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## Council Minutes - January 10, 2023

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

Staff Present: Angie Rath, Julia Voss

Opening Prayer: Pastor Steve Brackett from the Northeastern Iowa Synod office opened in prayer.

**Synod Office Presentation:** The Council welcomed Bishop Kevin Jones and Pastor Steve Brackett to the meeting. They were invited by President Nederhoff to discuss the Letter of Dissent with the entire council. Bishop Jones said that some of the ELCA remarks that were issues of concern in the council's letter of dissent are coming from Bishop Eaton and those would need to be addressed by her. He continued by stating that he had recently been in conversation with Bishop Eaton and that the council should also expect a response from her very soon.

He went on to say that "faithful people can come to differing interpretations about the Scriptures." He explained that the application of "Historical Criticism" of the ancient texts has shown us that the Bible does contain many inconsistencies. Pastor Brackett agreed. Discussion occurred with council member Julie Creeden, who disagreed with their stance that Scripture is not inerrant. Creeden stated that there are no inconsistencies in God's Word. Discussion followed. The Bishop concluded his views by stating that "faithful people can come to differing interpretations about Scripture. The ELCA believes we can still be one church even though we have different ideas about the inerrancy of Scripture."

Regarding homosexuality, the Bishop shared that he feels this is a social justice issue. He explained that there are some ELCA congregations, such as Nazareth, who take the conservative Biblical stance which is evident in our "Speaking the Truth in Love" document. While other ELCA congregations have "conscience bound release," believing homosexuals should be able to have the same life-long and monogamous commitments as heterosexuals. He shared that the ELCA believes we can co-exist with these differences. He explained that issues have arisen between some congregations and the ELCA since the release of the Social Statement on Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust (2009 Churchwide Assembly.) It is Bishop Jones' view that these issues have arisen due to the larger church moving closer to the "conscience bound release" interpretation over the years. The bishop believes that congregations who hold beliefs similar to Nazareth, are "feeling unwelcome and unheard."

He said that He is sympathetic to the divide that is happening at Nazareth and the struggle among congregation members. He asked the question, "Is God being obeyed?" He reminded us all to "love thy neighbor" even when we may disagree on issues. He referred the council to the book of Galatians where Paul says "I do something out of love, because I'm free. I'm bound by your conscience, not mine." He continued by reminding the council that "Paul says you can't draw a line and say you're in and you're out to others." He concluded this portion of his comments by sharing that votes have to be taken at the Church-wide Assembly. People are allowed to make statements at the meeting.

Regarding the current unavailability of ELCA pastors, Bishop Jones and Pastor Brackett said that the retirement of Baby Boomers has hit hard across the entire country and we are not seeing as many students going into the Seminary. There is a shortage of pastors nationwide.

Bishop Jones suggested not rushing to get things done because conversations need to be heard first. He said the Synod office is still looking for an Interim Pastor for Nazareth and also suggested that Nazareth hire consultant to help the congregation get through this period. He suggested the Council look at the Mennonite Peace Center for guidance. He suggested finding a donor from the congregation to pay for this. He went on to say that he may be able to find a Reformed Church in America (RCA) interim pastor as well, and to let him know as soon as possible if the Council would like him to research this possibility. He feels that an interim pastor from the RCA would “fit the theology of Nazareth Church a little better” than a pastor from the ELCA. The council thanked him for his offer and said they would look into any RCA candidate he could find.

Bishop Jones went on to discuss a possible By-Law change that the Church Council was planning on recommending to the congregation for their approval at the upcoming Annual Meeting. He indicated that if the congregation were to reduce the required waiting period between votes to disaffiliate from 90 days to 30 days, some people in the congregation could bring a lawsuit that Nazareth left in such a way that would be deemed illegal based upon the Constitution of the ELCA – this opinion came straight from ELCA council. He encouraged the Council to follow the ELCA’s Constitution very carefully for the sake of the congregation.

Discussion took place on some miscommunication regarding a possible Interim Pastor. Those issues were cleared up with Bishop Jones and President George Nederhoff.

A question was raised by council member Lisa Arenholz, who had attended two break-out sessions at the most recent ELCA Synod Assembly. Lisa found the topics of the sessions very troubling and asked the Bishop whether or not he approved of these topics. He said he was unaware of the content of all break-out sessions held at Synod Assemblies, but that he would look into these concerns.

The Council thanked Bishop Jones and Pastor Brackett for taking time out of their evening to attend.

**Tour of the Underground:** The Council toured the Underground Kits and Quilts area with Donna Kirshenmann, Barb Ericson, Diane Hamer, Donna Schmeidel, and Kristie Lehman. They learned more about this Nazareth ministry and were provided with a hand-out of some background of the ministry that was formed in 1945. Kits and Quilts representatives expressed their desire/vision to have a “dedicated” room for the work they do – a secure, permanent space that would allow tables and sewing machines set up at all times so members of the ministry could work without having to move items and set up every time they come to the church – taking away valuable time to make items to help and support people/places around the world. The only expense they would incur, they believe, is the cost to add/change the locks on the two doors that open into the large room. The Church Council thanked the women present and the Kits & Quilts Ministry for all they do and for the tour of their space. Danielle Terrell will follow up with Nazareth and Marc Rath, Facility Director, on some of the requests presented.

**Congregational Input:**

Peg Smith and Helen Duncan, Nazareth members, presented to the Council. Helen Duncan distributed a letter she had written to the Council expressing her concerns with leaving the ELCA. The letter referenced several Bible verses.

Peg Smith thanked the Council for letting her speak. Peg talked about “Why we are Lutheran” and referred to Martin Luther. She said that the Sacrament of Baptism and the Sacrament at The Altar (communion) are essential to being Lutheran and that we are all here because we are saved by grace. She felt that both baptism and communion were missing in the inner circle of the bullseye in our slide presentation for the congregation. Peg went on to express views that the discontent at Nazareth is not pleasing to God. She talked about the ELCA views and cautioned the Council on how they research information on the ELCA.

