

# Council Meeting Minutes



## Church Council of First Evangelical Lutheran Church

December 12 (Saturday), 2020, 3:00 via Zoom

Next meeting: January 9

“To worship God as an intergenerational praying community, learning God’s Word, and building lasting relationships as we grow in God’s love and grace.”

**Members Present:** Wendy Szczepanski, Rose Anderson, Miriam Flysjo, Becky Hulden, Pastor Dwight Rudquist      **Members Absent:** Craig Loen

**A. Opening Devotions** – Rose Next month Wendy

**B. Sharing Story** - Becky- what a blessing we finished the steeple repair. God worked through us to make it happen. We need to celebrate what God has done for us. What else does God have in mind for us to do next?

**C. Pastor’s Report- Pastor Dwight**

Pastor is trying to get all the online services for the month done early so Angie will have ample time to edit before Christmas.

Pastor is hoping to make some contacts before the end of the month.

Christmas gifts are being distributed to church staff.

Blessings of homes will be Jan 10. We will ask if anyone is interested in having their home blessed. People doing the blessing can go in individual cars and homeowners can step outside to receive the blessing. It will be a good way to connect with our members. If people aren’t comfortable with visitors a blessing could be posted online for people to bless their own home.

**D. Treasurer’s Report – Becky**

This month we are about \$2800 ahead of our budget. It helped having 5 Sundays in the month. We continue to get money for the steeple fund...\$1350 in November. The bill for the steeple was paid.

Janell and Becky completed the PPP loan forgiveness request forms.

**E. Production equipment for church services**

Immanuel in Almelund had Bitworks come in to give a bid about what would be helpful to produce their service online. They outfitted Immanuel with 2-3 new cameras and additional sound equipment so they could have live or recorded services. We will have Bitworks come and assess our situation and make a bid. When we get a bid, the property committee can decide if we need another bid before proceeding.

**F. Transition – Shared Ministry with Trinity Lutheran, Lindstrom**

**Discussion of “Issues to be addressed” worksheet**

We have a meeting in a few days with Trinity.

The biggest concern for First is losing Pastor Dwight. We have not had such a good fit with previous pastors. Having him here has been a balm.

What would it look like if Dwight stayed with us longer? If Pastor Dwight stayed we could still work with Trinity. Our confirmation students and youth could join Trinity to be a part of a larger group. Both churches

have a strong emphasis on serving the community. Maybe we can find ways to work together to serve the community.

Maybe we need to see how far along Trinity is in the process. If they want to hire someone right away there are other churches in MiChiLu that might be willing to do a shared ministry with us in a few years.

When we looked at our assets we didn't sound as good as we would have liked. If we share leadership sometimes it is harder to grow. We need time to heal and determine our mission. It seems like partnering now might not be the best for us.

It was amazing all the different ministries Trinity is able to do. What does it mean to flourish? Is flourishing having enough energy and people to be able to reach out? People who used to participate in ministry at First are gone or tired.

Our last two pastors left because we couldn't afford them any more. What happened? We have to reckon with our past. We need input from everybody. What has been the impact of our history?

Covid has made this process extremely difficult. We can't meet in person to discuss the process and get input from everyone. We are in survival mode. This can't count as interim time until we are back in the church. This is not a healthy time to try to transition to another pastor. Covid came fast, but it will go away slowly. We still have a number of months to get through Covid.

Pastor Dwight said it's a great opportunity for First to do shared ministry with Trinity but it makes sense to need more time to transition to shared ministry because of the restrictions due to Covid. He is enjoying the part time call and being able to preach. Pastor Dwight does not know how long he will be able to continue with First because at some point he will want to be completely retired. He wants what is best for First.

**G. Parking lot lights.** The parking lot lights aren't coming on at night. Stan Peterson replaced one of the parking lot lights near the back door and is planning on replacing the one on the southwest corner as well. We also have some street lights in the parking lot that do not work. Pastor Dwight will check with Don and Bruce to get the lights fixed.

#### **H. Motion to adjourn, second**

Miriam motioned to adjourn. Rose seconded.