**Lebanon Lutheran Church Council Minutes - Tuesday November 14 @ 6:30 PM** - In person in church lounge and via Zoom

**In Attendance:** President Cheri Crouch, Financial Secretary Curt Crouch, Treasurer Terry Beekman, Brian Jaekel, Laura Hollister, Al Wheeler, Sarah Schmalz, Secretary Meg Eaton, Pastor Doug Ogden

Cheri called meeting to order @ 6:25 PM.

Cheri called for the **Agenda Review**. Cheri noted that the fire extinguisher trainer canceled tonight’s training (Urgent/New Business #1). Agenda accepted as amended.

**Opening Devotion**: Brian shared selections from one of his favorites, the *Sports Bible.* He has found several inspirational passages in the book. He quoted Frank Reich, the former quarterback of the Buffalo Bills. Coach Reich wrote he is humbled by Christ’s sacrifice, and that being a strong Christian for him means knowing that everything he accomplishes is through Christ. He has come to know that football is not the most important thing, even if it is one of the vehicles for him to live out his faith. He sees God’s grace as GRACE: God’s Riches At Christ’s Expense.

Future devotions: December, Terry. January, Meg

Participants shared **recent signs of God’s grace.**

**Secretary’s Minutes:** Council reviewed the October minutes. Al moved, Sarah seconded, and minutes were approved as written.

**Budget Planning** (moved up from New/Urgent Business #2 for scheduling): Treasurer Terry Beekman presented two draft budgets to the Council, one low, keeping Pastor’s salary frozen, and one high, raising Pastor’s salary to Synod Guidelines. Due to budget issues Pastor has volunteered to keep his salary frozen for the second year in a row. Unless income improves Terry recommends that we are not in a position to follow Synod Guidelines as other areas of the budget have also been frozen or eliminated with the exception of a 3.2% increase for Margaret’s COLA. Council will vote on the budget when more income and expense numbers are in.

Lengthy discussion on areas of the budget that might need to be tweaked: i.e. no more Living Lutheran charges. Monica’s health insurance numbers will increase and have not arrived. Bell choir director and choir pianist stipend totals seem low.

**Pastor’s Report**: New Member classes start at 9AM in January. Meg will put notice in the Weekly. The sign on Division was too small to be seen so idea to move it was dropped. Musicians have been lined up and Advent Vespers will start Wednesday December 6th and continue December 13th and 20th. Potluck at 6:00 PM followed by Evening Prayer at 7:00 PM. Sleigh Ride is Sunday January 21st. See Pastor’s Report for more details.

**Financial Reports:** Curt reported on church finances. Budgeted expenses are on target at 82.83% with goal of 83.33%. Income is still down but the end of the year tends to raise this number due to annual givers who give in December. This does create an issue for accurate planning. Curt reviewed the status of a couple of accounts, including giving the old Land Contract account to Quilting and managing Swim Lessons income next summer.

**New or Urgent Business:**

1. **Fire Extinguishers:** canceled
2. **Budget Planning:** moved up on Agenda, see above item
3. **Complete Nominations for Ballot:** Bill B. has agreed to be on the Financial Compliance Review Committee. Jenna B. has agreed to be on the Endowment Committee and Becky W. has agreed to be on Endowment for another term. All Usher Team members have agreed to return (Terry B., John P., Jim K.). All Council members eligible for re-election have agreed to run again (Laura H., Sarah S., Wietse S.). Michele W. has agreed to chair the Altar Guild again. Barb and Doug A. are considering being our remote Synod Delegates for 2023.
4. **Thrivent Action Cards**: Curt has applied for and received a Thrivent Action Card for the Christmas tree and greenery. Meg’s card used for the Hay Ride can have the balance applied to children’s programming and supplies. More cards could be used for winter events like Lumberjacks Hockey, Movie Night, and Sleigh Ride to sponsor participation but card applicants were not identified.
5. **Calendar:** Review of calendar. Reviewed Advent Vespers dates (see Pastor’s Report section). Christmas Eve day is a Sunday, worship at 10:15 AM and 6:30 PM. Annual Meeting is January 28th 2024. Reminder: Church Council meeting is on Tuesday December 12th at 6:30 PM, Finance at 6:00 PM.
6. **Brainstorming Winter Events:** Sleigh Ride scheduled for January 21. Events reviewed under Thrivent Action Cards (above).

**Emphases of the Month -**   **November – Generosity; December – Worship and Music; January – Quilting:** Samaritas speaker John Jacks scheduled for worship November 19.

**Unfinished Business:**

1. **Outdoor Sign** **for November/December:** According to Pastor, sign messages will be: November speaker John Jacks followed by Advent Vespers schedule then Christmas schedule.

**Adjournment**

At 8:01 PM Cheri asked for a motion to adjourn. Brian moved, Al seconded, motion passed unanimously. Meeting closed with the Lord’s Prayer.

*Submitted by Meg Eaton*