

**Minutes for Annual Meeting
First Lutheran Church
Blair, Nebraska**

**Annual Meeting of the Congregation
LIFE Center
January 28, 2024**

1) CALL MEETING TO ORDER

- a) Current Council President, Jim Petersen called the meeting to order at 10:40 AM. Pastor Glen shared an opening prayer.

2) INTRODUCTIONS

- a) Jim introduced the Executive Team which consists of himself as President, Vice President Deb Katt, Secretary Gail Persson, and Treasurer Chad Leggott. John Mark Nielsen was also introduced as the parliamentarian for today's meeting.

3) ESTABLISH QUORUM

- a) Pursuant to Section C10.04 of First Lutheran Church's Constitution, ten percent of voting members shall constitute a quorum. Furthermore, Section C8.02c of the Constitution defines voting members as those confirmed members who have communed and contributed in the current or preceding calendar year.
- b) Since the total number of members who have communed and contributed to First Lutheran Church during 2023 and January 2024 is 567, ten percent of that would be 57 members. There are currently 70 voting members present this morning, either in-person or on-line via Google Meets. Quorum of the 2024 annual meeting has been met.
- c) Jim explained that if congregation members make motions or second any motion to please state their name for the meeting notes.

4) APPROVAL MEETING MINUTES

- a) Annual Meeting, January 29, 2023
 - i) The minutes of the January 29, 2023 meeting had been made available to the congregation on page 4 of the Annual Report as well as on First Lutheran's website.
 - ii) Lorie Thomas made a motion to approve the minutes as written; Ann Grinbergs seconded; motion passed unanimously.
- b) Special Meeting of the Congregation, October 14, 15 & 18th 2023
 - i) Congregation members were referred to the Annual Report for the minutes from the special congregational meeting that was held in October 2023 for the purpose of approving changes to the Church Constitution.
 - ii) Trudy Hutton made a motion to approve the minutes as written; Jeff Smith seconded; motion passed unanimously.

5) PRESENTATION BY THE CALL COMMITTEE

- a) Melody Dubon, Chair of the Call Committee provided a summary of the journey of the call committee as we continue our search for a new Senior Pastor for First Lutheran.
 - i) After the Ministry Site Profile was completed last fall, the committee received candidate names in October and interviews began in November. They have interviewed some great candidates and have had some great discussions, but the process takes time. She requests that the congregation surround the Call Committee with their prayers as they continue on this journey.

6) YEAR IN REVIEW

a) President's Report:

- i) Jim summarized his comments that appear in the Annual Report. Highlights include the following:
 - 1) Call Process for a New Pastor for First Lutheran
 - 2) Development of the Safety Committee
 - 3) Emphasis on Church Committees
 - 4) Revision of the Constitution
 - 5) Celebration of Pastor Glen's 30th Anniversary of his Ordination
 - 6) Review Church Finances/Cash Flow

Jim thanked the church staff; Erika Cada, Vince Krysl and Dawn Andersen for all of their help this past year. He also thanked Pastor Glen for his leadership and wisdom as Interim Pastor.

He also recognized the contributions of Council Members, Rex Pfeil, Tracy Gross, Tristan Claussen and Rylan Blattert. These members have completed the terms for which they were elected. Jim will also be completing his term as a Council Member and wanted to thank all of the Council Members for their support as he served as Council President.

b) Pastor's Report

- i) Pastor Glen summarized his report printed in the Annual Report, highlighting the following points:
 - 1) We need faithful servants and more of them
 - 2) We need more faithful givers and more of them.
 - 3) We need more time together
 - 4) We need leadership
 - 5) We need engagement

7) **APPROVE CHANGES TO BYLAWS TO ESTABLISH GIFTS AND MEMORIALS COMMITTEE**

- a) The gifts and memorials situation had not been addressed for several years. This left many gifts/memorials that have been sitting on hold for 10+ years, or funds with no designation.
 - i) To rectify the situation, dormant 'named' funds have been moved into areas where they can be used. Some were moved into restricted funds for music or property, and a number of other things.
 - ii) There were still four or five funds that we still have contact with the families so we are still working on where we can best use that money with the help of the families
 - iii) We then identified some projects for using some of the discretionary funds, one of which is the replacement of the ovens in the kitchen.
 - iv) This process of reviewing the gifts and memorials brought up the fact that the Gifts and Memorials Committee, according to the Church's bylaws, is a sub committee of the Vision Committee. So Council is proposing an update to the bylaws that will create a standing committee called Gifts and Memorials for which the congregation will nominate and elect members for a 3 year term.
 - v) A policy procedure has also been created and can be found on page 8 of the Annual Report, under the Revision of the Bylaws of First Lutheran Church of Blair.
 - vi) This proposed revision has been presented by the Church Council for approval by the congregation.
 - vii) The revisions were unanimously approved.

