

New Song Council Meeting

November 24, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 6:02pm by Holli Spangler. The council met at church observing social distancing protocols. Present were Pastor Paul, Art Clayton, Doug Gab, Neal Husak, Holli Spangler, Lauren Thomas, Stephanie Wasano, and Melissa Williams. Absent was Larry Edsall. Shani Fjelsted was present to review the updated 2021 budget.

Pastor Paul opened with a devotional reading and a prayer.

Pastor Paul's Report:

Deaths: None

Memorial service: None

Weddings: Matt and Jessika Simo - 11/3 (renewal);

Allen and Anne Schroeder - 11/11;

Thomas and Margaret Willmore - 11/11;

Christopher Plaat and Hedia Bahri-Plaat - 11/22

New members: None

Birth: None

Baptism: None

Worship (Connecting to Christ)

The season of Advent is upon us, a time of hope and anticipation as we come across the darkness of winter. Covid-19 has truly changed the landscape of our life together, and it is important amid our current struggles to lift the light of Christ which brings us renewed hope. Our sermon series will look at the Prophets of Hope as we near the Christmas season. There will be Christmas services on 12/23 and 12/24 at 3:00, 5:00, 7:00, and 9:00pm. Pastor David Miller will preach the weekend after Christmas Day.

We will have sign-up sheets for each of the Christmas Eve worship services available during worship on Sundays. We would like people to reserve a space at one of the 8 services.

Advent is also a season of preparation, preparing for the coming of Christ. We at New Song are in a season of preparation as well—preparing budgets, annual meetings and the like. “Simple Church” encourages alignment...a clear sense of our purpose, which is worship, grow, serve and invite. Let us together imagine a post-Covid-19 worshipping community filling the sanctuary and let us prepare for that day!

Holly Swanson and Liz Baldizan both preached in November, and we are grateful!

During midweek on Wednesdays in December we will have a prayer and praise worship service accompanied by Gershon on the guitar. All are invited!

Grow (Connecting to One Another)

The Stewardship team, under the leadership of Melissa Williams, completed most of its campaign, culminating with Consecration and Cabaret Weekend on 11/14-15. Pastor Marta preached and the Cabaret team organized a festive celebration.

Serve (Connecting to Community)

I hosted the Lutheran clergy this month for fellowship. Congregations struggling with how to effectively be church was a strong theme.

The military ministry completed its clothing drive, and Toys for Tots is in process during Advent.

Invite (Connecting to Community)

We are facing challenging times as a congregation. I am reminded of Noah's Ark that floated around the floodwaters for 40 days, unable to see land until the bird came with an olive branch. We don't know when or how Covid-19 will cease to dominate our lives, but it will. As we begin this Advent journey, let us keep vigilant, preparing for the coming of Christ into the world yet again, and preparing for a new day at New Song.

Financial Report:

Neal presented the end-of month financial report for October 2020. With a mixture of on-line and in-person services, our average attendance was still down when compared to last year due to continued concerns regarding the Covid-19 virus. Our monthly revenue from offerings was up 33% from last year, while our year-to-date revenue is down 2% from last year, but on track for our 2020 budget. We are blessed with the faithful tithing of our congregation that continues to support our church and its mission.

Old Business:

1. Neal and Shani presented the update of the New Song 2021 budget for review. This budget had the results of the Stewardship Campaign, which was down \$60,000 from 2020. This caused a \$60,000 deficit for the proposed 2021 budget. Some adjustments were made to expense line items that brought the deficit down to approximately \$25,000. Neal and Shani informed the council that Neal has been in ongoing discussions with MFI, our mortgage lender, on renegotiating terms of the APR portion of our mortgage. Currently we have approximately 3.5 years left on the APR portion with a rate of 5.25%. The current proposal is a 5 year term with a rate of 4.35% and a \$4,500 fee. This would lower our monthly payment by approximately \$1,100. The council approved a motion to refinance (Doug motioned and Stephanie seconded) and set a cap of up to \$5,000 for the fee. This savings was part of the reduction of the deficit to approximately \$25,000. At this time no adjustments were made to salaries. The council approved the modified 2021 budget (Neal motioned and Art seconded).
2. We have added one new small group that will begin in the new year. We also have some folks who have expressed interest. Many of the groups are waiting to begin their first meeting until the new year in hopes that Covid will have lessened by then.
3. Due to the current Covid-19 situation it was decided to cancel the Christmas concert. On Saturday, November 28th, at 6pm there will be the lighting of the outdoor Christmas tree, along with the singing of carols.

