

# Congregational Meeting Minutes 1/24/21

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## Attendees:

- In Person: Leslie Braun, Fern Rathsack, Bonnie Probelski, Lois Faldet, Mary Stevens, Vicki Lidicker, Robin Honish, Jerry Wiskow, Neil Traxel, Jan Nealy, Ellen Smith, Rick Smith, Kathy Wiskow, Ron Voigt, Jim Cox, Patti Cox, Paul Hoffmann, Fred Walls, Pastor Clare Sedlacek, Jim Sedlacek, Chris Lear (Living Hope Deacon)
- Phone/Google Meets: Mark Dybdahl, Pat Bialzik, Becki Hill, Rachel Hagerty, David Hagerty, Mary Paul, Lori Hayes, Judy Olson, Connie Hoffmann, Jenny Florio, Deb Walls, Jason Florio

## Approval of the Minutes from 2020 Annual Meeting

- Motion by Neil Traxel to approve minutes from the 2020 meeting, second by Bonnie Probelski. All in favor; none opposed.

## Call Process

Brief summary by Paul Hoffmann (from annual report): Ministry Site Profile (MSP) for CTK completed in April 2020. With the resignation of Pastor Kelly, a Joint Discernment Team was created between CTK & Living Hope with the purpose of combining both MSPs into one document. We now have a complete set of MSP to cover the options of shared or individual part time ministers for a 2021 call.

Fred Walls: An important part of the next step in the call process is to identify whether we want a single minister just for our congregation or if we want to share a full time minister between the two churches.

Discussion regarding how sharing a pastor should look like:

- Jerry Wiskow stated that he thinks it is okay for the services to go back and forth between the two churches.
- Leslie Braun stated she feels the two churches compliment each other and we build each other up.
- Bonnie Probelski asked about health insurance and how that works. Fred explained that what we did with Pastor Kelly was one church issued a call for a full-time pastor and the other had a contract stating half the time they would be at that church. With a shared call, the cost would be split 50/50. If each church calls a part-time pastor, each is responsible for providing insurance on their own.
- Pat Bialzik feels having the pastor alternate weeks does not serve us. She states she doesn't mind sharing a pastor, but feels we need to meet each Sunday. Fred brought up the idea of having designated people at CTK when service is at Living Hope to greet them and possibly watch live-stream from the sanctuary. Pat suggested that Deacon Chris Lear could help us with services on the Sundays that Pastor is at Living Hope. Fred responds that in the future, if we see that we

are having great success with this we can definitely look at ways to provide communion at both locations on Sunday, but the main goal of all this is to get us all in the same building so that we are talking to one another and getting to know one another. Worrying about visitors coming into the church can be dealt with, but shouldn't be our focus.

- Fern Rathsack- There is value in having alternating services and going to Living Hope; we need to do a better job of getting to know them. We are all working for the same cause, we are all working for the same Lord. There is real value at each congregation with people of varying strengths, capitalizing on the strengths of people to work together.
- Leslie Braun - There is strength in numbers. It is a lot easier if you get to know people; everyone feels more comfortable around each other.
- Jim Cox - Concerns about people coming when the church is closed - we can deal with this. Can we continue this alternating back and forth as an experiment rather than a commitment? What would people's perception be if church bounced back and forth between congregations?
- Robin Honish explains that she may appear to be one who isn't participating when church is at Living Hope, but that is when she goes to the Catholic Church with her husband. Catholic churches have been doing this alternating service locations for some time now. Three campuses between Port Washington and Saukville share a priest and it works for them. She shared a line from a book the Sisters' Circle is reading "Ask the Lord to give you a blessable spirit so that we can accept changes, move with them, and listen to the way God is directing us to go." - helps us to be flexible in our spirit.
- Ellen Smith - Agrees with Jim Cox and wants the flexibility to go back to the old model when she wants to.
- Fern Rathsack - A solution is having someone here, we have a greeter and do live stream, greeters can explain the situation
- Rachel Hagerty - Regarding keeping the churches separate, but sharing resources and would this be a trial; it seems we've tried this before and we should know whether it's working or not. The strengths and weaknesses of both congregations are very important to recognize. Together we are stronger; not separate churches, but sharing resources. In the long run it is more important to consider 1 church, 1 congregation, sharing strengths. Already talked about dwindling membership at both churches, differences in population and feels it would be a wiser choice to consider 1 church and 1 congregation. CTK lost huge revenue stream due to COVID and feels financially, this is a better idea.
- Fred Walls - Cooperation-wise in the past 3 years has not gone as ideally as many would have hoped. Most of it falls on the leadership not being on the same page as Pastor Kelly or Living Hope's leadership. Each church had this idea of running separate but equal. Pastor Kelly would say "people at Living Hope are really nice if you just get to know them" and "they're great bosses". We never got

to that point until the end. Basically when we got to that point we had 2 weeks to try it and we were back on virtual only and weren't really able to do anything.

