

**Council meeting 4/14/20 via Skype \*\*\*UNAPPROVED\*\*\***

Present: Pastor Kowitz, Cortney Holm, Tamie Onsager, Tim Wilson, Andrea Wilson, Julie Askelson, Connie Kuennen, Jim Sims, Tim Stoddard, Randy Iverson, Jeremy Thompson, Danielle Askelson, Ward Budweg, Dawn Deines-Christensen, Susanne and Rick Twedt, Rebecca Swella-Smedsrud, Mary Fitch, Marissa Nordschow, Ron Borsheim via phone call

Absent: Shirley Finley, Doreen Fullhart, Ron Kregel, Matt Burkey, Karla Miene

Call to order and devotions:

Approve agenda: Moved: Jim Sims 2nd: Randy Iverson Motion carried: Yes

Approval of previous minutes (March): Moved: Tamie Onsager 2nd: Danielle Askelson Motion carried: Yes

Approval of Treasurer's report: Moved: Tamie Onsager 2nd: Connie Kuennen Motion carried: Yes

Report from committees: For efficiency due to video conferencing, written reports were submitted by committee chairs and dispersed via email for council to review before the council meeting. Below are the reports as submitted by the committee chairs.

**Mutual Ministry:** Presented by- Marissa Nordschow, reminder to consider recommendations feed back from the committees by June if possible.

**Decorah Lutheran Church – recommendations for committee structure/organization (from Mutual Ministry Committee – 4/7/2020)**

In the spirit of better organization and efficiency operating as a volunteer-driven council and committees, and in support of the congregation and pastor & staff, the Mutual Ministry Committee made the following recommendations to the executive committee and church council last year (2019) – we are providing this update/reminder to all former and new council and committee members:

- Each committee should appoint or elect a chairperson. This individual will represent the committee and its members on the executive committee as well as be the person in charge of generating the meeting agendas for each committee.
- A recorder should be appointed or elected for each committee. This individual needs to be someone other than the chairperson. The person is responsible for taking minutes for each committee meeting, typing them & dispersing them in a timely manner after the meetings and prior to the next committee meeting. A recorder should also provide executive summary for the chairperson to share at any council meetings, in advance if possible, to expedite the committee reports at council.
- All committee and council members are asked to read any correspondence and reports from the committee, council and church to stay informed and to properly prepare in advance of any meetings.
- Communication is key for all committees, council and executive committee – keep in mind appropriate opportunities to report and share information with the congregation (or even between committees and council) through existing means like weekly bulletins, The Spirit, temple talks, DLC webpage and Facebook page.
- Review your roles/responsibilities description as well as your annual calendar for each committee. Update both annually and share (via shared data space and printed format when needed) – use as a guide for keeping business of each committee focused through the year and

as an on-boarding tool for new committee members upon election to their role. Keep in mind that you should determine and fulfill the responsibilities of the committees as outlined in the church's Constitution and Bylaws.

- It is our intention to encourage a more effective and efficient committee structure, which in turn, should allow for shorter council & executive committee meetings through better reporting and committee's responsibility for their specific roles and purposes at Decorah Lutheran. In addition, more effective committee meetings, structure and work could lead to understanding the opportunities for other members to be involved – even wanting to be elected to these positions to avoid gaps in the annual meeting nominations.

**Evangelism:** Presented by- written and verbal report Dawn Deines-Christensen, most of evangelism committee not able to meet via video so not much has changed from last council meeting.

DLC Evangelism Committee Minutes 3/10/2020

Meeting called to order by Chairperson Dawn.

Attendance: Dawn Deines Christensen, Betty Storla, Karla Meine, Barb Houdek and Ron Onsager.

We have been collecting the names of congregation members who do not currently have name tags and those will be ordered. We wish to be sure everyone has them to make it easier for Pastor Kowitz to learn our members.

Dawn suggested we order DLC magnets to give out on Pastor Kowitz's first Sunday, he also liked that idea. Dawn will check into ordering them. Ron questioned how much we have in our budget and it was not known. This needs to be checked on.

Dawn reported that most of the Meal packets assembled by our volunteers have been distributed to: Local Food Pantry, NEICAC, Decorah Community School Backpack Program and the Bible Mission in Cresco.

