of the Time/Talents sheet as requested by the Stewardship Committee. The committee had one recommendation for the Council: See action items below.

US World Missions – Kristie

Shannon Sandquist with the Navigators spoke with the committee about a mission trip opportunity that is coming up. So far two Nazareth members have expressed interest. They need at least four people to go. If no one else at Nazareth expresses interest, the opportunity will be open to members of Ascension Lutheran. Ron mentioned that a new organization is now under the umbrella of the Navigators that is involved in this mission trip called "Oaks International." The committee had one recommendation for the Council: See action items below.

Stewardship – Julie

The committee had two recommendations for the Council: see in Action Items below.

Worship & Music – Wayne

The makeup of this committee is out of compliance with the bylaws. There are too many people (bylaws state 6 members + 2 ex-officio) and there are staff members in place where congregation members should be. The core team has already discussed this and will be moving forward with solutions to get the committee back into compliance as soon as possible. All members will ultimately require Council approval.

Julie reported that Jordan had helped immensely with organizing the membership of our current committees so that the Council can get them back into compliance with the bylaws. Every June one-third of the membership is supposed to go off and one-third new members come on. It may take some staggering terms in the meantime, but the Council is committed to bylaw compliance for all committees. Volunteers with a mature faith and an education background will be sought for serving on the Education Committee with Beth as the Council Rep. Jordan will continue to track the terms of each member to the best of her ability and add the term dates to our organizational chart, and then the Council will begin staggering terms until member rotations are compliant and systematic.

Action items from Committee Reports

- Approve Dan Schofield as new member of Local Missions Committee as per their recommendation.
Moved: Ron
Seconded: Beth
Vote: Pass
- Approve Kathy Oakland, Shelley Lauritsen, and Maureen Hanson as new members of the US/World Missions Committee as per their recommendation.
Moved: Ron
Seconded: Nate
Vote: Pass
- Approve recommendation from Stewardship Committee to replace giving 50% of the Thanksgiving offering from ELCA World Hunger to Lutheran World Relief.
Moved: Julie
Seconded: Kristie
Vote: Pass
- Approve recommendation from the Stewardship Committee to update the current NELC Stewardship Policy in the Church Handbook, Section c. Participation, to read as follows:
Stewardship calls for action. On the first Sunday of November members of Nazareth are asked to bring their pledge cards and time/talents sheets to the worship service. These are left at the altar. If members are not at the worship service on those Sundays, there will be an opportunity for them to leave their cards and time/talents sheets in the offering plate on the second Sunday in November. During the second week in November, the Church Administrator and Stewardship Committee shall prepare a report for the Church Council stating the anticipated income from the congregation for the coming year. The Council will then prepare a budget during the month of December for the next year.
Moved: Julie
Seconded: Wayne
Vote: Pass

President's Report | Wayne Jacobson

- Our current bylaws need to be updated – especially if the outcome of the second vote approves our disaffiliation with the ELCA. Wayne asked the Council for nominations for members to work on these updates to our current bylaws. Chris suggested asking the former bylaw committee who has already invested much time in this area to serve again, if they are willing. The Council agreed. Wayne will ask John Larsen, Paul Creeden, Maureen Hanson, and Russ Curtis. Wayne and Pastor Mike Brost will also sit on this committee. Kristie also mentioned that John Lehman would like to be considered. He will be asked as an alternate if one of the former members cannot serve.
- Wayne reviewed the prescribed governance of NELC as it is set forth in our current bylaws. The congregation elects 9 Council members to act as the governing body of the church. The Council maintains standing committees to carry out the business and operations of the congregation. These committees do their work and then make recommendations to the Council. The Council either denies or approves committee recommendations. Occasionally, there are items that require full congregational approval, in which case it is the duty of the Council to make recommendations to the congregation. The congregation may either deny or approve those Council recommendations. Most of our current committees are working within compliance of our bylaws. However it is noted that the following committees need to be adjusted in order to be in compliance with the bylaws:
 - The Worship & Music Committee is supposed to have 6 members plus 2 ex-officio members which are the Senior Pastor and Director of Music. There are currently too many members on this committee, and other than those two ex-officio positions, the intent of the bylaws is that the committee members should be from the congregation, and staff as either ex-officio or advisory basis as set forth in the bylaws for each committee.
 - The Education Committee has no current members and needs to be re-established and functioning in order to be in compliance with the bylaws. Beth Harris is the current Council rep of that committee. The Council is currently looking for volunteers from the congregation who have a strong love for Jesus and a background in education to sit on this committee.
 - The Endowment Fund is to include the Senior pastor and Finance Manager as advisory members.
- Wayne asked Kaylene to update the Council on the electronic signage bids that will be paid for by a generous donation from a member in memory of a loved one. She is gathering bids at this time. No action will be taken on this item prior to gathering more information from the city. Kaylene has reached out, and we are waiting to hear back.