- Mary Paul - People are creatures of habit, more of an effort to go to another church. It's not about getting to know the people, but it's the extra effort.
- Mark Dybdahl - If we can get help for each other, it's a good thing. The drama is really hard to take sometimes. We should have a definite course of action. Agrees with Jim and others about the optics of the church being empty.
- Fred asks Pastor Clare: If you are a prospective pastor looking for a call and the churches said we want to work together but do it as an experiment and call it off if we feel it isn't working, what would you say to that? Pastor Clare responds: 1. It wouldn't be hard on the pastor to do both; to work at both churches and go back and forth on Sundays. 2. As a pastor, I would love to see members of both congregations in both places every other week. 3. Personal feeling you are stronger together. 4. You would have more opportunity with a full-time pastor, than you would with a part-time pastor. 5. This is an intriguing situation. Robin made a comment about part-time Catholic and part-time Lutheran, you go to WORSHIP. We as a community, we as people are having to make adjustments all the time. We have lived a year of making adjustments. Some of us not liking any of them. This is just one more uncomfortable, not welcome adjustment. Think of the opportunity to serve at both churches; to offer what you have at both facilities. To be able to care for each physical building and have it offer more. What are the possibilities that each can serve beyond the congregation. Two facilities offer great opportunity for each of you; both the congregation you attend and belong, the community in which you live and support in so many other ways.
- Lois Faldet: If the pastor was willing to go back and forth from one church to the other on a Sunday.
- Pat Bialzik - likes the idea of having 2 services; one at each church. Doesn't like the building being empty on a full Sunday.
- Fred explains we need a decision to bring back to Living Hope. We can't go back and forth, we can't give a trial to this. Either we're all in or not.
- Robin asks for clarification on what we are deciding on today.
- Fred explains by making a motion that we call a single full-time pastor for both congregations. Second by Ron Voigt. Discussion - K Wiskow asks about how this works out financially. This is exactly the same as with Pastor Kelly. We share all expenses, pastor has hours at each church.
- Deacon Chris Lear (Living Hope): Wanted to get a feeling for how CTK members feel about all this. Mentioned "the Yolking Years". Chris lived it and came to love all of CTK members, as well as his friends at Living Hope. Wanted us to know, as seen from a rostered minister, what this moment might mean. Early June LH had their Confirmation Sunday. Pastor was still running back and forth between churches. CTK got, what he perceived, as the preferred time which meant Pastor Kelly would be at CTK from 9a - 10a, sometimes run over. Sundays are prime time for pastors and that's a good time to get your ministry done. If a bunch of

folks want to talk to the pastor between 10 and 10:30, how is that pastor going to get from CTK to LH by 10:30, collect themselves, and be ready for service. Time and again he saw the stress that caused for PK. That particular Sunday LH was ready at 10:30 and she didn't show up until 10:45 before she arrived, collected herself, and was able to get up there and do the service, but was very stressed out. When you share a pastor on Sunday morning, and even though Pastor Clare is willing to be helpful saying willing and able to sign up for that, it really creates a lot of stress for the person doing the service because the pastor is running and chasing their own tail. If you want to maintain a certain level of service on Sunday mornings every Sunday morning, don't go with a shared pastor. Living HOpe getting the 10:30 service wasn't great.

- Robin adds that having the first service wasn't great either - it goes both ways and it's not perfect having the pastor going back and forth. Causes more stress and we don't get to visit with the pastor.
- Mary Paul - Why can't you do ½ year where LH is at 9, CTK at 10:30 and switch, or do it seasonal. Fred explains that would be too confusing. Mary suggest that since CTK has had 9a for so long, flip it & let LH have that time slot.
- Vote on motion = show of hands in the room. All in favor of calling 1 fFT pastor to cover both churches. 16 yes. None against. Online: Pat - no response, Jason Florio yes, Judy Olson yes, Jenny yes, Mark yes, Rachel yes, Deb yes, Dave yes, Lori hayes yes, becki yes, connie yes, mary paul yes. None against.