Dawn has cleaned and organized the Welcome Center in the church narthex recently. Ron will see about a table for the ushers to use for bulletins and sound amplifiers so they do not need to be on the Welcome Center.

Discussion of the need to update our Church Brochure and Thank you cards. When Pastor Kowitz arrives we ask for his input before proceeding. We also discussed making sure all Memorials are listed each month in the Newsletter.

Need to review how the God Squad is working, this will also be tabled until Pastor Kowitz is here.

The Congregational Potluck scheduled for March 15 is being billed as a Family Night with games. Next Potluck is scheduled for April 24, we will decide the program at our April meeting.

We need some new ideas for how we want to recognize new members.

Dawn will discuss with Pastor Kowitz what he would like to do for the children's message on Easter Sunday.

We have received a donation to cover the cost of Bibles for the pews and these will be ordered soon.

**Stewardship:** Presented by-Julie Askelson written submission, audio not available via Skype for her so no further discussion.

April 14, 2020

**Stewardship Committee:**

Committee communicated via email this month and decided to continue this means of communication. Noisy offering has reached \$1026.64. this money is designated for the students who graduate from the Foster Care system; Kirsten Heine will be contacted for details. Kirsten is the coordinator of the program.

April is the month envelopes are ordered in April; 300 were ordered last year; will coordinate with Jenna for this year...number remaining, members who never pick up nor indicate if they desire envelopes, members left DLC.

No other correspondence at this time.

Ron Borsheim, Jim Sims, Becky Smedsrud (co-chair), Susanne Twedt, Rick Twedt, Julie Askelson (co-chair)

**Property and Management:** Presented by-written and verbal update submitted by Tamie Onsager, reports some church site projects such as painting still occurring following social distancing guidelines and there are more to be done so taking volunteers.

Property & Management email meeting April 10, 2020.

Tamie Onsager Chair, Tm Wilson Co-Chair; Tim Stoddard, Shirley Finley, Randy Iverson, Ron Kregel, Randy Iverson

Committee Review Profit & Loss statements for March 2020 & Jan. thru March statement by email correspondence that was sent to them. 803.004 is misstated and Mary will be pulling all the bills posted to this account and will review with Pat to verify that everything posted to this account is accurate.

New sound system equipment has been purchased and installed for new FCC regulations. Thank you to Jim Sims, Chris Storlie & Dennis Peterson for their helping with the installation. Vick's Htg. Plbg., has finish the installation of the furnaces & air conditioners for the Fellowship & Social Hall. Motion was made by email & approved by P&M to proceed and have Gary Thomas install a new roof on the education building \$22,700.00 his plans are to do our project this spring but due to Minnesota shelter in place it will have to wait until this is lifted for him to proceed with our project. Money was transferred at the end of 2019 to the money market account at Viking Bank to cover the above projects so Mary will be transferring money back to the general account to 806.030 to cover the above expenditures.

P&M committee feels going forward Pastor Kowitz will review & approve all the wedding request and update the committee on them as needed and the P&M committee has turned over the request, we had been holding onto for the summer weddings for him to address.

Current bill reports from March 25 & April 3 have been approved by email correspondence from P&M committee.

P&M committee made an email motion and approved Mary Fitch, Treasurer request to pay the Marco billing through the Church credit card. Approved

P&M committee made an email motion to approve paying Julie Askelson \$531.25 for her typing the Human Resource manual this money will come out of the Restricted accounts. Approved

P&M committee made an email motion to have the Nordic Lazer for \$391.50 to be paid out of Restricted accounts. Approved

P&M will be working with Pastor Kowitz to discuss "Decorah Lutheran Church Requisition & Payment Approval Form" going forward this will help clarify which accounts the money will need to come out of and approvals of all purchases to control spending and help keep the budget on track.

P&M has been working with volunteers painting the door frames & doors around the church. There are step runners that need to be cleaned and painted. Always looking for volunteers to help let Tamie Onsager know if you are willing to do so. Darron has been working on stripping the floor in the narthex along with volunteer Claire Askelson.

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Tim Stoddard email information on the CARE Acts to P&M committee so they will be informed and will be able to discuss this at Council meeting.

Respectfully submitted,  
Tamie Onsager Chair

**Personnel Committee:** Presented by-written and verbal submission Julie Askelson, she asked that we consider approving the Human Resources manual. At this time not all council members have a copy or had a chance to read it so council decided to give everyone a chance to read it and discuss at the next council meeting.