She shared the ELCA social statement on abortion and said that the Council had stated an untruth about what the Bishop said about abortion during our presentation. Peg felt that these are women’s choices – and that we are a church, not a governing body. She shared her opinion that Jesus never mentioned abortion or anything about homosexuality in the Bible.

Peg said she loves Nazareth - it is her home, and she is disappointed with the perceived agenda by the Council. She encouraged the Council to end the discontent by:

1. Accepting help from a source that is reputable and unbiased, one who works from facts and not fallacies and half-truths.
2. Call as soon as possible an Interim Pastor who has been trained specifically to help with this type of situation.
3. Stop listening to outside influencers who want to push their own agenda.

She concluded her comments stating that she does not care whether or not Nazareth remains in the ELCA, but she shared her strong belief with the Council that Nazareth should always remain Lutheran.

The Council thanked Peg and Helen for attending and sharing their comments/concerns.

Jim Glaspie, Nazareth member, also presented to the Council. Jim had concerns with the presentation on January 8, 2023 regarding the ELCA. He felt that the presentation was full of opinions rather than facts. He encouraged the Council to support their opinions-shared within the presentation with data and explain the “why” behind it. He questioned the decline in Nazareth’s membership, and thought that blaming any decline on the ELCA was misleading. He also questioned whether other churches are really growing and encouraged the Council to share that data.

He went on to say that he had called Portico (Nazareth’s current insurance company for staff benefits) and found out that “yes, we can stay with Portico if Nazareth disaffiliates with the ELCA, but that the rates will be much higher.” He said that if Nazareth looks at different insurance companies, the Council should be careful of any perceived “conflict of interest” that could come from several of our members being associated with local insurance companies. Jim went on to express his opinion on the inappropriateness of having a non-council member present information at the ELCA Informational Session and that the Nazareth leadership is presently failing the congregation. He said that the information presented by the Council appears biased and that the author and sources need to be listed for fact-checking purposes.

The Council thanked Jim for attending and for sharing his comments/concerns.

**LCMC Presentation:** The Council welcomed Pastor Stephen Anenson, current Coordinator for the Iowa district and Pastor Mark Vander Tuig, retired National Coordinator from Lutheran Churches in Mission for Christ (LCMC.) They spoke on the purpose of the LCMC and what they do to support congregations and help them enhance their local and worldwide work for the extension of God's Kingdom. LCMC's purpose is to "support the common mission to bear witness to the good news that sinners are put right with God by faith alone in Jesus Christ, to resist any corruptions of this Gospel, and to serve and support fellow congregations who seek to do likewise. Looking only to the cross of Christ, we proclaim God's work as law and gospel for the redemption of His people today." Pastor Vander Tuig added that LCMC values the local church as the highest good, and that the association exists to serve the local church. The National coordinator works to help local congregations to work together. LCMC's emphasis is on evangelism and church planting. They greatly encourage mission work, and provide leadership training by supporting pastors with Continuing Education opportunities and other resources.

LCMC was founded in 2001 and currently has approximately 790 congregations in the U.S. and just under 200 congregations in 15 countries for a total of 971 churches. Their congregations are served by:

- 1261 pastors on their clergy list,
- a national full-time staff of 5,
- an 8-member board of trustees,
- a 7-member ministry board,
- and a growing number of districts and fellowships.

LCMC is a Lutheran association and is under the authority of Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions. LCMC pastors can stay on Portico for the same rate as ELCA pastors. LCMC has their own health benefit package for staff through an agency in Sioux Falls. He said that the name of the Sioux Falls, SD company can be found on the LCMC website: LCMC.net

The Sacraments of baptism and communion are celebrated. LCMC strives to maintain their Lutheran theology integrity. They host a Youth Gathering every summer in Des Moines, Iowa. Pastor Vander Tuig shared that the LCMC website is a marketplace of resources and ideas. Congregations are not required to give anything financially to LCMC, but they do hope and pray that congregations would consider helping to support their five total administrators, nationwide.

Pastor Vander Tuig expressed to the Council that they know transition is difficult. They are willing to help us find an Interim Pastor, but know that we, as a church, have difficult decisions to make right now. LCMC will provide "call committee coaches," who will work with a call committee to help navigate the process of calling a new pastor without directly telling the call committee what to do. LCMC has a working relationship with 9 seminaries – some specifically Lutheran, others with a Lutheran track. An example of the latter is Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary in Massachusetts.

The Council thanked Pastor Anenson and Pastor Vander Tuig for sharing their presentation on the LCM

**Pastor Bob Ericson:** Council welcomed Pastor Bob Ericson to the meeting. George Nederhoff explained to Pastor Ericson the thread of emails that transpired between Bishop Kevin Jones and George Nederhoff regarding the possibility of hiring an interim ELCA pastor. Pastor Svingen accepted another interim position and was going to only be able to be at Nazareth a few days a week. Some miscommunication was cleared up regarding the Council's hesitancy to call Pastor Paul Svingen.

Pastor Ericson reminded the Council that the decisions they are making are affecting people, and clear communication ahead of time is going to be essential moving forward. He warned the Council about the perception of micro-managing the Teaching Team or any staff. Some council members agreed with Pastor Ericson's assessment of micromanagement, while others disagreed and felt that Council oversight of preaching is essential during this time of transition when we have no Senior Pastor. The Council reassured Pastor Ericson that George and Lisa will be meeting with the Teaching Team on January 12 to make introductions and ensure there will be clear communication moving forward.

Council thanked Pastor Ericson for attending the Council meeting and for his faithful service to Nazareth.

**Call Meeting to Order:** George Nederhoff called the meeting to order at 9:00 p.m.

**2023 Budget Proposal:** The Council welcomed Anne Carlson, Dean Meier, and Adrian Talbot from the Personnel Committee. Dave Welter sent his regrets as he had another meeting commitment that evening. Anne gave a thorough and detailed presentation of the proposed 2023 balanced budget to Council. Anne has been working hand-in-hand with Angie Rath and Lori Haag on crunching numbers, and she said she was proud of the sacrifice made by staff and Mission Committees to cut budgets even further. Finance and Personnel Committees have consulted with one another to present this year's budget.

