

Congregational Council  
St. John's Lutheran Church  
March 19, 2024

**Members:** Pr. Pam Fickenscher, Pr. Jonathan Davis, Ellen Ellickson, Jill Enestvedt, Dan Franklin, Daniel Hanson, Andrea Hoff, Tamara Jackson, Eric Johnsrud, Judd Lohmann, Elaine Nesbit, Rob Quanbeck, Eric Sponheim, Alli Walters

**Members present:** Pr. Jonathan Davis, Ellen Ellickson, Jill Enestvedt, Dan Franklin, Daniel Hanson, Andrea Hoff, Tamara Jackson, Eric Johnsrud, Elaine Nesbit, Rob Quanbeck, Eric Sponheim, Alli Walters

**Not present:** Pr. Pam Fickenscher

Meeting was called to order at 7:06pm.

Opening: Dan Franklin opened us in prayer.

1. Motion to approve the February 27, 2024 Council Minutes was made by Eric Sponheim with the following amendment: Item 5.a. Motion was made by Eric Sponheim and seconded in this meeting by Eric Johnsrud. Motion to approve the Minutes with the above amendment passed unanimously.
2. Financial Report by Judd Lohmann, Treasurer
  - a. February offering was \$10,755 under budget. Year to Date offering is \$15,005 under budget. This is not of concern because it aligns with season trends and expectations.
  - b. Income from Designated Funds and St. John's Foundation will be released as boards make requests.
  - c. \$200K of CDs were rolled over in February and are now in significantly higher yield accounts (.05% vs. currently 5.05%)
  - d. The main church checking account has been converted to interest bearing and is expected to generate about \$400 monthly in interest.
  - e. The Sustaining Grace Campaign has already deposited 71,000. This is an excellent start. Should bills exceed funds available at a given time, St. John's Foundation will provide a short term unsecured loan for up to 100K at an interest rate of 6.5%.
    - i. Questions about the St. John's Foundation charging St. John's Church interest were raised, and the relationship between the Foundation and church was explained.
  - f. Motion to approve the financial report was made and seconded by council members (names not recorded).

3. Council Updates and Action Items

- a. Adult Ministries and Education: Rob Quanbeck brought a suggestion from the board for one outdoor service this summer followed by a meal. Ideas were shared. The board will continue to plan for this.
- b. Worship and Arts: The board is suggesting that we go to one service over the summer, for the wellbeing of our pastors and all. Exact dates will be worked out. Rob Quanbeck made the motion to have one Sunday service throughout the summer. Eric Johnsrud seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- c. Adult Ministries and Education chair Rob Quanbeck discussed details about the planned event “Finding our Way: Jews and Christians Thinking Through Scripture,” scheduled for Sunday, April 14 and Monday, April 15. The board requests up to \$3000 from St. John’s Fund in honorariums for outside speakers and a catered meal on Sunday, April 14. The community is also invited to this event. Eric Johnsrud made the motion to approve. Andrea Hoff seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- d. The Evangelism and Benevolence Board: Eric Sponheim is welcoming and encouraging all groups to submit photos of their various activities to [photos@stjohnsnorthfield.org](mailto:photos@stjohnsnorthfield.org) for use in church materials and our website. A discussion followed about the importance of gaining permission from adults and parents. In general permission will be sought once the photo is chosen to be used, although some youth families have opted out of their children being photographed for public use.
- e. The Benevolence and Social Concerns Board requests approval from the Council to release seminary scholarship funds of \$1300 (from the Foundation) to Luther Seminary for Kristin Parlo and Christi Hall-Holt. Andrea Hoff made the motion to approve. Jill Enestvedt seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- f. The Youth Board, Tamara Jackson and Pr. Jonathan have brought forward the idea of increasing the number of Wednesday evening services, as they have been meaningful to both adults and youth. The Council was receptive and a discussion followed. Concerns were expressed about not wishing to create additional burden on staff. The Council agreed that it was worth further discussion, and Pr. Jonathan encouraged the chairs to continue the conversation with their boards.

4. Pastor’s Report (included in materials and Pr. Jonathan reviewed for the Council)

5. Board Reports (included in materials submitted)

Additional Items -

- a. The Evangelism and Communications Board is looking for input on the scope of the board's responsibilities at St. John's. Several examples were given of communication help to the other boards. They will look at the church constitution and also be open to feedback.
- b. Youth Ministry and Education Board: Keep an eye out for Easter breakfast volunteer needs and others such as ushering. (Easter is during Spring Break this year).
- c. Business and Management Board will be doing inventory of computers for updates and reviewing policies as leases renew.
- d. Faith and Health Board shared location of new AED device (by the stairway on the lower level directly below Pr. Jonathan's office.)

6. New Business

- a. Andrea Hoff brought to the Council an invitation to join a coalition of local churches calling for a bilateral ceasefire in Gaza. Eric Johsrud followed by reading the ELCA conference of Bishops statement of March 3, 2024, calling for a bilateral ceasefire in Gaza. Eric Johnsrud made a motion that the Council of St. John's Lutheran Church supports the ELCA Conference of Bishops statement calling for a bilateral ceasefire in Gaza. Michelle Kramer-Prevost seconded. After much discussion Eric Johnsrud made a motion to table the motion pending dissemination of the Bishop's statement to the congregation. Elaine Nesbit seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Pr. Jonathan offered to confer with Pr. Pam and Dan Franklin, and make a plan for how to communicate with the congregation before the next Council meeting.

Future Dates:

April Board Night: **April 9, 2024/ 7:00pm**

April Church Council Meeting: **April 23, 2024/ 7:00pm**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:08pm.

Respectfully submitted by Elaine Nesbit