

**Annual Congregational Meeting**  
**St. Martin's Lutheran Church**  
Fellowship Hall  
15 January 2023 following 10AM Worship Service

Photographs for Realm directory

Meal provided by Council - "At the Table" stewardship theme for 2023

**Called to Order** at 12:03 PM

Anita Salmon

**Opening Prayer**

Pastor Ellen Williams

**Meeting Overview**

Anita Salmon

**Appointment of Tellers**

Anita Salmon

- Appointed: Debbie Mitchell, Kathy Edgar, and LaNelle Deardorf

**Congregational input** - members are invited to fill out strategic planning and volunteer request forms.

**Approve Prior Meeting Minutes**

- January 16, 2022 annual meeting
- October 23, 2022 special meeting
  
- *Motion* to adopt January meeting minutes: by Joel Anderson, 2nd by Mike Bruemmer; approved by voice vote.
- *Motion* to adopt October meeting minutes: by Natalie Archer, 2nd by Michelle McGovern; approved by voice vote.

**Adoption of Reports** - printed and electronic copies written reports provided

- Pastor's Report
- President's Report
- Endowment Fund Report
- Committee Reports
- 2022 Statement of Financial Activities
- Updated 5-year Financial Projections Report
  
- Comments on 2022 financial activities from Treasurer Debbie Mitchell:
  - This year, we had net losses of \$68,609 in the school fund and of \$42,668 in the operating fund.

- Cash flows include the third CCRF (federal Child Care Relief Fund) payment that was expected in 2023 but received in 2022.
- Comments on updated 5 year projections for 2023 from Anita Salmon
  - Includes a proposal to use endowment earnings as budgeted income in 2023–2024 to bring our cash balance almost to the desired level.
- *Motion* to adopt reports: by Lisa Stafford, 2nd by Heidi Gibbons; approved by voice vote.

## **Special Orders:**

### Nominating Committee Report

#### Nominees for the 2023 council:

- President-Elect: Laura Raun Carroll
- Treasurer: David Dunn
- At-Large Council:
  - Penny Davis, Norm Hummell, and John Santana (2 years)
  - Carey Henderson (1 year, filling remainder of term of Councilmember Abby Adams)
  - School Board: Anna Bergstrom, Larry Archer, and Terrell Halaska Dunn

*Motion* to approve the above slate of nominees by acclamation: by Karen Cross, by 2nd by Joan O’Mara; approved by voice acclamation.

### Financial Proposals Task Force Report

**MOTION FROM COUNCIL:** “Suspend for 2023 and 2024 the 1991 congregational meeting resolution prohibiting budgeted use of endowment earnings” (does not require a second)

### Discussion:

- Current Endowment Fund bylaws allow the Endowment Fund Board to distribute annual earnings:
  - Benevolence: up to 2% of fair market value of fund (~ \$44,000 in 2022)
  - Council-designated: up to 3% of fair market value of fund (~ \$66,000 in 2022)
- The market has gone down, but the estimated value of 5% of the fund is \$100,000.
- The proposal allocates \$30,000 for ELCA benevolence and \$1,000 for Pastor’s discretionary benevolence in the operating fund budget and still allows additional \$8,000+ in funds for other benevolence considering the lower market value.

- The two-year time period is expected to be sufficient, but the congregation could vote to extend the suspension in the future if needed.

*Approved by unanimous voice vote.*

**MOTION FROM COUNCIL: 2023 Operating Fund Budget adoption**

- Proposed Operating fund Budget
- Resulting Estimated Cash Flow from combined budget proposals

*Motion* to amend the 2023 proposed operating fund budget motion to match the column labeled “Alternative informed by 2022 year end”: by David Dunn; 2nd by Debbie Mitchell.

*Motion* to call the question and close discussion: by Mike Bruemmer; approved by voice vote.

- Amendment of 2023 proposed operating fund budget motion was approved by voice vote.

Discussion

- The portion of Intern staffing income and expenses that were used in 2022 have been transferred to the operating fund from the dedicated offering fund. Additional 2022 dedicated funds for the 2023 portion of Vicar Cecie Suknaic-Saulnier’s internship continue to be held in the dedicated fund and will be transferred to the Operating Fund in 2023.
- The proposed budget does not fund a new intern after the conclusion of Vicar Cecie Suknaic-Saulnier’s term.
- Decrease in maintenance contracts: elimination of security patrols (\$6,000 annual) and correction of over-projection for 2022 year end. The new number is closer to 2022 actuals.

Amended 2023 operating fund budget motion as shown in column “Alternative informed by 2022 year end” approved by voice vote.

**MOTION FROM COUNCIL: 2023 School fund budget adoption**

- Proposed School fund Budget

Discussion

- CCRF grant funding is very flexible. The total amount is \$506,000 and is awarded in 4 equal installments. We must provide acceptable receipts for each installment to receive the next. We have received three installments thus far. To justify the payments, we can provide receipts for past expenses back to Sept.

2021. James Gavin has been compiling receipts to submit to the government to justify the grant. To keep the ongoing cash flow status of the school without the grant clear, CCRF receipts are going into a separate CCRF fund. Matched income and expenses are transferred to the School Fund as money is spent.

- The increase in tuition revenue is mostly due to the addition of three infant classrooms. Infant care tuition is very high due to staffing requirements and equipment needs. We were able to acquire equipment and recruit staff from a nearby pre-school that recently closed. A much smaller portion is due to a 7% average tuition increase for the fall of 2023.

