

## **First Lutheran Church 2023 Annual Meeting January 28, 2024 Draft**

President Jennifer called the meeting to order at 11:00 AM.

Present were 31 voting members, including 8 council members, with 3 members present via Zoom.

Marcia gave the Dwelling in the Word.

Approval of the Agenda. Jan Riely motioned to approve, Ann Beard 2<sup>nd</sup>, motion carried.

Approval of the 2022 Annual meeting minutes. Glen Beard motioned to approve, Lynn Haugeberg 2<sup>nd</sup>, motion carried.

Ministers Report. Matt was gone but a greeting from Bishop Craig and Minister Matt was included in the annual meeting booklet.

### **Committee Reports.**

**Finance:** Gretchen went through the 2023 Financial Statement and 2024 Proposed Budget. She would like the members to remember this is the first year of a standalone church. Some of the numbers on the report will reflect Area Parish expenses. Jean Wold and Michon Sax requested the balance in checking versus last year which is down substantially. The banking information was not represented on this report. They were shown the balances from our previous council meeting. Concern was expressed regarding attendance. Kevin Sullivan encouraged all to invite absent members and new families to join our church. Council is working diligently to create ways to enhance our services for more interest and to encourage more involvement. Jan Riely motioned to approve the financial report. Michon 2<sup>nd</sup>, motion carried. Laura Dahl motioned to approve the 2024 Budget as presented. Marcian 2<sup>nd</sup>, motion carried.

**Property.** A written report was presented to show the Bell Tower is complete except for the installation of the faux bells. The chimes play at 9:00 AM, 12:00 PM and 6:00 PM. The old parsonage was sold. The new audio video system is complete. A new sign is being discussed to install. A new freezer was purchased for the kitchen. New computers and software were purchased for the office. The parking lot will be resurfaced in 2024. Looking into updating the basement.

**Worship.** A written report was presented. Bible Study came back this summer; church service was held in June at the new Ag Expo with breakfast served. Pastor Paul left in June and Matt started to lead services in July. Matt is enrolled in the SAM program and wishes to continue his education to become an ordained minister. We had 3 ladies along with Matthew, complete the online lay pastor training; the Christmas Cantata was held in December and a huge success.

**Stewardship and Evangelism.** This committee has initiated fun activities for all holidays, passing out goodies or gifts to youth and adults. Also has helped serve several events after services. The Care Team was organized to provide food and care packages to those suffering from illness, family tragedy or to help celebrate a milestone event. The committee has spearheaded activities to help fund the WELCA and Youth activities. We had our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual 'table party' which is proving to be a very successful outreach to our community.

**Youth and Education.** Several fun activities were held for the youth along with fundraisers. 'Noisy Buckets' was introduced with the youth gathering the coins for a cause they choose. Youth are getting more involved in

church services. The annual ski trip will return for our youth. Plans are being made to take some youth to the National Convention in New Orleans. There are 6 taking confirmation classes.

**Call Committee.** Along with the written report, Joy commented that our Call is still active. There are 26 full time pastor openings and 3 part time openings in western North Dakota. New graduates are filling positions in the urban areas. In the past, ordained ministers were assigned a parish. That has since changed to the graduated having a choice of where they are placed. 84 parishioners attended the online lay training course offered by the Synod. The Synod had been forced to 'think outside the box' to fill the pulpit needs. The individuals stepping up to help fill this need by taking this course has been a saving grace.

**Trust Committee.** Written report was presented. Kelly Peterson reported on the actions taken during the year and answered questions. The Rothe Trust is for financing education expenses and capital drive with matching donations from members. The Iverson Trust money is available to FLC as council deems necessary. We are very thankful for the Rothe Trust for funding ½ of Matthews salary as it falls under education.

**WELCA.** The 2 WELCA circles have recently combined into one. Quilts have been sent to Lutheran World Relief along with local presentations to graduates, baptisms, Providence House and UMM. Two fundraisers were held and were a success.

**Election of Council Members.** Gretchen, Laura and Cindy's terms are up. Gretchen and Laura do not seek another term. Cindy is open to another 3-year term. Robin and Lynn were appointed by council in February of 2023 to fill a 1-year term as there were no nominations at the annual meeting.

Laura nominated Robin to fill his 2 remaining years. Jan 2<sup>nd</sup> with nominations cease. Motion carried.

