**Lebanon Lutheran Church Council Minutes - Tuesday December 12 @ 6:30 PM - In person in church lounge and via Zoom**

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

Cheri called meeting to order @ 6:30 PM.

Cheri called for the **Agenda Review**. Agenda accepted as written.

**Opening Devotion**: Terry shared excerpts from Kelly Fryer’s book *Reclaiming the L Word: Renewing the Church From its Lutheran Core.* She writes about being angry at God when she was younger, thinking she hated God and religion. Inspired by her husband-to-be to turn away from a self-destructive path, she was an adult convert to Lutheranism because she loved the theology of “a God who always comes down to meet us.” Her professor in seminary changed her life by emphasizing that there is nothing we can do go “up” to God because God always comes down. “Grace drew me in and keeps me there.”

Future devotions: January, Meg

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

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

**Pastor’s Report**: Pastor plans to collect eyeglasses at the church to send to the Lion’s Club. Christmas plans are set. New Member classes start at 9AM for four Sundays in January. The Sleigh Ride is Saturday January 20. He is looking for leadership on the health kits if we are going to do them again this year for Samaritas. See Pastor’s Report for more details.

**Financial Reports:** Curt reported on church finances. Budgeted expenses are slightly above target at 92.98% with a target of 91.66%. Income is still down and leftover land contract interest will be moved to the general fund to offset the deficit. Investments are continuing to recover. The Financial Compliance Review Committee met with our accountant, Treasurer, and Financial Secretary in December and after reviewing accounts the FCRC approved all procedures with no recommendations.

**New or Urgent Business:**

1. **Budget Draft:** Terry presented a new draft of the 2024 budget based on health insurance increases, maintenance and utility increases, COLA for part-time staff, and feedback from Council last month. The budget increase is approximately 2.5% over 2023. A final Council vote will be taken when the December numbers and financial reports come in January, then the budget will go to the congregation for a vote at the Annual Meeting. The Council thanked Terry for his many hours of work on the budget.
2. **Review Ballot:** Ballot is complete except for Synod delegates. Meeting is just one day (5/11/24) via Zoom this year. Wietse will see if Frank and Alice are interested. Barb may be willing if no one else can be found.
3. **Plan Annual Meeting:** Sunday January 28th after worship and potluck. Doug will ask Margaret to include the Constitution vote on the Agenda in the Annual Report. Amy will take minutes. Sarah will pass around a sign-in sheet and walk around with a microphone for speakers to communicate with Terry B. on Zoom. Meg will publish the Annual Report and Annual Meeting date for at least 2 weeks in a row in January and include a link to the new draft Constitution and the Zoom link. Al will present and answer questions about the Constitution. Terry B. will present and answer questions about the budget. Curt will present and answer questions about the financial reports. Cheri will lead the meeting. Doug will set up a sound system in the lounge so Terry can hear and be heard by meeting attendees.
4. **Review Need for Thrivent Action Cards for Winter Events:** Doug volunteered to apply for a card for the Sleigh Ride. Discussion of how cards can be used for education, service, and fundraising.

**Emphases of the Month -**  **Worship and Music; January – Quilting; February – Kids Klub:** no discussion needed

 **Unfinished Business:**

1. **Outdoor Sign** **for December –** no discussion needed

**Adjournment**

At 8:10 PM Cheri asked for a motion to adjourn. Laura moved, Sarah seconded, motion passed unanimously. Meeting closed with the Lord’s Prayer.

*Submitted by Meg Eaton*