8) **NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT**

- a) Eric Filows presented the slate of nominees as follows:
 - i) **Congregation Council Members** (3-year term) Elect 3
 - 1) Ashley Rasmussen
 - 2) Angie Hemminger
 - 3) Ann Hansen
 - ii) **Youth Representatives** (1-year term)
 - 1) Maddie Kempcke

- 2) Blythe Knight
- iii) **Nominating Committee 2024**
 - 1) Loren Havekost
 - 2) Jeanette Moeller
 - 3) Judy Brehm
- iv) **Synod Assembly Voting Members** (Kearney, NE; June 1 & 2, up to 6 candidates)
 - 1) John Mark Nielsen
 - 2) Dawn Nielsen
 - 3)
 - 4)
 - 5)
 - 6)
- v) **Christian Growth Board** (5-year term, meets quarterly)
 - 1) Kurt Loseke
- vi) **Gifts and Memorials** (3-year term)
 - 1) Layne Lueders
- b) There were no further nominations from the floor. Jim noted that the list of synod delegates is not complete, so the Council will work on 'drafting' individuals before June.
- c) The slate of candidates was presented for congregational vote and the vote to accept was unanimous.

9. BUSINESS OF THE CHURCH

- a) Financial Review Report – Chad Leggott, Church Treasurer was unable to be at the meeting so Jim Peterson presented his report.
 - i) The church collected \$477,000 in revenue to the General Fund in 2023. The budget was \$523,000 making us short \$46,000. However, total expenses were budgeted at \$537,000 and actual expenses came in at \$513,000. Thanks to the staff for finding ways to minimize expenses as much as possible. This resulted in a \$36,000 loss for the year. While this is not ideal, First Lutheran remains in a good financial position as we begin 2024. The largest expense continues to be salaries, utilities and property items.
 - ii) Restricted accounts — Contributions to restricted accounts are given with a specific intended use. Outside of the Christian Growth Fund, First Lutheran brought in a revenue of approximately \$244,000 to these accounts, compared to expenses of \$242,000. Netting \$2000 for the year. The largest contributions were made to fund midweek meals, property and youth travel.
 - iii) The staff continues to do a good job of looking for different ways to fund these special programs, which is very much appreciated.
 - iv) Christian Growth Fund — the Christian Growth Fund grew by \$67,000 in 2023 due to a positive market. This growth is after the Christian Growth Fund spent approximately \$50,000 towards programs in 2023.
 - v) Balance Sheet — The overall cash at year end 2023, was down approximately \$32,000 compared to the end of 2022. The building loan balance has been reduced to \$103,000 and with regular payments of \$12,755, the loan will be paid off in July/August 2024.
 - vi) At the end of January 2024 the balance of the building fund account is \$22,000. We will need additional funding in this account to ensure that the loan can be paid in 2024.
- b) Rex Pfeil made a motion to accept the financial report as presented; Tim Grinbergs seconded; motion passed unanimously.

10. Approval of Line of Credit

- a) The Church has a \$50,000 Line of Credit at Washington County Bank, which helps in terms of cash flow when needed. We did not have to use the credit line in 2023.
- b) Roger Hohensee made a motion to approve the line of credit; Deb Katt seconded; motion passed unanimously.

11. 2024 Mission Plan (Budget)

- a) 2024 Budget

- i) Jim reviewed the proposed budget for the 2024 operating year. The Vision Committee worked closely with the staff to come up with this budget.
 - *Budgeted revenue: \$514,500
 - *Budgeted expenses: \$514,268
 - ii) The total budgeted expenses for 2024 are actually lower than the actual expenses for 2023. While insurance and utility costs continue to sky-rocket, other factors are lower and the staff is constantly looking for ways to lower operating costs.
- b) Rex Pfeil made a motion to accept the proposed budget; Jane Heinrich seconded; motion passed unanimously.

12. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE PRESENTATION

- a. Staff Recognition: Deb Katt called Eli Cada, Trisan Claussen, Chris Mommsen, Chele Garder, Paul Grinbergs and Tim Grinbergs forward. She read a brief bio of each of the staff members including the various duties they perform for First Lutheran. These individuals serve First Lutheran as our part-time staff, and help keep things running smoothly. To show our appreciation of their dedication, each individual was presented with a one-time bonus.

13. ADJOURNMENT

- a. Pastor Glen led us in the Lord's Prayer as we closed the meeting.
- b. Roger Hohensee made a motion to close the meeting; Tracy Gross seconded; meeting adjourned 11:23 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Gail Persson, Secretary