

**Living Lord Lutheran Church
Annual Meeting Minutes of January 28, 2018**

Meeting called to order by 2017 President Robert McKinney at 11:45 am.

Devotions given by Pastor Leitch.

Attendance: 51 present with a needed quorum of 28.

Parliamentarian Bill Hawley and Tellers Earl Butts, Leroy Morgan, and Rolland Walters were appointed.

Donald Smith moved, Barbara Wright 2nd that the January 29, 2017, Annual Meeting Minutes be approved with a change on page 6 that Barbara Wright's sister's church and not daughter's church was membership affected by a same sex marriage church vote. Passed.

Barbara Wright moved, Lorraine Bell 2nd that the April 23, 2017, Special Meeting Minutes to vote on the purchase of a new organ be approved. Passed.

Bonnie Sanzenbacher moved, Stacey Altieri 2nd that the Parochial Report be accepted. Pastor reported that membership on page 9 "Statistical Adjustment-?" was a work in progress. Passed.

William Hawley moved, Pat Was 2nd that all Standing Committee Reports of Council be accepted. Passed.

Karen Bandy moved, Keith Muller 2nd that all Special Committee Reports be accepted. Barbara Wright recognized her Fuchs Memorial Fund Committee and thanked them for approving the 2017 funding for church security and exterior lighting and some funds allocated toward the new Allen Organ purchase. Motion passed. Warner Taiclet reported that Mrs. Fuchs, whose husband was the founding pastor of Living Lord Lutheran Church, from whom the donated funds were obtained, passed away this past Sunday.

Rolland Walters moved, Leroy Morgan 2nd that discussion of use of the church for same sex marriages again be tabled until next year's annual meeting. Bonnie Sanzenbacher asked, "Why was no information supplied to the congregation this year as was last year passed that it was to be supplied?" President McKinney replied, "Shared Ministry was a major issue this year and Town Hall meetings will be scheduled by Council and we will supply information as we get it." Pastor Leitch stated, "No insurance coverage is provided if the church does not perform a requested same sex marriage." Fred Welter asked, "When will Council schedule Town Hall meetings on the topic?" President McKinney replied, "Council will start talking about a schedule for throughout the year." William Hawley notified the congregation that a U.S. Supreme Court case is currently being heard on same sex marriages about a baker's refusal to bake a same sex wedding cake and that we should listen to the news as the court's decision will affect the overall future of the issue of same sex marriages. Motion passed.

Bonnie Sanzenbacher moved, Barbara Wright 2nd that the Nominating Committee consisting of Karen Bandy, Neal L'Amoureux, Donna Tompkins, and Nancy Walters nominate the following individuals for election: Nancy Walters for Fellowship Chairperson; Lorraine Bell for Later Life

Chairperson; Judy Shaffer for Outreach Chairperson; and Warner Taiclet for Council Secretary. Passed.

Barbara Wright moved, Neal L'Amoureux 2nd that Robert McKinney's choice by Council to serve as 2018 President be placed on the ballot for ratification. Passed.

Rolland Walters moved, Earl Butts 2nd that Earl Butts and Karin McKinney be nominated for the Nominating Committee. Passed. Darlene Altieri and Arlene Barkan will be voted at the February Council Retreat/Meeting to become Council's members to be on the Nominating Committee. Arlene Barkan has been Council appointed to fill the Evangelism/Membership Chairperson unexpired term of Jean Christopher-Difford, who resigned due to health issues. Finance Chairperson for 2018 will be vacant as no one was nominated.

The meeting continued to the next agenda topic of discussion with ballot voting delayed.

Lorraine Bell moved, Pat Was 2nd to allow the Shared Ministry team of Living Lord Lutheran Church and St. Paul Lutheran Church to study, research, and formulate a viable plan for consolidation of Living Lord Lutheran Church and St. Paul Lutheran Church which could be voted on in a future congregation meeting. Pastor Leitch stated that there are 305 pastor vacancies existing and not enough pastor candidates are in seminaries. Pastor said he committed to our church for 10 years and only 3 remain. He further explained that Living Lord Lutheran Church property is zoned as residential and could not in the future ever be sold for business use. Pastor stated that a survey showed that Emmanuel Lutheran Church would, of the 3 churches under the Shared Ministry consolidation discussion, be the one that would best be recommended to be closed or torn down. Pat Was gave a prepared speech that the initial creation of the Shared Ministry Committee was to assist Emmanuel Lutheran Church until it could obtain pastor and that the committee has changed from its initial created purpose to cover consolidation possibilities among 3 churches. (See speech that is attached.)

The meeting agenda continued while offices and Shared Ministry ballots were being counted by the tellers.

William Hawley moved, Fred Welter 2nd that the 2017 Audit Committee Report be accepted. Passed.