Old Business | Chris Hansen

Chris is still working to get written documentation to cover any liability by having Deery Toyota and New Aldaya use our parking lot. To avoid a conflict of interest, he will reach out to Attorney Pat Galles for help in this area.

New Business | Council

- A few members of the congregation have reached out to the Council as a whole, as well as individual Council members, asking why the blinds cannot be opened during Sunday morning worship services. Some of the blinds do not work very well, however an attempt has been made to keep as many open as possible during the Sunday morning time.

- NELC employment policy regarding severance – this item will be sent to the personnel committee to work on and bring recommendation(s) back to the Council at their earliest convenience.
- Review the approval process for use of Worship Center by outside groups. The policy is clearly written in the Church Handbook and must always be followed. The Senior Pastor will have the final approval for any event held in the Worship Center. Wayne will ask Marc what criteria are used for outside groups using other areas in the building. The current policy in the church handbook may need to be reviewed by the Council in the near future.
- Wayne will plan on giving a brief Council update to the congregation this Sunday, June 23rd. It will include updates on the upcoming affiliation vote on August 28th, the parking lot construction work, new roof work, strong congregational giving, and the upcoming Biblical Stewardship emphasis in the fall.
- Kaylene asked for clarification on membership and the NELC privacy policy.
- Staffing update: There are a couple of people who have shown interest in the Food Ministry position left open by Peg Merfeld. Kaylene and the pastors will follow through with these contacts.

Action item

Adjourn

Moved: Kristie

Seconded: Nate

Vote: Pass

Meeting adjourned at 11:15 p.m. | Next meeting: Tuesday, July 16th at 6:30 p.m. in Room 301

July 16, 2024 | Nazareth Council Minutes

Attendees: Cindy Wilson, Beth Harris, Kristie Lehman, Chris Hansen, Ron Martin, Nate Greiner, Julie Creeden, Wayne Jacobson, Tim Boettger, Mike Brost, Kaylene Hoskins

Guests: Donna Kirschenmann, Randy Kies, Nathaniel Parrish

Absent: Kristina McBurney

Call to Order at 6:30 p.m. | Wayne Jacobson

Wayne welcomed everyone and thanked us for attending. Mike read Psalm 119:25 and the Council reflected on the verse. Julie opened us in prayer.

Secretary's Report | Julie Creeden

Action item

Approve Council minutes from 6/18/24

Moved: Ron

Seconded: Beth

Vote: Pass

President's Report | Wayne Jacobson

- Insurance policy review: Kaylene, Wayne, Kristina, Anne, and Ed Hanson (Brotherhood Mutual) met to perform a required yearly review of Nazareth's property/casualty insurance policy per the By-laws. There is typically a 15% increase in premiums each year. Last year's premium was \$28,279. This year's premium without Blessed Beginnings will be \$33,419 with a \$10,000 deductible. Ed emphasized that we should avoid claims as much as possible. All claims should be run through Kaylene first to avoid being put in a higher risk class unnecessarily. If we have no claims this year, we could get a rebate next year.
- Blessed Beginnings Vans: Wayne is assigning Marc the task of researching whether it might be preferable to sell the vans ourselves rather than going through a dealership.
- Trailer purchased for Habitat for Humanity work: Nazareth owns this trailer, but in June when Marc visited with the Council, he had mentioned that most of the tools are individually owned by members. Wayne will ask Marc to provide an inventory of these tools and will let Kaylene know.
- The President's report will continue following guests of the Council.

Guest | Donna Kirschenmann, congregation member

Donna and the Nazareth Gather groups are interested in helping with the Refugee Resettlement Program that is being sponsored by Lutheran Services of Iowa (LSI). Through this LSI program, 150 people will settle in the Cedar Valley over the course of this summer. LSI is looking for basic supplies and furniture. Donna would like to open up this opportunity to the entire congregation by placing an announcement of this need in the Naz News. This opportunity would run from the last Sunday in July through the first 2 Sundays in August. Donna would also like to inquire with Mike Knipp, the philanthropic director for LSI, to possibly give a brief update on the effort during announcements of an upcoming worship service.

