Zion Lutheran Church Minot

Church Council Meeting, Tuesday, September 19, 2023

* Meeting called to order by President John Butgereit at 6:33 PM
* Opening Devotion by Pastor Natasha was a request for council members to fill out an inquiry sheet from Leaderwise so they can get data on our congregation. She led us in prayer as we finished.
* In attendance at this meeting: John Butgereit, John Thompson, Matt Sundahl, Kristi Asendorf, Rich Jensen, Sherry Broderick, John Gruenberg, Pastor Elaine, and Pastor Natasha.
* No Executive Session was needed for tonight’s meeting.
* The Agenda was reviewed. Motion by Kristi Asendorf to accept the agenda as written, a second was made by Sherry Broderick. Motion passed.
* There were no visitors at this meeting.
* All submitted written reports were in a Consent Agenda, including meeting minutes from August, were reviewed. Motion by Rich Jensen to approve the Consent Agenda. Second by John Thompson. Motion carried.
* New Business
  + There was an error made in a former employee’s vacation pay, resulting in an overpayment of $2,971.30. This person was aware of this error. A letter was written to the former employee asking for the money to be repaid by October 1st. The letter was signed by the President of the Church Council and the Chair of the Personnel Committee. No council action is required on this item at this time.
  + With the help of the Personnel Committee, we have made a decision on hiring a new employee as our Office Manager. We had almost 20 applicants and conducted four quality interviews. This employee has been in and met the staff. An employment contract has been signed, and she will begin her employment on October 3rd. Everyone involved in this process was extremely high on this person.
  + Christmas Worship Schedule. By consensus, the council approved a schedule for Christmas Eve Worship. This year it’s on a Sunday, and we will not hold the normal 10 am service. Christmas Eve services will be at 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, and 10:00 pm.
  + We briefly talked about Nursery services provided during worship. A policy change has been proposed to have the workers clock out after an hour if no one shows up in the nursery for that worship service. Item is table to the next meeting do we can get more data on usage numbers.
  + Annual approval of Portico benefits and health benefits for Pastors. Pastor Elaine receives benefits through Board of Pensions Presbyterian. Her 2024 plan will stay the same as 2023, with a monthly payment by the church of $2,732.57. Pastor Natasha receives benefits through Portico Benefits Services, as partner of the ELCA. Her package will be $4,327.48, up 2.5% from 2023. Kristi Asendorf made a motion to approve the annual benefit packages for 2024. John Gruenberg seconded the motion. Motion carried.
  + Youth Director Kortni Plorin submitted an application form for Memorial & Trust Funds to help pay for 14 students and 2 adult leaders to attend the ELCA National Youth Gathering in New Orleans in July of 2024. Motion by Sherry Broderick to approve this application and send it to the Trust Committee. A second was made by John Thompson. Motion carried.
  + John Thompson reported he has 25 tickets to the Minotauros, winnings from a golf tournament he participated in. He wants to give them to the church to be used in some form to do some fundraising. We need to do more research into what we can do with the free tickets.
* Old Business
  + Sabbatical Policy for Program Staff. There are two parts to this issue. We need to first address the policy that was changed to allow program staff at Zion to take a sabbatical up to 90 days after five years of service. When the new policy was brought to the Council, we thought it had been approved and recommended by the Personnel Committee, so it was passed and approved by the Church Council in July. After that meeting, some confusion arose as to how this new policy came about, and there could have been better communication between the Personnel Committee and the Council on this matter. After consideration by the Council and further communication with Personnel, it was decided this was probably a mistake to have quickly approved everything. After some discussion, Rich Jensen made a motion to rescind vote to change the sabbatical policy passed at July 18th Council meeting. The motion received a second by John Thompson. The motion carried. With this action, we will now revert to the original sabbatical policy that only includes pastoral staff. John Butgereit and Rich Jensen will meet with both program staff members regarding this change.

A second part we needed to address was the sabbatical we had also granted to a program staff member. After considerable discussion, it was decided by consensus that we would honor the commitment made for 2024. With the policy amended in this meeting, this would only be for this one-time event.

* + Rebel Give problem update. At this time, we don’t have an update.
  + Heat Pump/AC Repair/Replace. The Building and Grounds Committee is having to go back and start the bidding process again. After receiving feedback from engineers, we only have the choice of having to go through an exterior wall in the upper level, and then to replace that hole with a door or a removable panel. No action needed at this time. Also, the Council needs to be aware there are additional heat pumps still working that are approaching their expected life-span, so further costs will be anticipated down the road at some time.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM

Submitted by Rich Jensen

Church Council Secretary