Pat Was moved, Karen Bandy 2nd that the 2018 Living Lord Lutheran Church Budget be accepted to be \$154,374.00. Bonnie Sanzenbacher asked, "If the 5.5% benevolence line item could be lowered to 4.5% or less?" Pastor addressed the question and replied, "It would be a great loss for staffing and seminary students if cut." He said only 51 pledge cards were received for 2018 with around 60 more cards possible for pledging. Bonnie Sanzenbacher stressed the need for a fundraiser to be held. Pastor agreed that in the past it has always helped. Fred Welter wanted to know why the 2018 budget will be more if the 2017 budget was a deficit. Pat Was discussed the limitations that existed in any budget cuts to the proposed budget. Nancy Walters requested that funds not be removed from any committee budgeted line item unless the chairperson of the committee has been consulted as to why funds are removed. It was determined that some funds from Fellowship's #1414 budget line item in 2017 were spent on the park picnic and were Council allocated as one-third of Shared Ministry cost. Council will try to

make sure a similar issue will hopefully not present a future problem. Nancy Walters requested that any church services that will occur outside of our church need to notify the chairperson of the action. Karin McKinney asked, "Why was \$300.00 allocated in the budget for Altar Flowers when congregation members purchase the altar flowers?" Worship Chairperson Jan Was replied, "A delivery charge of \$7.00 still exists per vase even if only one vase was delivered instead of two vases. Also, purchases of Confirmation Class flowers, All Saints flowers, and special funeral flowers as for Lynn Golen's father can occur." Lynne Walters moved, Lamar Shoemaker 2nd that the 2017 Budget item #1435 Bell Choir expenditure of \$36.15 be removed as funds came from the Corbin Memorial Fund. Parliamentarian William Hawley ruled the motion out of order as it was already expended in 2017 and therefore is not part of the 2018 budget motion. It will, however, be removed from 2017 as an expenditure. Budget passed.

Results of elections showed all nominated candidates for all 2018 offices were elected. Vote on Shared Ministry was 24 for continuance and 26 against continuance. The motion to continue the 2018 Shard Ministry study with St. Paul Lutheran Church is defeated.

Bonnie Sanzenbacher commented that there is a need for more communications with congregation members about what is going on in the church. The reply was that committee members post bulletin board items, minutes of meetings are posted, Constant Contact information is computer updated, the Lamplighter newsletter is monthly issued by computer and printed copies are also available, community activities involving congregation members are bulletin board posted, and often some church correspondence gets bulletin board posted. It was asked how we can better notify non-Sunday attending members about church activities. The reply was that any suggestions are always Council welcomed.

Karin McKinney asked that with the Shared Ministry defeat what will be done with regard to the already scheduled upcoming joint Lenten Evening Worship Services since Pastor Leitch will be on vacation. Pat Was moved, Barbara Wright 2nd that Living Lord Lutheran Church continue its planned shared Lenten services with St. Paul Lutheran Church through the 2018 Easter period. Passed.

Pastor Leitch gave the benediction.

William Hawley moved, Barbara Wright 2nd that the meeting be adjourned at 12:58 pm. Passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Warner Taiclet
Council Secretary

Members of Living Lord Lutheran Church

Several years ago, Living Lord voted to participate in a shared ministry agreement for the purpose of assisting Emmanuel Lutheran during their time looking for a pastor.

During the past couple of years, the focus of the Shared Ministry Committee has changed beyond its original scope of authority by changing worship services and other activities for the direct purpose of encouraging the merging of congregations.

Sadly, within a month of the vote for the shared ministry, St Paul's church council was discussing, in their Church Council meeting, our plans to close Living Lord.

Unfortunately, to this day, St Paul's still is of the opinion that we plan to close and don't understand our vote to replace our organ.

On a wider scale, any talk of a merger will not solve the ELCA systemic problem of dropping church attendance, fewer pastoral candidates or the need for support of congregations with limited resources or members. This is not a new problem. As long as 4 years ago, I brought the issue up at a Synod meeting for church treasurers with Bishop Allende in attendance.

On a local level, the shared ministry effort has had an adverse effect on Living Lord. We have one of the most visible churches in the area on Route 46 with a high volume of street traffic. However, each time there is no church service we are sending the community a message that we are either a part time church or one that is not dependable. Hardly, a message we want to convey if we expect to change visitors into members of our church community.

While, we understand the dilemma the church hierarchy finds itself in, Jan and I don't feel that Living Lord should be the sacrificial lamb in the process. We will vote no on any proposal to extend the shared ministry agreement or continue talks regarding a proposed merger. In addition, we suggest that the Shared Ministry Committee be disbanded.

JPW Jan 28, 2018