Adrian Talbot thanked the Council for having them attend the meeting and gave a brief background of his 34+ years of Human Resource experience, in addition to having experience as being a past president of Church Council, as well as sitting on call committees during the time of interim pastors in the past. He has been at Nazareth for many years and worked through challenges and crises that have arisen over the years. He urged the Council that if the Lord is gracious enough to bless Nazareth with additional funds, that they consider giving the dedicated staff a modest bump in pay or a one-time lump sum "bonus" as an affirmation of gratitude and compassion.

Dean Meier reiterated Adrian's words and said that the staff was put on a spending freeze and then made additional significant cuts to their ministry budgets; and with the rate of inflation in our country of 8% or more, and no raises, the staff is going to be hurting financially with inflation. Dean asked the Council to continue to find ways to thank the staff and give them praise and a pat on the back.

Julia Voss on behalf of the Nazareth staff, thanked Anne, Dean, and Adrian for their care of staff. Angie Rath, Administrator, reiterated the thanks and gratitude for their hard work and their concern.

The entire Council thanked Anne, Dean, and Adrian for sharing their presentations. Julie Creeden specifically thanked the committee for their clear and concise explanation of a very complicated budget in a way that all council members could fully comprehend.

**Opening Prayer:** George Nederhoff opened the remaining portion of the business meeting in prayer.

**Financial Update:** Craig Blanchard gave an update on the November Financials. A motion was made (Saathoff) and seconded (Terrell) to place the November Financials on file. Motion carried. Approved

#### **Approval of Minutes:**

- A motion was made (C. Hansen) and seconded (Blanchard) to approve the minutes from the December 20, 2022 Council meeting. Motion carried. Approved.
- A motion was made (Creeden) and seconded (Saathoff) to approve the minutes from the special Council meeting on January 3 where Council met to plan for the ELCA presentations on January 8 and January 15. Motion carried. Approved.

#### **Recommendations:**

- A motion was made (Saathoff) and seconded (Blanchard) to approve the following Memorials:
  - Given in memory of Arnie Flessner to Capital Fund: \$25
  - Given in memory of Dennis Gaede to Welcome Home Appeal: \$925
  - Given in memory of James Floyd to Welcome Home Appeal: \$975
  - Given in memory of Ray Pearson to Capital Fund: \$290

Motion carried. Approved.

- A motion was made (Christiason) and seconded (M. Hanson) to approve the 2023 Budget as presented. Discussion took place regarding particulars and the use of the Reserve Fund for certain items. Angie Rath will work with Anne Carlson to put together a few proposals so that Council can look at these on Sunday, January 15 at 2 p.m. Motion carried. Approved.

**President Report:** George Nederhoff reported that he will contact Bishop Kevin regarding Interim possibilities from the RCA and will also reach out to the LCMC.

George gave an update on the names that will be presented at the Annual Meeting for 2023 Church Council. Julie Creeden and Chris Hansen will be on the ballot for (2) 2-year terms; and Kristina McBurney, Wayne Jacobson, Kristie Lehman, and Nate Greiner will be on the ballot for (3) 3-year terms. 5 candidates will be need to be voted in on January 29. Nominations will also be taken from the floor.

The Teaching Team will meet January 12 at 8 a.m. to make introductions and talk with Andy Walser, Pastor Bob Ericson, Nathaniel Parrish, Calli Tystahl, Derrick Akers, Kristin Sauerbrei, Tim Boettger, Steve Kramer, and Matt Reisetter. Discussion took place on details of hiring fill-in pastors and contracts signed.

**Administrator Report:** Angie Rath referred to the Draft Agenda for the Annual Meeting needing approval from Council. A motion was made by (C. Hansen) and seconded (Creeden) to approve the agenda. Discussion took place. A motion was then made (C.Hansen) and seconded (M. Hanson) to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried. Approved.

**2023 Nominating Committee:** A motion was made (Nederhoff) and seconded (Saathoff) to appoint Lisa Arenholz and Craig Blanchard to serve on the 2023 Nominating Committee. Three other people will need to be elected from the congregation on January 29 at the Annual Meeting. Motion carried. Approved.

**By-Laws Revisions:** Discussion took place that Article IV that will be presented at the Annual Meeting will need to be stricken based on the ELCA discussion with Bishop Kevin. Article VIII, Article IX, and Article XVI will be voted on at the Annual Meeting. Dan Olsen will be contacted to run the technology and sound booth on January 29. Maureen will present the By-Law proposed revisions at the Annual Meeting.

**New Business:** The Church Council decided that with the late hour of this meeting, the remaining agenda items would be discussed at the next Council meeting. The Council decided to change the Council meeting from February 14 to Tuesday, February 7 at 5:30 p.m. Julia Voss will notify Sam Madson to get a notice in the Naz News.

The recommendation from the Local Missions Committee to approve \$2016 for Alternatives; \$4625 for Christian Crusaders; and \$6945 for CF Bible Conference was tabled due to budget questions/concerns.

**Reminders:**

- The next informational meeting for the congregation regarding our ELCA affiliation will be Sunday, January 15 from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. in the Worship Center.
- The next regular Council meeting will be Tuesday, February 7 at 5:30 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 (C.Hansen) to adjourn the meeting at 12:00 midnight. Motion carried. Approved.

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



## Council Minutes - March 6, 2023

**Present:** Bob Saathoff, Craig Blanchard, Lisa Arenholz, Julie Creeden, Chris Hansen, Wayne Jacobson, Kristie Lehman, Nate Greiner, Kristina McBurney

**Absent:** None

**Election for Council Secretary Position:** A motion was made by Nate Greiner and seconded by Kristie Lehman to appoint Kristina McBurney as the Council Secretary. Motion carried and approved.