This past calendar year, the Personnel Committee of Chris Storlie, Shirley Finley and Julie Askelson, under the guidance of Pastor Jim Glesne, compiled the Decorah Lutheran Church Human Resource Manual. The task began when Pastor Jim provided a HR Manual from a larger church. As a group, we read through the template manual, discussed each section to discern if the section should be tailored to fit DLC or stricken from a manual appropriate for Decorah Lutheran's needs. We met many times in April, May and June of 2019; we sought input from Mary Fitch, and asked questions of Jenna Iverson and Pat Gjere. Following our discussions, a rough draft was typed and reviewed again by the Personnel Committee. The rough draft was further revised and tailored to Decorah Lutheran Church needs. Then, a final draft of the manual typed and the manual format reviewed. The final draft was submitted to attorneys Jim Burns and Jeremy Thompson. These gentlemen reviewed the document focusing on meeting State and Federal employment guidelines; and it does. Comments and suggestions were submitted to the Personnel Committee by one attorney and after discussion, included in the Decorah Lutheran Human Resources Manual.

The compilation and printing of the Decorah Lutheran Church Human Resource Manual has been the effort of three Personnel Committee members, three Staff members, the Interim Administrator and two DLC member Attorneys. The Personnel Committee is not soliciting further comments or suggestions to be added to the content of the HR Manual. The Personnel Committee, therefore, submits the Human Resource Manual for approval by the Decorah Lutheran Church Council.

Respectfully submitted,  
Julie Askelson, Shirley Finley, Chris Storlie, Interim Administrator Pastor Jim Glesne

**Worship:** Presented by- Pastor Kowitz stated the next outdoor service at the Fish Hatchery is tentatively scheduled for August 16<sup>th</sup>, waiting to confirm with their office (which may be a bit due to Covid 19 closures). Continue with online services, current arrangement is working well.

**Education:** Presented by-written submission by Jeremy Thompson, he also reported that they continue to work on material that can be shared electronically and via the Spirit newsletter to the kids.

1. March Attendance – 1st week - 80; 2nd week 78; 3<sup>rd</sup> week 66
2. Sunday School: Preschool – Kindergarten stories read by teachers and songs led by Pastor Kowitz being shared -via Facebook
3. 1st-6<sup>th</sup> Grade Palm Sunday School songs are on our web page. Daryl Hansmeier, church organist recorded them, along with communication to all parents to have kids continue learning songs/continue working on assigned memory work. Memory work schedule and memory work is on web under Connect/Youth/Sunday School.
4. 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade students were to complete 40 Days in the Word via web/videos, and also have a Bible app on their phone.

5. Confirmation classes for this year will be completed online. Two emails were sent to every parent stating how many sermon notes (16) should be completed.
6. VBS still planned for July 20-23, 8:30-9:00. In the event the Youth Director position has not been filled by that time additional volunteers needed. Steps to secure volunteers for VBS will begin in May.
7. Adult Bible Study - beginning, Wednesday, May 27, Pastor Kowitz will lead a Bible Study from 9:30-11:00 in Fellowship Room. This will be for the Bible Study group Ole Winter led.
8. Baccalaureate - undecided currently

**Youth:** Presented by-written report submitted by Danielle Askelson. "Specific point" of discussion a part of the council agenda.

Junior and Senior League continue to check-in on Wednesday evenings using Zoom; Lee Stock and Cortney are taking over these sessions with plans to include Pastor Kowitz. We still intend to coordinate an Easter Breakfast when the time comes for us to celebrate Easter as a congregation. We are moving forward with the summer service "trip", focusing on serving our local community instead of traveling long distance. We will soon post the vacancy for our Youth Ministry Director.

#### Old Business:

- Decorah Faith Coalition: The meeting was scheduled for March 16<sup>th</sup> but did not occur. They had a conference call but Tim S. has not participated. The coalition participated in the Winneshiek County Mutual Aid fund to assist in fundraising, there was a pancake event at Tbock's which Pastor Kowitz did participate in. Pastor Kowitz has been in communication with the local pastors involved in this group. Tim S. reported that the coalition considers all local churches a member, some are more active than others.
- Corona virus update: Andrea Wilson presented current information as dispersed by Gundersen Health System according to the models guiding care and decisions for clinic/hospital settings, due to this she recommended Council anticipate continued restrictions for large gatherings past April 30<sup>th</sup> and to also be prepared for a gradual return of "open for business" with slow return to full participation.
- Council seats still needed: 2 yr council Worship, 3 yr council Evangelism and one non-council Education. At this time with reduced church functions/activities working well without these filled however if a member wants to participate, we will take them. Otherwise, address later once we can meet in person.