4. The council verified the dates of the events leading up to our 2021 annual meeting that will be held on Sunday, January 24, at 11:15am. The Town Hall meeting will be Saturday, January 16, at 3pm. The budget will be available to review and the formal annual meeting announcement will go out to the members of the church on January 7. The council will meet on January 12 to finalize any outstanding items for the annual meeting.

New Business:

1. Pastor Paul reminded us that as we look to the new year, it is a time to prepare for renewal of life. Part of that preparation is to develop an invitation/evangelism strategy to incorporate this aspect of our simple church. He spoke with Pastor Marta, and she is willing to help lead and develop an evangelism strategy in the new year. We will be launching our Simple Church process at the annual meeting to launch our ...Worship, Grow, Serve, Invite. The team will explore how to bring new people into New Song, including what practices to use and what strategies to develop. Pastor Paul's goal is to have the team organized by the end of January 2021. This team will also look at how to improve our giving strategy.

Liaison Reports:

1. Music/AV:

No report for November.

2. Facilities:

Doug reported on the RPFs that he had received for the landscaping need. The three bids were: Arbor Landscaping at \$1,400 per month; Jose Ramirez at \$1,800 per month; and Brightview Landscape Services at \$1,450 per month. The council approved the recommendation to go with Brightview (Art motioned and Lauren seconded). Brightview will also do bush removal (rosemary bushes) from the parking lot in the December timeframe. Their cost for removal was half of the other two companies. The increase in our monthly expense for landscaping was incorporated into the approved 2021 budget.

3. Academy:

Larry shared Rachele's report: November has been a tough month due to Covid exposures, between holidays and Covid shutdowns we have hardly been at school this month. We have closed twice for Covid exposure, the first week of November was an isolated incident with one student, we closed for 3 days to complete cleaning and finish the two week closure mandate since we were notified late of the child coming down with it. Our latest has been a 4 day closure last week. We are closed the week of Thanksgiving for Fall break, so that will take care of the two week mitigation period. We are hoping to come back on Nov. 30th and be able to finish out the year. With cases rising, that will be an almost impossible feat but, we are all working hard on that goal. The teachers

have been very cooperative and have been great at switching to virtual learning at very short notice. I really commend them for their efforts.

The academy partnered with Chick-Fil-A on Eastern and Lone (which also happens to be owned by one of our academy families) to raise \$200.00 for the academy in fundraising funds. We have started an ornament fundraiser with another small business, All Fired Up. Children will paint ornaments that will then be fired and given back. The school will raise \$2.00 per ornament sold. We are hoping to add a garden to the academy with funds raised.

Due to Covid we are also having a very hard time obtaining a sub list, with everyone's children being out of school we are forced to find people who do not have children. This is a large feat, but we are working on it. Thankfully, we have not needed a sub yet this year.

Our 3 yr old class is thriving, we have more enrollments for January and may have a need to open another class to compensate. We have 27 children in our Kinder class and our Pre-K class is almost full with one space left. We do have a very small 4s class which we are working on getting enrollments.

Our distance learning lab has come to a close and will no longer be offered. The community room has been cleaned out and is ready for use by other programs. Due to the unstable nature of the school district and Charter schools decision to provide part time classes our enrollment suffered. We just cannot afford to keep the program going with low enrollment and the added costs of internet that will run all of the chrome books the children need.

We are looking forward to Covid cases minimizing in the new year and life getting back to normal or at all possible.

4. Nominating Committee:

Stephanie reported that the nominating committee (Sheila Siino, Sue Clark, Michelle Gab, and Holly Swanson) have secured nominations for the three council positions that will need to be filled. Holli Spangler, Doug Gab, and Melissa Williams have volunteered to continue to serve on the council. The nominating committee has two positions on their committee that need to be filled. The slate should be complete in December and the vote will be held at the annual meeting scheduled for January 24th, 2021.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:04pm, followed by reciting the Lord's Prayer.

The council decided to cancel our December meeting, which was scheduled for Friday, December 18th at 6pm. Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, January 12, at 6pm.

Respectfully submitted, Melissa Williams – Recording Secretary