### Church Council Committee Assignments:

Seminary Committee-Lisa Arenholz  
U.S./World Missions Committee-Kristie Lehman  
Blessed Beginnings Committee-Nate Greiner  
Building & Grounds Committee-Nate Greiner  
Worship & Music Committee-Wayne Jacobson  
Education Committee-Julie Creeden, Kristina McBurney

A motion was made by Nate Greiner and seconded by Julie Creeden to table the creation of the Education Committee. Motion carried and approved.

A motion was made by Julie Creeden and seconded by Nate Greiner for Bishop Jones to authorize Andy Walser to preside over communion. Motion carried and approved.

**Council Gift for Pastor Bob:** Julie will have several gift recommendations for the council to choose from at the March 21st council meeting.

**Review of Consultant Suggestion:** A motion was made by Julie Creeden and seconded by Lisa Arenholz to have Kristen Swenson begin a church overview. The motion was withdrawn.

A motion was made by Wayne Jacobson and seconded by Julie Creeden to invite Kristen Swenson to attend the March 21st Council meeting for an informal interview with Council and the Personnel Committee. Motion carried and approved.

**Adjournment:** A motion was made by Wayne Jacobson and seconded by Kristie Lehman to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried and approved. Meeting adjourned.

Minutes submitted by Kristina McBurney, Council Secretary

## **Council Minutes - March 21, 2023**

**Present:** Bob Saathoff, Craig Blanchard, Lisa Arenholz, Julie Creeden, Chris Hansen, Wayne Jacobson, Kristie Lehman, Nate Greiner, Kristina McBurney, Mike Brost

**Absent:** None

**Meeting called to order: 6:00 p.m.**

A motion was made by Craig and seconded by Nate to approve the 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes. Motion carried and approved.

A motion was made by Craig and seconded by Chris to approve the Council minutes for February 7 and 17, 2023. Motion carried and approved.

The council met with Kristen Swenson.  
The council met with Tim Boettger and Matt Reisetter.  
The council met with Dave Welter

*Council began an Executive Session at 7:25 p.m.  
A motion was made by Chris and seconded by Craig to end the executive session. Motion carried and approved.  
Executive Session ended at 8:48 p.m.*

A motion was made by Kristie and seconded by Craig to approve the Council Minutes for March 6, 2023. Motion carried and approved.

A motion was made by Wayne and seconded by Nate to approve the January 2023 Treasurer's report. Motion carried and approved.

A motion was made by Chris and seconded by Kristie to approve the February 2023 Treasurer's report. Motion carried and approved.

### New Aldaya Annual Meeting Attendees

-Pastor Mike  
-Kristina McBurney  
-Wayne Jacobson

The council decided to add the Article II Confession of Faith and Speaking the Truth in Love Document on the "Who We Are" Nazareth webpage.

A motion was made on behalf of the Personnel committee to approve Mary Margaret Halverson as a member of the committee. The motion was seconded by Kristie, motion carried and approved.

A motion was made by Julie and seconded by Wayne to "accept" Kristin Swenson as a volunteer consultant to evaluate and submit a proposal regarding Nazareth's best practices, organizational chart, and financial and communication systems. Motion carried and approved. Julie will contact Kristin

Kristie and Bob attend staff meeting on March 27, 2023  
Julie will follow up regarding gift for Pastor Bob, suggested amount of \$25 per council member

*Next regularly scheduled meeting, Tuesday, April 18th, 6:00 p.m. Room 301  
Meet third Tuesday of each month*

*Council zoom meeting Wednesday, March 22, at 8:00 pm*

New Business for April 18

Sunday Teaching Schedule/Teaching rotation  
Staff appreciation  
Volunteer recognition  
PPP Loan

A motion was made by Craig and seconded by Julie to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried and approved.

**Meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.**

## **Council Minutes - April 18, 2023**

**Present:** Craig Blanchard, Julie Creeden, Nate Greiner, Chris Hansen, Wayne Jacobson, Kristie Lehman, Kristina McBurney, Mike Brost

**Absent:** None

**Meeting called to order: 6:28 p.m.**

Julie asked to correct the spelling of Kristin's name in the March 21st minutes and to change "hire" to "accept" in the motion regarding Kristin's consulting offer.

A motion was made by Wayne and seconded by Julie to approve the March 21st Church Council minutes. Motion carried and approved.

A motion was made by Kristie and seconded by Nate to enter executive session. Executive session ended at 7:00 pm

Council approved Ron Martin and Mike Francis to fill the two vacant council positions.

### **New Business:**

Wayne moved to pursue a dialogue with Tim Boettger regarding a 20-25 hour teaching and pastoral contract and extend a teaching contract to Matt Reisetter on an as needed basis using the previous honorarium. Julie seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Council discussed inviting staff to third Tuesday of month council meeting  
Church council agreed to be available on Sunday mornings in Fellowship Hall for questions and conversations.

Nate motioned and Julie seconded to extend a retroactive honorarium to Andy, Kristin and Derrick for their Sunday teachings while Naz was without a senior/interim pastor. Motion carried and passed unanimously.

Interim Pastor's report

Financial report

Julie motioned and Wayne seconded to accept the Financial report. Motion carried and was approved.

### **New Business**

Guidelines for Welcome Home! Appeal 10% Fund

Council and committee spots

Establishing education committee

Kristina moved and Julie seconded to approve a \$6000 seminary scholarship for Jackson Reynolds for 2023-2024. Motion carried and approved.

Wayne moved and Julie seconded to allot up to \$250 for a retirement gift for Pastor Erickson in honor of his retirement. Motion carried and approved..

**New Business:**

Communication strategy regarding Affiliation Task Force report to congregation.

Next meeting: May 2nd and May 16th at 6:00 pm

Craig motioned and Wayne seconded to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried and approved.

**Meeting adjourned at 10:04 p.m.**

## Council Minutes – May 2, 2023

**Present:** Wayne, Craig, Julie, Kristie, Chris, Mike, Nate, Ron, Kristina, Mike Brost, Kaylene Hoskins

**Absent:** none

**Meeting called to order:** 6:26 pm  
Luke 6:12-19

### **Mission Update**

Kim Albertson-Local and World Mission Partnerships Proposal for 2024

Table April 18th council minutes approval

### **Updates:**

A motion was made by Wayne and seconded by Nate to offer the position of Interim Associate Pastor, a part-time contract, to Tim Boettger. Motion carried and approved.