#### New Business:

- CARES act and payment protection loan application -description of the federal loan/grant for not-for profit businesses, including churches sent to council members via email by Tim Stoddard on 4/13/20.
  - o Mary shared compiled information and research regarding 2019 payroll and utilities as required by the application process. It excludes P. Glesne and supply pastor expenses as they are considered independent contractors. This number does not reflect a senior pastor salary, which we now need to consider with Pastor Kowitz start on April 1<sup>st</sup>.

- Approximately \$33,600 will be requested, this covers the recommended 8 week period. Loan forgiveness is the amount paid for payroll and utilizes in that 8 week period, any portion in excess of the forgiven amount will be repaid with an interest rate of 1% within 2 years according to this program. This may apply to Pastor Kowitz's pay (\$8,700) if they do not approve his portion since we did not have him as a part of our payroll in 2019.
- Reasons to consider applying for the loan are as follows by financial report from Mary:
  - Our actual giving in March was down nearly \$16,000 from budget.
  - April giving through 2 weeks is down about \$12,000 from last year (Easter was 4/21 in 2019).
  - We don't know how giving will hold up in April & May; it's likely to be down since in person attendance will likely be restricted through this time.

Motion to proceed with loan application via the Paycheck Protection program with Decorah Bank and Trust in the amount not to exceed \$35,000 presented by Tamie Onsager and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Andrea Wilson. - Motion carried: Yes.

- Installation for Pastor Kowitz: Postponed. Reminded this is a formality through the ECLA, but he is still our hired and acting pastor.
- Youth Director posting: Plan is to post as previously described. Youth committee wishes to address benefits differently and asked that council consider improving benefits package. Committee shared information gathered in discussion with Adrian Walter and other examples of youth ministry directors of similar sized churches. Andrea will compile more information regarding options like what is currently being done for Pat Gjere as a non-ordained Portico member as Portico is a suggested option via input from other youth directors. This will likely lead to further discussion to address similar needs in our full-time staff who currently receive no benefits.
- Pastor Ole celebration for anniversary of 65 years of ordination, postponed planning for now.
- Gift from Jack Anundson estate (memorial gift)-\$25, 000. Per interpretation of legal documents by Jeremy Thompson the 6 month waiting period for contesting does not apply to the church however, disbursement will likely not occur prior to that time frame so we'll decide where this should go once we receive it.
- Requisition and payment forms being developed through Property and Management, Mary and Pastor Kowitz to help track payments, what accounts to take these from and improve budget adherence.
- Wedding updates-Pastor Kowitz is reviewing and reaching out to those requests. One, a non-member, was to be scheduled 5/16, but has moved to another venue and officiant. Two (6/20-member and 8/1-nonmember) will occur at DLC with Pastor Kowitz providing pre-marital counseling with a different officiant presiding for the ceremony. 8/8-member, Pastor Kowitz will be doing pre-marital counseling and ceremony. There is a potential September wedding to be organized.

Pastor's report:

- 2 weeks officially working in the office, expressed gratitude and appreciation for each of our talented staff.
- Requests the help of Stewardship to update and institute online giving platform. ELCA supports the use of Vanco or Tithly. Reports that Vanco has improved their platform over the last couple years and should be better than we had last experienced. Recognized that all online platforms will charge a fee to use their services. What we gain would outweigh the expense. Suggestions from council members is to put the this up as soon as we can considering reduced physical attendance, link to this platform directly on our webpage and post on the slides during online services.
- Pastoral care being done over the phone and he has been calling members with birthdays.

Tamie reported the article on Pastor Kowitz is completed and will submit it to the paper and Decorah News.

**Transfers:** Jenn, Brian, Mya, Ruby, Ivy and Miles Sullivan.

Motion to adjourn by Danielle Askelson, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rebecca Swella-Smedsrud Motion carried: Yes

Closed with Lord's Prayer

Submitted by,  
Andrea Wilson  
Council Secretary