Action item

Allow an announcement, approved by the Council president, to run in the Naz News which includes a link to the FAQs on the LSI website for members who have an interest in helping this cause. Also allow Mike Knipp to make a 2-minute announcement at a worship service if he is available.

Moved: Chris

Seconded: Julie

Vote: Pass

Guest | Randy Kies, Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA)

Randy is a new part-time staff member with the Northeast Iowa FCA who is in charge of FCA Sports. Randy's role at FCA is to establish and promote club sports teams in the northeast Iowa area with a vision to lead every coach and athlete into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ and His church. FCA's vision is to see the world transformed by Jesus Christ through the influence of coaches and athletes. Randy has worked closely with Marc Rath to schedule these teams in the Nazareth gym. Interest in these teams continues to grow.

Action item

Fully support a continued partnership between Nazareth and FCA, and seek opportunities to expand this partnership whenever possible including prioritizing FCA groups when scheduling the Nazareth gym.

Moved: Julie

Seconded: Chris

Vote: Pass

Guest | Nathaniel Parrish, Director of Music at Nazareth

Nathaniel and the Worship and Music committee have been working diligently to improve the worship service based upon the Worship Mission Statement from Calvary Church. This is the statement that has been used as an example for the 2nd Sunday worship experience since its inception. The Committee is seeking an opportunity to have more consistency within the service from week to week in addition to a higher level of participation and engagement within our worship services based upon this Worship Mission Statement. Nathaniel is now seeking feedback and directional clarity from the Council. The Council will be looking into either adopting this Worship Mission Statement or creating an original one that is similar in order to provide guidance for focusing Nazareth's worship services solely on God rather than individual style preferences. The mission statement could also be the basis of music selection and execution. The Council will take up this topic at a future meeting and continue to receive updates from Nathaniel and the Worship & Music Committee as they continue this work.

Treasurer's Report | Cindy Wilson

Cindy shared that the Finance Committee hasn't met yet this month and will share the June financial statements with the Council via email once they have met on Monday, July 22nd.

Action Item via email 7/28/24

Approve June Financials.

Moved: Cindy

Seconded: Ron

Vote: Pass

President's Report – Continued | Wayne Jacobson

- The Council reviewed the documents that have been updated since the last special congregational meeting/vote regarding our ELCA affiliation. The following actions were taken:

Action items

- Approve congregational letter
Moved: Chris
Seconded: Kristie
Vote: Pass
 - Approve resolutions document
Moved: Nate
Seconded: Ron
Vote: Pass
 - Approve Notice of Special Meeting
Moved: Kristie
Seconded: Chris
Vote: Pass
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- The Council reviewed the updated script for the upcoming August 28th special meeting and vote. Wayne will share it with our parliamentarian, Luke Zahari, prior to our next meeting.
 - Julie will create PDFs of the above three documents and get them to Jordan for printing. Julie will also deliver a copy of each document to Bishop Jones of the ELCA Northeast Iowa Synod in addition to mailing them via certified mail.
 - Wayne shared that the members of the former By-laws committee who were previously chosen by the Council to reconvene have all accepted the invitation: John Larsen, Russ Curtis, Maureen Hanson, and Paul Creeden, in addition to Wayne Jacobson and Mike Brost, will serve in this capacity following the second vote on August 28th.
 - Wayne will invite Marc Rath to come to our August Council meeting to report on the tasks that he was given by the Council at our June meeting.

Old Business

- Electronic signage update: Kaylene reported that the bid from Signs and Designs came in substantially less than Nagle. She also shared that Signs and Designs has reached out to the city for confirmation of regulations. After discussion, the Council prefers that the entire sign be electronic so that any branding can be easily updated rather than non-digital branding across the top of the sign that would be costly to update.
- Deery/New Aldaya use of Nazareth parking lot: Chris reached out to Steve Daniels who will spell out any liability in writing to be signed-off by both parties. Chris also suggested that we acquire a count of the cars used by New Aldaya and Deery and negotiate possible snow removal help in addition to help with costs of parking lot maintenance based upon the number of spots they are using.