### **Task Force Next Steps**

Report completed by Thursday, May 4th and sent to council and pastor  
Thursday, May 11th at 6:30 pm Task Force Presentation

*Congregational Information meeting TBD*

### **New Business:**

Julie Creeden moved and Nate Greiner seconded to add Kaylene Hoskins as an authorized check signer and to remove Mallory Jensen as an authorized check signer. Motion carried and approved.

### **April Financial Report**

Craig motioned and Julie seconded to add Peter Voorhies to the Finance Committee. Motion carried and approved.

Mike Francis-Local Missions Committee

Ron Martin-World Missions Committee

Endowment Committee-three members leaving, need  
Kaylene will investigate Employee Retention Credit

Craig moved and Kristie seconded to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried and passed.

**Meeting adjourned at 9:18 pm.**

## Council Minutes - May 16, 2023

**Present:** Mike Brost, Chris Hansen, Wayne Jacobson, Nate Greiner, Julie Creeden, Kristina McBurney, Mike Francis, Kristie Lehman, Ron Martin, Craig Blanchard, Kaylene Hoskins

**Absent:** none

**Meeting called to order:** 6:50 pm

### Updates:

The council met with John Larsen regarding the ELCA Model Constitution.

Recommendation:

Adopt resolution at the council level, set congregational meeting

- recite process to date
- congregational meetings
- conversations, Q & A with Bishop
- Affiliation Task Force final summary
- include council affiliation recommendation

Submit notice and resolutions to the Bishop that follow the guidelines set forth in both the ELCA Constitution and Bylaws and the NELC Constitution and Bylaws as soon as possible.

Julie Creeden moved and Ron Martin seconded that the Nazareth Lutheran Church Council hire John Larsen to draft the resolution to notify the bishop of the Northeast Iowa Synod regarding the council's decision to hold a special congregational meeting to allow a congregational vote to disaffiliate with the ELCA

Motion carried and approved.

Wayne moved and Kristie seconded to accept the Affiliation Task Force report with sincere gratitude as presented to the church council on Thursday, May 11, 2023. Motion carried and approved.

### Next steps:

- Instruct Kaylene Hoskins to send a brief letter to the congregation including the executive summary written by the Affiliation Task Force. Kaylene should also include this brief letter and executive summary in the newsletter.
- At the end of the letter/executive summary, include both a QR code and a link to the full report for access by the congregation.
- Have a few printed copies available at the Welcome desk on Sunday
- Inform congregation that they can request a hard copy of full report at Welcome Desk

### Other Business:

Tim Boettger has been hired on a half-time basis for preaching and will start on June 1st.

**Financial Update:**

It was determined that the Church Council needs to set guidelines for Welcome Home 10% Fund and Easter Special offering. This will be placed on a Council agenda in the near future.

Wayne moved and Nate seconded to approve the April 2023 Financial Report as presented by Craig Blanchard. Motion carried and approved.

**Old Business/New Business:**

Sturgis Parade float- Modest funds will be provided to the float committee in order that Nazareth can have a float in the parade again this year.

Next Council Meeting:Agenda:

Welcome Home 10% guidelines

Easter offering guidelines

Clarification on agreement with Chick Fil-A

Craig moved and Julie seconded to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

**Meeting adjourned:** 10:31 pm



## Council Minutes - June 6, 2023

**Present:** Chris Hansen, Nate Greiner, Julie Creeden, Kristina McBurney, Mike Francis, Kristie Lehman, Ron Martin, Craig Blanchard, Kaylene Hoskins, Mike Brost

**Present via conference call:** Wayne Jacobson

**Absent:** none

**Meeting called to order:** 7:05 pm

### **Updates:**

Craig moved and Nate seconded to approve the May 16, 2023 Church Council minutes. Motion carried and approved.

Craig moved and Julie seconded to approve the May 11, 2023 Church Council minutes. Motion carried and approved.

Council discussion regarding sharing Nazareth documents and opening up information meetings to other congregations. Nazareth council asks documents used by other congregations be sourced to Naz and will keep information meetings regarding our relationship with ELCA to members only.

### **Blessed Beginnings Update:**

Blessed Beginnings proposal to raise rates and increase staff wages needs to be approved by council.

### **Finance Update:**

Council clarified a gift of record as a gift to Nazareth funds and ministries.

Kristie moved and Ron seconded to give the Epic scholarship applicant the same amount he was given last year, up to \$2500 matching Epic scholarship. Motion carried and approved.

Chris moved and Kristie seconded to have Julie reach out to John Larson to write up a liability contract for Nazareth parking lot use by Deery and New Aldaya.  
Motion carried and approved

The council discussed the agenda for the June 7th and June 20th meetings.

Next meeting will be June 13, 6:30 pm

Wayne moved and Julie seconded to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried and passed.

**Meeting adjourned:** 10:41 pm

## **Council Minutes - June 13, 2023**

**Present:** Chris Hansen, Julie Creeden, Kristina McBurney, Mike Francis, Kristie Lehman, Ron Martin, Craig Blanchard, Wayne Jacobson, Kaylene Hoskins, Mike Brost

**Absent:** Nate Greiner

**Meeting called to order:** 6:30 pm

**Updates:**

Craig Blanchard moves to cancel the \$250,000 business loan at Banklowa and have Banklowa convert the \$750,000 business loan to a \$250,000 business loan. Kristie Lehman seconded. Motion passed.

The council entered executive session.

The council concluded the executive session.

**Meeting adjourned:** 10:15 pm

## **Council Minutes - July 11, 2023**

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

**Present through conference call:** Mike Francis, Nate Greiner

**Guest:** Marc Rath

**Meeting called to order:** 6:18 pm

### **Recommendation to review/approve Church Council minutes:**

Wayne Jacobson moved to approve the June 13, 2023 council minutes. Kristie Lehman seconded and motion passed.

