



Faith Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes Tuesday, April 21, 2026; 5:00PM in Person/Zoom

Mission – "Gathered faithfully to love and serve God and our neighbors"

*Values – Mutual Respect, Honesty, Kindness, Service, Forgiveness,
Commitment, Perseverance, Faithfulness, Compassion, Flexibility*

In Attendance: Special Guest Pastor Nicole Eastwood, Pastor Eric Olsen, Jane Sanks-President, Ann Greenwood-Vice President, Deacon Scott Rice - Secretary, Anita Wooton – Treasurer, Peggy Ragan, Quyen Dang, Julianne Geyser, Jerry Cooper, Linda Burton, Nancy Flanagan (zoom) and Wayne Head

- **Call to Order:** Jane Sanks opened the meeting at 5:00 PM.
- **Quorum:** Yes
- **Introductions:** Council members introduced themselves to our special guest, Pastor Nicole Eastwood, Assistant to the Bishop for Candidacy
- **Opening Prayer:** Pastor Eric

This was a special meeting of the council, held to meet with Pastor Nicole Eastwood, Assistant to the Bishop for Candidacy, regarding calling a new Associate Pastor to Faith.

The meeting began with Pastor Nicole leading two brainstorming sessions, the first about the purpose of our Parish, the second about opportunities for growth. We talked about the demographics of our congregation, and whether there were other underserved "market segments" in our neighborhood that we should be reaching out to. Spanish speakers and families with young children were mentioned.

Pastor Nicole suggests that council prepare a job description as a first step. It is important to define clearly what the Associate Pastor's focus will be to find the best candidate. Will the priority be ministering to Spanish speakers, working with youth, visiting the sick and homebound, etc. Pastor Eric noted that overly specialized Pastors can create dysfunction. This will not be a "siloe" addition to the Pastoral Staff. Rather, they will have a focus area(s) but be integrated into general church functions and operations.

We identified the need for a Pastor to serve our Spanish speaking community, to pray with them, lead worship in Spanish, visit the sick, etc. Anxiety among the Spanish speaking population is high. We need someone who can minister to them. This is the main identified focus area for the new Associate Pastor. They will have separate functions and activities but generally be integrated and help with overall church needs.

Pastor Nicole feels that we are ready to call an Associate Pastor. We have the energy, the opportunities and the leadership capability to do so.

After council finalizes the job description, the next step is to form a call committee (fbsynod.com/transitions, Transition Manual, Section 3 – Forming a Call Committee). The call

committee has the challenge to address a need that is not clearly visible (yet). This must be considered when selecting members of the call committee. The call committee needs to prayerfully consider who would be the best candidate based on the Council's job description. Because this position is integrated into the Pastoral staff under Pastor Eric's leadership, he will also serve as an ex-officio member of the committee. Good chemistry is necessary. Council appoints the call committee. A diverse group is desired. Best practice is to not have council members (or their spouses) on the committee. A council liaison would be appropriate.

A generous congregation family has pledged \$100,000/year for 5 years to support this call. Should this be a term call? Is \$100,000/year enough to bring someone to Sarasota? Will the general fund need to contribute to this position? How do we define success? It is rare for a Spanish speaking ministry to ever be economically self-supporting.

Pastor Nicole doesn't know of any bilingual Pastors currently available in our Synod, but there are some available in the broader ELCA. Not a lot though.

Pastor Nicole thinks we are ready, and that this effort will be very successful.

The meeting closed at 6:40 with each council member individually and Pastor Nicole praying for God's help in this endeavor, and then the Lord's Prayer was said by all.

Respectfully submitted by Scott Rice, Secretary.