- Kaylene reported on her research of the larger ticket items from Blessed Beginnings daycare – specifically the more expensive strollers and cribs. She shared that some church daycares from Spencer Iowa that had been flooded had reached out in need of help – the Council agreed that would be a good place to donate the Blessed Beginnings daycare items. Kaylene also shared that Kim and Meg had been given the opportunity to take any items that could enhance their programs prior to donation. Kaylene was directed to reach out to the daycares in Spencer and proceed with this donation.

New Business

- Education Committee – The Council has decided to establish a task force to assess what is currently being done holistically with regards to Christian education at Nazareth from kindergarten through adult and create a vision for the committee's vision and mission moving forward. Beth will make contacts with members who have expressed interest and ask if they are interested in serving on this task force prior to reestablishing the Education Committee.
- All other committee reports were postponed until next month due to time constraints and lack of any urgent business needing to be dealt with.

Pastors' Reports | *Mike Brost and Tim Boettger*

Mike shared that it continues to be exciting and very encouraging to see the momentum of what God is doing at Nazareth. He continues to work on planning of fall events including confirmation. They will meet with a candidate for the food ministry position within the next few days. Tim reflected on the hiring opportunities we currently have at Nazareth – leadership within our personnel hiring is critical moving forward. The pastors, staff, and Council continue to pray that God provides the right people for our open positions who have mature faith and the skills to lead, and that we remain willing and able to wait on the Lord to provide.

Action item

Adjourn

Moved: Kristie

Seconded: Beth

Vote: Pass

Meeting adjourned at 10:45 p.m. | Next meeting: Tuesday, August 14th at 6:30 p.m. in Room 301

August 14, 2024 | Nazareth Council Minutes

Attendees: Cindy Wilson, Beth Harris, Kristie Lehman, Kristina McBurney, Ron Martin, Nate Greiner, Julie Creeden, Wayne Jacobson, Tim Boettger, Mike Brost, Kaylene Hoskins

Absent: Chris Hansen

Call to Order at 6:40 p.m. | Wayne Jacobson

Wayne welcomed everyone and thanked us for attending. He read Psalm 12:6 and Psalm 18:30, and the Council reflected on the “flawless” word of God. Thank God that we can trust him for his inerrant word! Wayne also shared a letter of encouragement to the Council and pastoral staff from a former Nazareth member who now lives in Ames. Her encouragement focused on the direction that Nazareth continues to take in order to remain faithful to the authority of scripture. Mike opened the meeting in prayer.

Secretary’s Report | Julie Creeden

Action item

Approve Council minutes from 7/16/24

Moved: Nate

Seconded: Ron

Vote: Pass

Old Business

- Update from Marc via Nate:
 - Several groups consistently use our gym. Julie will share the action item with Marc taken by the Council last month so he knows to always give FCA groups priority when scheduling outside events/groups in the gym. The Council will be considering additional policy creation in the near future to ensure that our gym is used for the purpose of sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ and ultimately give God glory rather than as a public rec center.
 - Kaylene will follow-up with Susan to inquire about gym usage fees – what they are and where those funds are placed.
- Randy Kies from FCA – Nate will reach out to Randy and see if he is willing to share FCA’s mission and vision with our congregation and how they are utilizing our gym to share the gospel with coaches and athletes through sport.
- No update on Building & Grounds – parking lot has not yet been done, but work should be starting soon according to Kaylene.
- Electronic signage – The Council reviewed the final proposal for an updated digital sign on University Avenue and accepted this proposal from Signs and Designs. The entire project will be funded by a very generous donation from a Nazareth member in memory of his wife. Wayne will contact the donor and let him know that the sign work will now move forward.

Action item

Accept proposal from Signs and Designs for removal of old sign and installation of new digital sign on University Avenue.

Moved: Beth

Seconded: Nate

Vote: Pass

- Update from Kaylene on Blessed Beginnings Daycare equipment: This equipment will be donated to the daycare at Trinity Lutheran Church in Spencer, Iowa who lost everything in the most recent flood. Kaylene has been in contact with their disaster team, and they are very interested in taking our equipment but are not quite ready. We will keep it stored here at Nazareth until they are able and ready to take it – Kaylene will keep us updated. Other area daycares in Spencer may also take some of the surplus equipment.