### **Facility Director Update:**

Overview of Building and Grounds projects

- Phase 2 and 3 of parking lot project
- Skylight replacement in Education Hallway
- Worship Center Windows
- Worship Center Heat Exchanger
- Worship Center window shades
- Roof section replacement
- Sidewalks
- Floor machine

### **New Business:**

Robert's Rules of Order discussion with Rod Hamer

Agenda for July 16 vote meeting

Discussion of ballots, etc for the July 16 meeting

### **Financial Update:**

Craig Blanchard moved to approve the May financial reports. Chris Hansen seconded the motion and the motion passed.

Craig Blanchard moves to approve the June financial report. Ron Martin seconded the motion and the motion passed.

### **Updates and Reports by Committees:**

Wayne Jacobson moved to approve the \$1000 request from the Mission Committee. Julie Creeden seconded the motion and the motion passed.

### **Old Business/New Business:**

Make sure the Church Council's slide presentation from the June 20th meeting is on the Naz website.

Kristina moved to adjourn the meeting. Craig seconded the motion and the motion passed.

**Meeting adjourned:** 10:03 pm

## Council Minutes - August 15, 2023

**Present:** Kristie Lehman, Julie Creeden, Wayne Jacobson, Nate Greiner, Chris Hansen, Kaylene Hoskins, Mike Brost, Tim Boettger

**Conference call:** Craig Blanchard, Mike Francis, Kristina McBurney, Ron Martin

**Guest:** Kristin Swenson

The Council opened with Ephesians 6:10 - 20 - read by Pastor Mike B.

Pastor Tim B opened our meeting with prayer.

**Meeting called to order by Chris H – 6:50 p.m.**

Congregational Input: N/A

### **Recommendation to review/approve Church Council minutes:**

Wayne moved to approve the minutes from July 11th, 2023, Kristie seconded. Minutes were approved unanimously.

### **Committee reports: (see attached addendum to minutes for further info)**

**Worship & Music:** Wayne J is Council rep – By-laws state this committee must have a minimum of 6 members – Committee is in compliance.

**Core team:** Tim B will be added to this team – This committee is not listed in By-laws

**Blessed Beginnings:** Nate G is Council rep – Ashley Geisinger has resigned – By-laws state this committee must have a minimum of 6 members: 3 parents with children currently or formerly enrolled, and two more at-large. Nate will check to see if a current or former parent has been chosen yet to replace Ashley.

**Personnel:** Chris H is Council rep – By-laws state this committee must have a minimum of four members plus the Senior pastor and church administrator – this committee is in need of another member. The Council will seek out another member who may be interested in serving.

**Local missions:** Ron M is Council rep – There have been several resignations from this committee – By-laws state this committee must have a minimum of 6 members – the Council will seek at least 3 more members who may be interested in serving.

**Stewardship:** Craig B is Council rep – By-laws state this committee needs a minimum of 4 members – Julie C volunteered to serve as a member. The Council will seek at least 2 more members who may be interested in serving.

**Endowment:** Wayne J volunteered to be Council rep. Russ Curtis' and Paul Creeden's terms have expired. Al Schmiedel and Bill Kahler have been added as new members to replace Russ and Paul. Committee is in compliance.

**Finance:** Craig B is Council rep – By-laws state that CC treasurer plus a minimum of 3 additional members. Also the senior pastor, administrator, and Finance Manager shall be ex-officio members. Pete Vorhees has been added as a new member. Committee is in compliance.

**Seminary:** Julie C volunteered to be the new council rep – This committee is not listed in By-laws.

**US and World Missions:** Kristie L is Council rep – By-laws state this committee must have a minimum of 9 members – The Council will seek at least one more member to serve on this committee. Kristie reported that Missionary Mark Wolter visited from Japan and preached at Nazareth on August 8th.

Additionally, last Monday the Kits and Quilts group put together 713 school bags for Lutheran World Relief.

**Building and Grounds:** Nate G is Council rep – By-laws state this committee needs a minimum of 4 members. In addition, the church administrator shall be ex-officio and the Director for Building and Maintenance shall be advisory member. This committee is in compliance.

**Education:** Bylaws state this committee should have at least 6 members. Also, members of the staff who are directly responsible to this committee shall be advisory members.

**Worship Planning Team:** This committee is not listed in the By-laws.

**Kristin Swenson's report to the Council:**

Kristin concluded her work that was tasked to her by the Council. Her report was emailed to all Council members.

**Next steps:**

Discussion occurred regarding choosing a date for another vote for ELCA disaffiliation. Council will announce this vote, and then invite the congregation to come along and be the Church by kicking off all of the fall ministries together.

Discussion occurred regarding the best practice for selecting future hires at Nazareth.

Craig shared the financial reports from July. They will be approved at the next regularly scheduled Council meeting.

**Building and grounds update:**

Mark sent an aerial photo of all of Nazareth's roofs and what year they were last updated.

**Update from Interim Pastor, Mike B:**

The NELC Church picnic will be Sunday, September 10. There will only be one service that day at 10 a.m. and the picnic will immediately follow. All Council members are encouraged to help out in some way!

Mike and his leadership team have been working with the staff on the 100 year discipleship plan in addition to how to cover duties for vacant staff positions. The new staff org chart will be rolled out on Monday, August 21st. Mike would also like to have a six-month evaluation for his work thus far. He will ask that it be on the agenda for next month's council meeting.

**New Business:**

Discussion occurred regarding the NELC membership list. It is out of date and will need to be cleaned up as soon as possible. Many letters sent out for recent mailings come back "return to sender."

**Meeting adjourned:**

Kristie L moved to adjourn Nate G seconded. Meeting ended at 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Creeden (filling in for Kristina McBurney who joined the meeting via conference call)

## Council Minutes - August 21, 2023

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

**Conference call:** Mike Francis

**Guest:** Bishop Kevin Jones, Northeast Iowa Synod of the ELCA

Julie C opened our meeting time with prayer.