### **Committee Reports**

- Vision Committee Report - Paul will speak with vision committee folks to try to figure out what next steps are
- Audit Committee Report - Ellen audited 3 funds & did sampling of reports of all 3 and everything looks fine
- WELCA Committee Report - Lois (Rachel's Circle) - information is in the Annual Report
- Nomination Committee Report/Election (Neil Traxel, Mary Stevens, Jan Nealy, Jim Cox)

Nominations:

President - Paul Hoffmann

Vice President - Mark Dybdahl

Treasurer - Fred Walls

Secretary - Becki Hill

Member at Large (7) - Ellen Smith

Synod Assembly Delegates (2) - Paul Hoffmann, Connie Hoffmann

Nomination Committee - Neil Traxel, Jenny Florio

Motion by Fred Walls to accept the Nominating Committee recommendations for officers. Second by Kathy Wiskow. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passes.

### **Treasurer's Report (Budget for 2021)**

- Review/explanation of budget by Jim Cox. Discussion and questions. Motion by Neil to approve the 2021 budget. 2nd by Paul. Bonnie asked about the year end giving statements. Fred explained that Church Administrative Assistant, Rachel Moore, could not be at the meeting due to a family emergency, but would get those out as soon as she was able. All approve of the motion, none opposed. Motion passes.

### **New Business**

- Welcome Pastor Clare Cheney Sedlacek! Pastor Clare has been appointed as our bridge pastor. Fred explained the difference between an interim pastor and a bridge pastor.

Questions for Pastor Clare:

- Office hours: As of right now, office hours will be on Monday as that is when Rachel is in the office.
- How would Pastor Clare prefer to be addressed? Because she is not ordained she wasn't sure how to answer this, but after speaking with Synod, it was explained that she is OUR pastor and Living Hope's Pastor, and therefore would like to be addressed as Pastor Clare.
- What is your position on in-person service and communion? Communion is a big, huge part of congregations and of community and of worship, so for sure in February when we meet at CTK (1st Sunday in February) there will be communion at least 1 Sunday in February, but not committing to exactly when that will happen just yet. In-person - as long as we are following state guidelines and follow social distancing rules. These things are something that will continue to be discussed and confirmed with councils.

### **Old Business**

- Communication: Calendar on CTK website should be up-to-date. Fred can update it. We can print copies of this and distribute them. There has been an increase in the number of email communications from Rachel & Leslie has been sending out a prayer calendar. We try our best to communicate as soon as possible and newsletters are sent out to those who do not receive email, but most communication is via email. Minutes of council meetings are posted on the website at the bottom of page.
- Thank you to Rick & Ellen Smith for cleaning after Prime Horizon moved out.
- Explanation regarding Lighthouse Youth Ministry now using CTK space for meetings. Issue in the fall regarding the space LYM was using came from higher up in the Methodist church that they could not have more than 8 people in the building. Limited how many kids they could have and couldn't get together. Issues with Zoom calls & nobody showed up. CTK Council offered our space, as it is big enough that social distancing isn't a big issue. Fred will be donating games for kids to keep them busy while adults are meeting and enjoying coffee hour. If you are aware of people who would be interested in the space (for rent), such as a yoga class or another class, this is an ideal

space for it. Right now LYM is meeting on Sunday nights and some may be at Vineyard Church on CTH V.

From Fern Rathsack: I would just like to say, on a personal note, I am 84 years old. The oldest one in this building. In 44 years I've seen a lot of change. Some of them painful. Some of them I thought for the good. I would just like to pray that all of us in this next year, or whatever it takes, become a little more open to change, open to get to know other people, and just try and make this work. That is my prayer for all of us. And believe me in the last 5-10 years it was very painful. Painful for a 18 year old and a 14 year old grandchild, who have been very patient to talk me through all the new things on computers. So, if at 84 I can adapt to change I think we all can.

Robin: Sister Circle group meets once a month, Ecumenical group. Started with Catholics who wanted to learn how to do bible study, so they hooked up with Lutherans and Methodists. Meeting for a couple of years now. Catholic friends in Sister Circle LOVE coming here. Due to COVID, haven't met in a while, but started up last Thursday. They appreciate our space and love our church. Welcome anyone to join!

Mary Stevens: Just went to Sisters Circle for the last time. One lady came up afterwards and said she loves our Epiphany Service and missed it this year.

### **Closing Prayer and Adjournment**