Treasurer's Report | Cindy Wilson

Cindy shared that the Finance Committee hasn't met yet this month and will share the July financial statements with the Council via email once they have met.

Action Item via email 8/26/24

Approve July Financials.

Moved: Cindy

Seconded: Julie

Vote: Pass

Committee Reports | Council Reps

Education: Beth

- Beth shared that a task force requested by the Council has been formed. Meg, Kim and Beth will meet Monday to begin brainstorming for the reinstatement of the Education Committee. Four other congregation members have also agreed to serve on this task force.

Local Missions: Ron

- Ron shared an informative Powerpoint from Danny Schaefer. He noted that there is a possibility that Danny will hold another evangelism training session at Nazareth again this fall.

Stewardship: Julie

- Julie shared that the committee is currently finalizing content for the fall stewardship mailing. Sam Madson and Susan Dean are helping with this work.

US & World Missions: Kristie

- Kristie shared that Andy and Amy Schmidt visited Nazareth recently and were able to speak with members of the congregation. They are currently serving as missionaries in Costa Rica and are supported by Nazareth. Kristie mentioned how powerful their work has been in spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ, in addition to helping the local people create a better life for their families. There were no updates from the other committees at this time. See update and recommendation from the Worship & Music Committee in the President's Report below.

President's Report | Wayne Jacobson

Worship & Music

- Recommendation: Beginning in September 2024, the Worship & Music Committee recommends that Nazareth offer two identical blended services. This will provide a singular unified focus centered around the best elements of worship in order to ensure God is at the center of our worship. The Committee would like to see the following items take place within the congregation:

- Be positive about a new direction as we strive to place God at the center of our worship experience.
- Commit to a new format for a period of time – at least 15 Sundays prior to evaluation, extending grace and patience to the Worship Team as they get settled in the basics before adding additional elements.
- Concerns with staffing – we will need to make sure staff is in place to prepare Nazareth for growth.

Action Item

Accept the recommendation of the Worship & Music Committee to offer two identical blended services as a trial period starting on September 15th and running through January 15th, at which time further assessment and evaluation will take place. The Core Team will communicate this change to the congregation.

Moved: Kristie

Seconded: Ron

Vote: Pass

ELCA vote update:

- The communications team will run a newly created informative video this Sunday encouraging the congregation to attend the second vote on August 28th. The video will also remind the congregation of the recommendation to vote yes for both resolutions from both the Council and pastoral staff.
- Weekly reminder emails are being sent.
- A reminder postcard will be mailed soon.
- Beth reported that Jill Hanus will oversee and give direction to the vote counters again this time. Beth will send the names of the counters to Julie when known.
- Kaylene will not be able to attend the special meeting – Jordan will cover her duties.

New Business | Kaylene Hoskins

Kaylene has posted the part-time position for a new sound/tech person. Keith Reynolds who is currently in that position will be moving to Florida on September 3rd. Kaylene shared that Charity Lovan has been hired part-time to fill our Director of Outreach Ministry position. This position oversees the food pantry and works closely with Love, INC. Charity started this past Monday. The Council welcomes Charity to the Nazareth staff!

Executive session began at 9:20 p.m. to discuss additional staffing items. Executive session ended at 10:00 p.m.

Pastors' Report | Mike Brost and Tim Boettger

Mike encouraged the Council and congregation for standing firm on the authority of scripture. If the second vote to disaffiliate with the ELCA and affiliate with the NALC passes, Nazareth will also be able to fully align with the NALC's four core values: Christ centered, Mission driven, Traditionally grounded, and Congregationally focused. The future for Nazareth is exciting – God is working! Mike and Tim both suggest one or two fall leadership meetings/retreats with the Council, staff, and committee leaders to begin this process. Tim also shared his enthusiasm and encouragement for what is happening at Nazareth.

Mike and Tim also shared Staffing updates:

Recently they had two interviews for our open junior high position, but no hires have been made as of yet. We will continue to search for one staff person for youth ministry – still operating within a partnership with Orchard Hill Church. Meg and Mike are engaging with this partnership. They are also both involved with CHAOS and confirmation. Mike reminded us that Nazareth also employs two interns at the CHAOS and college age levels.

Action item

Adjourn

Moved: Kristie

Seconded: Beth

Vote: Pass

Meeting adjourned at 10:45 p.m. | Next meeting: Tuesday, September 17th at 6:30 p.m. in Room 301