**Meet with the Bishop: – 7:00 p.m.**

Bishop Kevin Jones shared his thoughts on how the Council can best proceed knowing that we have a divided church in regards to the ELCA affiliation issue, with a 63.4% majority of the congregation desiring to disaffiliate with the ELCA. Discussion occurred, and the Bishop has agreed to help the Council appeal to the 36.6% minority of the members who voted to remain in the ELCA to consider coming together as a church because this kind of division simply will not work. He mentioned that it will be very difficult, if not impossible, for Nazareth to find an ELCA pastor who is willing to come to Nazareth given the current state of division within the congregation with the majority of our members wanting to disaffiliate. The Council thanked the Bishop for his visit and his willingness to help Nazareth move forward.

**Council Meeting called to order by Chris H –** After the Bishop left at 8:30, the Council meeting began at 8:40 p.m.

**Council Next Steps:**

Council's commitment is to remain true to who Nazareth really is according to our guiding documents, which have been in place and approved by the entire congregation for many years: Our [Confession of Faith](#) which is found in Article II in our current Bylaws, and our [Speaking the Truth in Love](#) document. Because of this commitment, the Council feels that we must persevere in our desire to disaffiliate with the ELCA, and will take the following action:

**Action Item:** Wayne moved that we call another vote at a time to be determined in 2024 to bring forth the same resolutions used at the July 16th meeting to disaffiliate with the ELCA and to affiliate with the NALC. As a Council, we will send a letter to the congregation explaining the details and briefly setting the direction we are taking. This motion was seconded by Julie. Motion passed.

The letter will be crafted by the end of this week in order to be sent out to all members no later than next week. Chris will ask the Bishop to preview this letter prior to sending.

Until January of 2024, the Council will place its sole focus on our ministry and mission and being the church together until January. Wayne shared Galatians 6:9 – **“Let us not become weary in**

**doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”** Even during this time of calling for another vote, we must not neglect our mission to be disciples and share the Gospel with those who do not know Jesus, as well as help those who do know Jesus to grow in their faith. The Council feels it is important to focus on starting all of our fall kick-off ministries well, prior to focusing on preparation for another vote. Other than sending the letter mentioned above to the congregation, the Council will not spend any additional time away from ministry and regular church business until January of 2024, when preparation for the vote will begin.

The Council will **not** currently be seating a call committee in search of a new Senior Pastor, but may consider putting together a task force to accomplish some data gathering regarding Nazareth’s history, however no decision has been made at this time.

Chris H appointed a sub-committee of the Council to work on defining exactly what is to be included in the document on which all staff and ministry volunteers will be required to sign-off, based on the recommendation of Kristin Swenson. Ron, Kristina, and Julie will work on pinpointing and summarizing this information and sharing it with Pastors Mike and Tim in order for them to clearly communicate the information with the staff.

Four Council seats will be open in January. Current appointed Council members, Kristina and Ron, can run again if they so choose. Craig and Mike F will be done with their terms. The Council will direct the nominating committee to bring forth four names to be on the slate of candidates for the Annual Congregational Meeting in January. Three of these named people will run for regular three-year terms, and one will run for a one-year term to finish an unexpired term of a former Council member who resigned.

**Meeting adjourned:**

Craig moved to adjourn – Kristina seconded. Meeting ended at 9:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Julie Creeden (filling in for Kristina)

## **Council Minutes - August 30, 2023**

**Present:** Kristie Lehman, Julie Creeden, Wayne Jacobson, Chris Hansen, Craig Blanchard, Kristina McBurney, Ron Martin, Mike Brost

**Conference call:** Mike Francis, Nate Greiner

**Meeting called to order:** 6:35 p.m.

### **Review of Minutes:**

8/15/2023 Council Minutes

Craig moved to approve, Wayne seconded. Motion carried.

8/21/2023 Council Minutes

Wayne moved to approve, Kristina seconded. Motion carried.

July Financial Report and Finance Committee Minutes

Wayne moved to approve, Kristina seconded. Motion carried.

Craig moved to approve investing \$241,766.33 in (3) Certificates of Deposit, Kristie seconded.

Wayne abstained. Motion carried.

Craig moved to spend committed Memorial Money as designated, Julie seconded. Motion carried.

Craig moved to transfer uncommitted Memorials of \$15,844.19 to the Mission Fund, Wayne seconded. Motion carried.

### **Old Business:**

Council discussed and edited the congregation letter regarding next steps after the July congregational meeting.

Chris requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Craig moved to adjourn, Wayne seconded. Motion carried.

**Meeting adjourned:** 9:55 p.m.



## **Council Minutes - September 19, 2023**

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

**Absent:** Mike Francis

**Meeting called to order:** 6:31 p.m.

**Congregational Input:** Mark and Deb Rhodes

### **Financial Update:**

Craig moved and Kristie seconded to accept the August Financial update. Motion carried. Craig moved to include the "Church Council Members from January 2021 to January 2024" document to the next Naz News. Wayne seconded the motion, motion carried. The next Finance Committee meeting is October 9th, 2023.

### **Review of Committee Minutes:**

Nathan moved to approve the Martinson bid for sidewalk repair, contingent upon ensuring the scope of work is comparable to the Peters bid, seconded by Julie. Motion carried.

### **Old Business/ New Business:**

Pastor Mike will look into having a New Member class in October 2023. Sam Madson will create a new tab on the website to archive past Church Council meeting minutes.

**Meeting adjourned:** 10:11 p.m.

Craig moved and Nate seconded to adjourn. Motion carried.

## Council Minutes - October 17, 2023

**Present:** Chris Hansen, Wayne Jacobson, Craig Blanchard, Kristina McBurney, Julie Creeden, Nate Greiner, Mike Francis (via phone), Kristie Lehman, Ron Martin.