Jan nominated Lynn to fill her 2 remaining years. Deb Larson 2<sup>nd</sup>, with nominations cease by Jan. Motion carried.

Marcia nominated Cliff Wenstad, Ardyce Alveshire and Cindy Geiger to each a 3-year term with nominations cease. Laura 2<sup>nd</sup>, motion carried.

Trust Committee representatives Kelly Peterson and Keith Helmuth terms are up and will seek another term. Marcia nominated Kelly and Keith with a unanimous ballot, Glen Beard 2<sup>nd</sup>, motion carried.

### **New Business.**

\*Location of signage. Jennifer and Glen have been in contact with a sign company out of Mandan. Plans are for a digital sign so there can be messages, events etc. posted on it. Placement has not been determined. Four possible sights are (1) near the RTC building, (2) where the big cottonwood is on the SW corner of our lot, (3) on the west side of the parking lot, and (4) in the garden area near the steps on the south side of the church. Glen commented that we spent \$8000 to trim the cottonwood a couple years ago. Discussion was held on the longevity of the tree vs the optimum place for a permanent sign. There will there be landscaping around the sign. There was discussion on water lines and there is an old basement at location 1 that may interfere with sign placement. A vote was taken and the results are as follows:

- (1) Near the RTC—9 votes
- (2) Take the cottonwood down and put it on the SW corner—13 votes
- (3) West side of the parking lot—7 votes

Larry Larsen requested we contact the sign company for their opinion for optimum placement. Jim Riely felt if there is an issue, Council can make the final decision taking the votes into consideration. We are thankful to have major donations toward our sign. We welcome more as this will be a big project. Projected to be \$50,000 plus.

\*Sell the new parsonage. Glen commented that there will be some yard maintenance that needs to be done if we keep it. It costs First Lutheran \$13,000/year in utilities, maintenance and insurance. The church bylaws do not allow us to rent out the property. Katie Tschetter did an updated CMA (comparative market analysis) and it has gone up in value. Joy mentioned that a lot of churches are offering a stipend instead of owning a parsonage. Concern is how long we will wait for a pastor to want to come to western ND. Jan Riely asked what would happen with Matt if a pastor did answer our call. If we should get an ordained pastor we cannot have a SAM in the same parish. Matthew would have to remain as a family/youth coordinator as he was when Paul was here. Larry Larson would like to see us keep the parsonage in case a call is answered. Kelly Peterson stated that if we sold the parsonage and invested the dollars, we would be money ahead even if we purchased another home. Jim Riely motioned to sell the parsonage. Jan 2<sup>nd</sup>. Discussion was held on selling just the house and lot it is on and keep the additional lot. Kelly stated that owning an empty lot comes with a lot of issues and would not recommend keeping it. A vote was taken and the results are as follows:

Sell Parsonage with its additional lots—22 votes      Keep the parsonage—5

Motion to see the parsonage carried.

\*Cub Scouts usage of the church. The Scouts approached us for use of the church. The Cub Scouts had an organizational meeting with a huge turnout. We have sponsored the scouts for years, although they have been inactive recently. We have signed a sponsorship for 2024. Matthew suggested we offer the use of the old nursery downstairs as a designated room for them as it isn't being used. Glen feels they need more room and suggested they have access to the rest of the old part of the basement. There was discussion that the basement needs an update. Steve Sanford motioned to approve the Cub Scouts to utilize our basement, Glen 2<sup>nd</sup>, motion carried.

\*FLC Vision. Plans are in place to meet with the bishop to develop a strategic planning session. The purpose will be to designate our spiritual, physical and financial goals for FLC in 2024 and how we want to accomplish them. We will keep the congregation informed on this process.

### **Old Business**

\*Food Pantry. Mitch Haugeberg gave an update of the evergrowing food pantry. We have been blessed and proud to be able to fill the need of the food pantry for McKenzie County. Due to the extreme growth they may be growing out of our facility. We have expanded their area of use downstairs and now they are looking for space for a walk in cooler. There are times when the parking is some issue with access to the church during distribution times. Glen and the food pantry board are in discussion with county and city officials to look into options that will be best for the pantry.

\*Membership list. Lists were passed out so members could view their families and update if necessary.

Donna Rauser motioned to adjourn, Steve Sanford 2<sup>nd</sup>, motion carried.

Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Cindy Geiger, Secretary