MEETING MINUTES Congregational Council

June 8, 2020 -- Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

**Present**: Pastor John Longworth, Lynn Jeffrey, Sherrie Pickett, Melinda Williams, Renee Warren, Martha Leonard, and Steve Tuckerman

**Absent:** Mark Woodbury

Lynn called the Zoom video and conference call meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

Pastor shared an article from the Living Lutheran online devotions titled “My take: The church is not closed” which touches on the fact that so much has changed with the onset of the COVID crisis. But the writer expresses his belief that “the church is open – both when we gather *and* when we scatter.” He states that “our church is not a building, an organization or a worship service.” God continues to work through each and every one of us in spite of our quarantine circumstances. We are called “to find creative and bold ways to live into the reality that, even when the building’s doors are locked, the church is still open.”

Pastor then offered an opening prayer to begin our meeting.

A motion was made by Melinda to accept the May 11, 2020 Council Meeting Minutes. Sherrie seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

**Committee Reports**

Pastor’s Report:

Pastor John presented these items from his report:

* United Way – Good Shepherd received $1,000 for emergency feeding, with $366.37 used for the final Pandemic Pizza Party
* May 18-22 Livestream of Festival of Homiletics – Pastor was excited to report back on this virtual conference. He enjoyed many excellent sermons and paid a nominal fee to maintain some of the recordings for future use.

At this point, there was some discussion around the potential of upcoming outdoor worship services. Pastor stated that the Worship and Music Committee had put a great deal of thought into a proposal for an outdoor service during this time when we cannot safely hold indoor services. The idea is to gather outside at the outdoor chapel for one service on Sunday morning with each attendee providing their own chair. There will be no communion or singing, and masks will be required of all in attendance. For those who wish to remain in their car for the duration of the service, the parking alongside the grassed edge of the parking lot will be available for a limited number of vehicles. If there is rainy weather, the outdoor service will be canceled, and only the minister, assistant minister and lector will go inside the church (maintaining a 6-foot distance) to record a service indoors which will be distributed to members as soon as possible thereafter.

After more conversations about the logistics and timing of these outdoor worship services and reviewing the Bishop’s five considerations for reopening our church, Pastor made a motion to approve the Worship & Music Committee’s proposal for the June, July and August outdoor services, Melinda seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

In addition to the Sunday services, Pastor is considering sending out an invitation for a potential Wednesday afternoon outdoor Bible study or possibly an online evening Bible study. He will study the responses to determine which format/timing might work best for the most church members.

Financials: Steve presented the Good Shepherd financial report for the current year through May which has resulted in net income of $15,635 as of 5/31/20. Steve reminded us that this includes the $19,055 PPP loan proceeds. However, in spite of the church services being canceled for the last couple of months, the current & benevolence receipts are only slightly lower than 2019’s figures.

Little Lambs Financials: Steve presented Wendell’s Little Lamb’s financial report for the current year through May. The net income for this period ($54,627) is overstated due to the PPP loan proceeds received ($116,842). There was a question from Steve on the payroll expense being below budget by $37,841. Pastor was planning to check with Wendell and get back to Steve with an answer on that difference. The checkbook balance was at $213,140 as of 5/31/20, so the Center is still in good financial condition.

**Old Business**

Lynn brought up the intention we had of celebrating the newly constructed space for Little Lambs this Spring before the COVID pandemic canceled our plans. After some discussion, it was decided that Sue should reach out to our local newspapers (Sam’s Good News, Rutland Herald and The Mountain Times) to have them interview her and take photographs of this newly constructed space to share this exciting new addition with the community. Pastor will communicate this plan with Sue.

**New Business**

Every year Pastor provides a retreat for all Council members during the month of August. Lynn suggested that we should plan to meet on August 29 at Main Street Park in Rutland from 9:00-11:00 AM for a breakfast picnic and abbreviated retreat this year in light of the COVID restrictions.

Steve Tuckerman announced that due to the COVID pandemic and his own health concerns, that unfortunately he will be unable to transition into the role of the church Treasurer during 2020 as planned. The Council will work together with Pastor this Fall to determine another plan to assist Wendell with transitioning these Treasurer tasks. It will be critical to also find a good back-up plan for running the church payroll in case Wendell is not available to perform this time-sensitive task.

Pastor mentioned that the member records software currently being utilized by the church office is an out-dated system with no updates available. He and Jennifer will be researching other software options this year, and Pastor will review their findings with the Council in the Fall.

**Plans for Next Meeting**

Next Meeting - Monday, September 14, 2020 @ 7:00 PM

Devotions: Melinda

The meeting adjourned with a closing prayer at 8:02 PM.

**Respectfully submitted**

Martha Leonard