**Staff Present:** Mike Brost, Tim Boettger, Kaylene Hoskins.

**Absent:** None.

**Dinner/Fellowship:** Council shared dinner together at 5:30 pm.

**Opening Prayer:** Pastor Mike read James 1:2-4 and James 1:19-21, ended in prayer.

**Call Meeting to Order:** Hansen called meeting to order at 6:24 pm. Read letter from Rich and Becky McBurney.

**Approval of Minutes:** Moved by Creeden, seconded by Blanchard to approve Council meeting minutes of September 19, 2023. Motion carried.

**Congregational Input:** Sue Roberts and Jim Glaspie.

**Council President's Report:** Boettger and McBurney presented their Student Ministry Assessment and Evaluation. Moved by Jacobson, seconded by Lehman to adopt the recommendations in Assessment and Evaluation. Motion carried.

**Executive Session:** Discussion about a new staff position.

**Interim Pastor's Report:**

- New member class in November.
- 100-year plan for entire life of a person.
- Nazareth in a healthy place, positive vibe in Worship Center.

**Interim Associate Minister's Report:** Family, discipleship, more junior high ministry at Nazareth.

**Financial Update:**

- September General Fund Revenues \$50,869.57 less than Expenses (shortage for September).
- Year-to-date General Fund Revenues \$14,470.24 more than Expenses (gain year-to-date).
- Year-to-date offering shortfall of \$171,397.
- Moved by Jacobson, seconded by Greiner to approve September Financial Report. Motion carried.
- Not good to use Mission Fund for General Fund.
- Need consistency between website and envelopes for special funds (Capital Improvement, Mission).
- Will review budget at December 2023 meeting.

**Updates / Reports by Committees:**

**Buildings and Grounds** – Modified Door #2 to be handicapped accessible.

**Personnel** – Needs more members.

**Local Missions** –

- \$1,000 from Mission Fund for Wings of Refuge.
- A/C funding request in 2024 if funding is available and need is still unmet.

**Seminary** –

- Pastor Bob will talk with students.
- Study and select seminaries for Nazareth. Make sure beliefs align with Nazareth.
- Committee not in Nazareth By-laws.

**Old Business / New Business:**

- Ministry Purpose Statement (MPS) to be included with all job descriptions. Reviewed and modified. Moved by Jacobson, seconded by McBurney to approve MPS. Motion carried.
- Christian Crusaders office location. Move from first floor to second floor education wing.
- Getty Christmas in December.
- May receive memorial for new sign on University Avenue.
- Creeden and Blanchard will be on Nominating Committee, to begin process of identifying candidates for Church Council election in January 2024.

**Motion to Adjourn / Closing Prayer:** Moved by Greiner, seconded by Lehman to adjourn at 10:32 pm. Motion carried.

## **Council Minutes – November 21, 2023**

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

**Via Conference Call:** Mike Francis

**Opening Devotion:** Isaiah 66:1-2, Pastor Mike

**Meeting called to order:** 6:15 p.m.

**Recommendation to approve Council minutes:**

Wayne moved and Kristie seconded to approve the October Council minutes. Motion carried.

**Congregational Input:** No congregational attendees

**Interim Pastor's Report:**

Mike continues to be encouraged during his time as an Interim Pastor and is sensing a shift in positivity at Nazareth and a positive shift in the atmosphere between services on Sunday mornings.

**Financial Update:**

Craig moved to invest \$100,00 in a 7-month CD and \$100,00 in a 11-month CD. Nate seconded the motion. Motion carried

Craig moved and Kristie seconded to approve the October Financial Report. Motion carried.

**Review of Committee Minutes:**

Blessed Beginnings

Building & Grounds

Endowment

Personnel

Local Missions: Christmas Baskets, Adopt A Family

US & World Missions:

Stewardship

Seminary

**Old Business/ New Business:**

The council reviewed the "Ministry Purpose Statement" and it was noted that the statement has been utilized for recent hires.

Office Space on second floor is being prepared for Christian Crusaders

Meg Husted will start full-time

Chris moved and Craig seconded to accept Marc's Facility report and empower Kaylene to make the final decision on the floor scrubbing machine up to the amount of \$15,000.

Health and Building Insurance Update

The Nominating Committee has met and identified candidates for the 2024 Church Council.

9:40 pm Council entered an executive session for an evaluation of Pastor Mike Brost.

**Meeting adjourned:** Kristina moved, Nate seconded to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 10:30 pm

## **Council Minutes - December 19, 2023**

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

**Via Conference Call:** Nate Greiner

**Opening Devotion:** Matthew 13:16, What is something that you've recently seen or heard that has been a blessing to you?

**Meeting called to order:** 6:10 p.m.

### **Recommendation to approve Council minutes:**

Wayne moved and Julie seconded to approve November 21, 2023 Church Council minutes. Motion carried.

**Congregational Input:** No congregational attendees

### **Council President's Report**

#### **New Business:**

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

Annual meeting agenda and report

2024 Budget for Council approval-Wayne moved to approve and Ron seconded to approve the 2024 Budget. Motion carried.

### **Interim Pastor's Report**

Mike shared that great strides have been made by the council and staff throughout the past year.

### **Financial Update**

Craig moved and Kristie Lehman seconded to approve the November 2023 Financial report.

### **Committee Updates & Reports**

Local Missions-Christmas food basket packing and distribution was a success.

### **Old Business/New Business**

Kaylene shared an update regarding Naz's food ministry and Barb Burbridge's upcoming transition.

Kristie moved and Craig seconded the motion to enter into an executive session to discuss Blessed Beginnings. Motion carried.

Executive Session began at 7:55 pm and ended at 8:37 pm.

Wayne moved to have an affiliation vote on Wednesday, April 17th at 6:30 pm. Julie seconded. Motion carried.

Wayne moved to set the second affiliation vote, if needed, for Wednesday, August 28th at 6:30 pm. Nate seconded. Motion carried.

The council discussed a stipend for Anne Mershon and Deb Blanchard.

**Meeting adjourned:** Kristie moved to adjourn and Julie seconded. Motion carried.

Tim ended the meeting in prayer at 9:00 pm.