

## **St. John-St. Matthew-Emanuel Lutheran Church**

### **Virtual Council Meeting on Zoom – Tuesday, November 14, 2023**

**Present:** Marc Youngblood, Allison Struthers, Andrew Kjoller, Anne Voorhies, Jolynn Johnson, Lynda Anderson, Katherine Anderson, Laura Gruenberg, Deb Maltby, Tammy Johnson

A quorum was present

**Excused Absence:** Jodi Cook, Fran Onne-Fong.

**Prayer:** Opening prayer was led by Marc Youngblood

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 PM

**Acting Secretary:** Anne Voorhies

**Approval of Agenda:** A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the agenda as presented.

**Approval of Minutes:** A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the minutes of the October 10, 2023 meeting as amended.

#### **Reports:**

**President's Report:** Attendance has been holding up but was down on Nov. 5<sup>th</sup> due to the NYC Marathon and a number of members attending the retreat at Koinonia. Attendance was up the following week due to baptism of Dan Vizzini's daughter and All Saints Sunday. Payment has been made for the Youth Gathering and the Senior Center has submitted a report detailing their activities and noting that Jackie Eradiri, Director of the Senior Center, is submitting a SNAP grant for the garden behind the old parsonage.

**Finance Report:** Tammy Johnson, Treasurer, reported that we are still taking in less income than budgeted. September income receipts were again lower than expected. Andrew Kjoller, Vice President, stated that expenses are up "normally" but our property insurance increased 10% as well. Tammy indicated that she would have to withdraw funds from the investment account to pay the upcoming insurance premium as we don't have enough cash on hand to cover it. This has been an ongoing problem. Andrew noted that during the pandemic, our expenses were lower and we had PPE loans that were converted to grants, which helped keep deficits down. All acknowledged that stewardship has not been done over the last several years and a push is needed.

**Stewardship:** The church has not had a stewardship drive in several years. We need to convey to the congregation why the money is needed beyond "we need more money" and what the benefits will be, e.g. additional programs. Andrew Kjoller, Lynda Anderson, and Marc Youngblood will make up the committee to work on a stewardship plan.

Concern was expressed that Koinonia fundraising which raised over \$5000 was supposed to have started after the stewardship drive.

**Youth Group:** The Youth Group held a bake sale after church on November 18, 2023. Lyla McAdams, Youth Minister, reported that the Lunch and Paint fundraiser went well and made over \$900.

**Property:** The door into the Senior Center handicap bathroom, the side door to the Senior Center, the front doors to the church and the Parsonage screen door were all repaired. It was also noted that we are looking at a higher windstorm deductible on our property insurance.

### **Unfinished & Continuing Business:**

**Bookkeeper Search:** The search for a bookkeeper has been unsuccessful to date. The current bookkeeper will be done in December. His software isn't downloadable into QuickBooks and he recommended ParishSoft. Another system looked into was prohibitively expensive. Tammy Johnson will try to get information on another system. Allison Struthers suggested that she will reach out to her former church as the work can be done remotely.

**Banners:** Lynda Anderson reported that no funds have been spent to date. With \$2000 already raised and utilizing the existing poles, the potential cost will be greatly reduced.

### **New Business:**

**Christmas Tree Sale:** The sale will be on Saturday, December 9<sup>th</sup> and we need to start marketing the Tree Sale. It was suggested that we advertise to Park Slope Parents (PSP) and Good Neighbors of Park Slope (GNPS). Tammy Johnson set up Zelle on our bank account so that people can use it to pay for trees, baked goods, etc. Allison Struthers and Jolynn Johnson will collaborate on creating posts. Farah Franqui and Deborah Maltby will post on PSP. The proceeds of the sale will go to Lutheran World Relief and CHIPS, our local soup kitchen serving the homeless & needy.

**Personnel:** We need a Personnel Committee to develop a review assessment of employees and procedures. We also need a protocol for cases in which the Pastor is incapacitated. While things have gone pretty smoothly during Pastor Parsons' recovery, it would be helpful to have guidelines. Tammy Johnson will work on this.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM with the Lord's Prayer.

**Next Meeting:** The next regular meeting of the Council is scheduled for 7:30 PM on Tuesday, December 12, 2023.