

All Saints Lutheran Church Council Minutes June 18, 2019 at 6:30 pm

Council Members: Pastor Eric Aune, Andy Bronczyk, Mike Fasching, Tim Sauer (absent), Jeff Schmidt, Al Steinhagen, Shelley Jagow, Mike McPadden, Tom Simmons, Cathy Bahls, Melissa Barthel, Stacy Neubarth (absent), Lois Panning

- I. Tom called the meeting to order
- II. Devotions: Eric
 - c. Devotion: Ephesians 4:1-6, 11-13: I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, 3 making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

Romans 12:5: "So we who are many are one body in Christ, and individually we are members of one another."

- III. Discussion regarding June Congregational meeting
 - a. Discussion led by Eric and his notes are as follows

A Healthy No Vote

1. On Tuesday, April 16 the council passed the 2019-2020 budget for the congregation to vote on at the annual meeting June 2. After discussion the vote was taken and the budget passed with raises for Darcy and me, 7-6. The purpose of every budget is to reach more people for Jesus Christ and to minister to needy people in our community and world—as our mission statement says All Saints purpose is to make more disciples and to make more of a difference. The salaries supported in the budget for Gerry, Judy, Jane, Chris, Darcy and I are a vital part of fulfilling our mission.

2. From April 16 to June 2, no council member came to me, or to the whole church council to express any objection to the budget that was passed. No member of All Saints came to me or the church council to express any objection to the budget and finally no council member informed me or the whole church council that any member had approached them with objections to the budget. If any council member in good conscience could not support the budget or heard from members who could not support the budget then at our May 21 meeting that information should have been shared and a solution or amendment to the budget should have been offered and voted on. In 38 years of ministry I have never had a church council not support a majority vote whether it was by one vote or by a vote I did not agree or others disagreed with.

3. What happened between April 16 and June 2 is unclear. Andy told me he had contacted a few families to come and vote so that the council "could get clear direction on the budget." To get a clear direction regarding the budget then the whole congregation should have been contacted and not select few..

4. Sadly, at the congregational meeting June 2 the focus of the budget became Darcy's salary increase. Had any council member who could not support the budget spoken to me and the church council we would have strongly encouraged you not to lift up one staff person as the reason to vote against the budget. All Saints has never been and never will be a congregation that operates in such a way. If reductions are made they do not rest upon one staff person they are across the board.

This became all the more painful for Darcy whose salary is 25% below the minimum synod guidelines (no full-time staff have received guidelines since 2005) and who has taken on the \$75,000 job of our former Faith Formation Director for a time which was expected to conclude by December of 2018, but now will continue into 2020. No one would disagree that she has done a tremendous job. For all Darcy has done for All Saints, as Office

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and Business Administrator, Financial Secretary, Sunday School, WOW, Confirmation, VBS, Prayer Partners, for the Building Team, Building and Grounds and Finance she deserved the common courtesy, the decency of being told that her salary increase would become the focus of the congregational meeting.

It is easy to vote no on a budget. The hard work lies in offering a solution. Over the years we have had people who objected to the budget and they were also asked to offer a solution--they had none. If I or any member of the council or congregation had been told of the effort to defeat the budget then we would have asked for a solution. What was the new plan for Darcy's salary? None was offered at the meeting. The budget simply became a win/lose proposition and when the budget becomes a win/lose everyone loses.

At our new member orientation last Tuesday night every new member spoke of the spirit of love and hospitality that drew them to All Saints. All Saints has had disagreements before but as the constitution says the responsibilities of the church council are to "maintain supportive relationships with the pastors and staff" and "to promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill, and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor and foster mutual understanding. What has set All Saints apart from other congregations is that we have been able to do that and with God's help we will again.

Finally every council, congregation and pastor face moments where we forget who is in control—God. For me the sad part of the meeting included not only the treatment of Darcy, but that only one person spoke of how God has blessed this church with everything we have ever needed. The first part of our mission statement says that we "Celebrate Grace." That means we look at our church and our lives and see all the ways God has blessed us. Our theme song for Bible School began: "Where ever you lead me, I'm going to follow. I'm trusting you God. You are good!" God has been so, so, so, so, good to All Saints. We have a brand new million dollar building that will be paid off in 12 years or sooner. Our congregation continues to grow and grow and grow and so does our giving and we have a balanced budget. Looking to God first along with figures, formulas, statistics and numbers is the only way this church council and congregation and pastor can dispel fear, doubt, despair and hopelessness that the devil uses to destroy Christ's church.

Now briefly to a new pastor I said at the April meeting and the May meeting that calling a new pastor will require the adoption of a new budget. Simple math tells us that we have supported for 22 years a Faith Formation Director whose most recent salary and benefits totaled \$75,000. Over the next year as Judy and I receive Medicare our health premiums will drop by \$16,000. In addition we have nearly \$6,000 in savings for a new pastor and a projected budget surplus of some \$20,000 and the Gratitude and Generosity Team will launch a campaign to help fund a new pastor. With the money given to support a former staff member, plus the money in savings, plus the savings in health insurance premiums, plus the \$20,000 budget surplus we are off to a great start. If people have questions about calling a new pastor have them talk to me.

In the interest of providing a budget so that we can Celebrate Grace, Make Disciples, Make a Difference and create a congregational climate of peace and goodwill, and in support of Darcy I move that we amend the current budget to include a \$2.50 raise an hour from her current \$21.64 to \$24.14, halfway to her minimum guideline of \$26.50 and also include a \$3,000 thank you gift all given retroactively from June 1, 2019 to April 30, 2020.

b. Discussion with all of council

Al discussed that he expressed some concerns at the April council meeting and no one was willing to have a good discussion about it. He had his faith questioned by some council members instead. It was agreed upon that better communication within the council needs to occur going forward.

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Melissa questioned how staff compensation was covered in previous years. Christin's compensation has been off the books since ~October, and it is unclear why the Mission and Ministry fund did not have a balance due to the lesser staff compensation total. Especially considering the giving has not changed much from last year compared to the year prior. It was expressed that being out of the church last summer and worshipping in the high school impacted the Mission and Ministry fund. Plus, additional fundraising campaigns for the new building (e.g., new chairs) probably consumed any extra giving potential from the congregation.

Further discussion and options on how to provide Darcy with a raise was discussed. Andy proposed a \$2.00 raise now and the \$.50 and \$3,000 bonus in December if doing so would not cause the Mission and Ministry fund to no longer be balanced (i.e., Mission and Ministry needs to be positive and we will not borrow from the savings to do so). Other council members felt that more should be provided now.

The discussion of a new Associate Pastor was then discussed. One of the main concerns of the members that came and voted no was that there is no money in the budget to consider the new Associate Pastor that we will be starting to look for very soon.

Eric stated that they hope to have 10 applicants for new Associate Pastor by Sept. Need approval by Bishop. Interviews begin, possibly by November a call could be issued. It was agreed upon that considering \$25,000 in the M&M budget for the Associate Pastor would be good.

Further discussion on salary compensation was discussed and then agreed upon.

Action Item: \$3,000 in backpay for Darcy, dependent on a balanced Mission and Ministry budget existing in December (i.e., Mission and Ministry needs to be positive and we will not borrow from the savings to do so).

Eric made a Motion to Amend the budget that was proposed to the congregation in June:

- \$2.50 hourly raise for Darcy retroactive June 1st.
 - Associated compensation costs will scale appropriately (e.g., health care, retirement social security)
- \$25,000 line item addition to the budget for an associate pastor Under M&M budget bucket.

Motion to second – Cathy

Unanimous vote. Meeting adjourned.
Next meeting July 16. No meeting in August