2023 school fund budget approved by voice vote.

**MOTION FROM THE FINANCIAL PROPOSALS TASK FORCE:**

- Immediate: Per Council-proposed Operating and School budgets, use Endowment Fund Earnings and additional School revenue to cover the cash flow gaps that result from expenses exceeding income. Limit spending of the CCRF Grant to \$150,000 to reduce the cash balance gap.
- Medium Term (first half of 2023): Authorize the Executive Committee to, based on forthcoming task force recommendation for final subdivision boundaries:
  1. Subdivide the SF-3 zoned property along West Avenue
  2. List property along West Avenue for sale
- Proceeds are to be used to reduce or eliminate the building debt, so those funds can be freed up for operations.
- Long Term (TBD date): List property occupied by the parking lot on the western block for lease or sale while retaining adequate parking.
  - Proceeds are to be used to fund the growth and financial future of St. Martin's.

*Motion* to split off discussion of selling any portion of the worship park and table that part of the motion to a future meeting to allow the congregation more time to consider: by Bob Daemmrch.

Anita Salmon noted that this motion was not formulated per Robert's Rules of Order. She asked Bob to reformulate the motion into either a motion to amend the motion currently under consideration by striking or rewording a specific portion of the motion or to reformulate into a motion to table the entire task force motion currently under consideration.

Motion withdrawn.

### Discussion

- It would be faster to sell the residential property than the parking lot property that would require rezoning and developer involvement.
- Back taxes may be owed, but we are waiting for additional information from Travis County Appraisal District (TCAD) office.
- This motion is to list the property. Any actual sale proposal would require additional action by the congregation.
- Our appraised property value is for the entire tract we own on the western block. The estimated value is \$1-2 million per residential lot. We won't know the true value until we list the property for sale.
- Putting off discussion of listing for sale would be equivalent to going backward 8 years. We have missed several spikes in the market in which to sell the property. Members will have an additional opportunity to vote against a specific sale.
- What about selling only the portion of the West Avenue single-family lots that is west of a north-south line even with the west edge of the existing parking lot?
  - The medium term proposal does not include the SF-3 portion of the parking lot.
  - The proposal is to authorize further exploration of the sale. That exploration would help determine which portion to sell. The task force may determine that the portion west of a north-south line even with the west edge of the existing parking lot is the best option within the area being authorized by this motion.
  - Defining the boundaries now is like planning a wedding without a groom.

*Motion* to call a vote: Norm Hummell; 2nd by Joan O'Mara; approved by voice vote.

Financial proposals task force motion approved by voice vote.

**Old Business** - None

### **New Business**

#### St. Martin's Core Values Statements

MOTION FROM COUNCIL: Adopt the following as our congregational core values:

- We **Worship** God and deepen relationships with one another through Lutheran faith traditions, including engaging liturgy and lifelong faith formation.
- We **Extend** God's inclusive gift of welcome to all people, especially those historically excluded from traditional church communities.

- We **Advocate** for justice, righteousness, and mercy with our time, property, and power.
  - We **Rally** everyone to use our God-given gifts and talents to love, share, and serve all of God's creation boldly.
- Discussion These statements will guide the work of the strategy task force and inform other community members about who we are.
  - The word "power" is included to acknowledge that we have a capacity to act to bring about positive change and counter the forces of darkness.
  - Motion to add the word "music" after "liturgy in the first bullet point: by Pam Hite, 2nd by Jennifer Anderson
    - *Motion* to amend the amendment as follows: "...engaging liturgy, inspiring music...": by Abby Adams, 2nd by Carey Henderson; approved by voice vote.
    - Amendment to the motion: approved by voice vote.
  - Question: Who is intended by "those historically excluded from traditional church communities?"
    - Response from Council member Abby Adams: we were thinking of race, gender, and sexuality, but we wanted to avoid excluding anyone by listing only specific groups.
  - Core Values Statements *motion* as amended: approved by voice vote.

#### 2023 Monthly Benevolence Focus

- Anonymous paper ballots were distributed.
- Upon tallying the votes after the meeting, the 5 organizations with the most votes were Bread for All Food Pantry (57 votes), Mobile Loaves and Fishes (44), Lutheran World Relief (36), Crosstrails Camping Ministry (34), and LuMin (UT Austin Campus Ministry) (34).

#### President-Elect's Remarks

Stephen Ottmers began by acknowledging President Anita Salmon for steering the council through a year with many activities and accomplishments. As written in the book *Fantastic Fungi*, evolution never stops. We have a community here at St. Martin's with many individuals performing different roles to fulfill our mission of sharing God's light in our human experience. Everyone is invited to contribute their ideas and talents. Stephen thanked the new council members and school board members.

#### President's Final Remarks

Trevor Hudson, a pastor in South Africa during apartheid said something to the effect of, "We each sit next to our own pool of tears." [Post-meeting note: The exact quote is "We must remember, everyone sits by their own pool of tears."] That is true of us as well. This has been a difficult year on the council, and the notes of appreciation were very meaningful. Going forward, when you see a problem and want something changed or disagree with something happening in the church, please trust that those around you are operating with noble intent. Second, in addition to identifying the problem, please also share ideas on how you can also bring solutions.

### **Adjourn & Lord's Prayer**

*Motion* to adjourn by Jim Parkhurst, 2nd by Pam Hite; approved unanimously by voice vote at 1:48 PM.