

Messiah Lutheran Church | ELCA – Council Meeting
Sunday, April 21, 2024 at 12:00 noon | Messiah Fellowship Hall

Council members present: Michele Wilson, Carolyn Lawhorn, Jon Driskill, Davin Henrik,
Susan Hamilton, Becky Breeden, Cristall Mount

Council members absent: Angela Kronau, Jack Wilder

AGENDA

- 1. Call to Order: Michele Wilson | Opening Devotion: Carolyn Lawhorn**

- 2. Approval of March Minutes:** Cristal Mount made a motion to approve the March minutes, Michele Wilson seconded the motion and the vote in favor was unanimously approved.

- 3. Financial Update: Steve Hess**

MELC Financial Report – Notes from Steve Hess, Treasurer

March and YTD Financials.

- **2024** Income and Spending plan \$29,878 per month
- **March** General Fund **Income** was \$2,847 above plan.
 - General Fund income is \$2,418 above plan YTD.
 - General Fund Income is **\$2,717** behind last year at this same time. **(3%)**
- **March** General Fund **Expenses** were **\$1,918** above Plan.
 - General Fund Expenses are **\$6,768** above plan YTD. **(8%)**
 - General Fund Expenses are \$887 below last year at this same time.
- **March** General Fund **Unrestricted Cash** reserves increased to \$20,803.
 - This is **3.0** weeks' worth of cash.
 - At this uncomfortably low level of unrestricted cash, I recommend spending **below plan** where possible for April.
- Other **March** items to note:
 - In 3 months, Pastor Mark spent 78% of his annual continuing ed allowance.
 - In 3 months, Pastor Mark has spent 140% of our annual Sr. Pastor Auto allowance.
 - In 3 months, Supply Clergy expense through March is at 129% of annual plan.
 - In 3 months, Building repairs are at 57% of our planned spending at \$9,127.
 - 2024 Sharon Olson endowment has been received \$5,200.
 - \$3,600 was requested form Mena Eckerd for Tyson House, ELCA World Hunger and Building.

After Steve reviewed the March Financial Report, the following items were discussed:

- a) A request was made to insure that any “gifts” made out to Building Maintenance Fund were being deposited appropriately.

- b) A question was raised about the Columbarium documentation (it was noted that there are only two available niches left). It is assumed that Kristin Kennedy has documentation on the ownership of each niche, so will be contacted about this when she returns to the office in May.
- c) Steve H. presented details pertaining to where in the budget for 2024 we are seeing the greatest expenditures. He explained some of the expenses that Pastor Mark had incurred since coming to Messiah and also indicated that property repairs had been utilized more than anticipated for that accounts yearly budget level. After much discussion about how to cover they water heater expenses (since Jon D. indicated that is an immediate concern), Council approved a campaign plan to raise money that will cover the \$20,000 estimated that will be needed to cover the cost of and installation of a “tankless” water heater. Council agrees that this is the most prudent approach to addressing this issue, so will request loan monies directly from the members of the congregation (ranging from \$20,000 down to \$2500 each) to be repaid by the church over the next 20 months. Michele W. will design the campaign flyer and send out the information to all church members in the coming week.
- d) Steve H. showed Council members the possible budget plans leading into 2025 as Messiah continues its search for a new pastor. He provided some historical changes that have occurred in the church giving patterns since Covid (the anticipated December “bump” in contributions has not been as large over the past couple of years) and, though our 2024 and 2025 anticipated budget for staff expenses is not likely to change much, we will still have to look at some creative ways to distribute the staff budget monies in a way that will allow us to provide a reasonable salary package for a new pastor. Council will continue to study this issue over the next couple of months. A question was raised about the Badenhop fund. Could the fund’s directions be expanded to cover more expenses (specifically staffing) than it is currently being used for? Steve H. explained that the Badenhop’s wishes were very explicit in that their endowment was to be used only for budgetary items that covered seniors and youth members/activities of the church.
- e) Davin H. suggested that Council follow up with each and every donation made by the church to local missions to determine how those donations are being utilized. He suggests that as a process of good stewardship in the use of our donations and if an organization is no longer using our funds in a way that matches our expectations, then we can make adjustments, as needed.

4. Monthly reports w/Notes

- a) Serve Committee: Michele W. and Shannon Waller have been involved with the Pride Interfaith Coalition and now need to find new representatives to replace them. Mike Driskill says he will work with the Diversity Committee and suggests that Leslie Wilder might be interested.
- b) Personnel – Staff Travel
 - i. Pastor Mark’s vacation – April 15-26 (Pastor Laura Henrik filling in)
 - ii. Continuing Education for Pastor Mark – May 13-16 (Pastor Jack Wilder filling in)
 - iii. Kristin’s Vacation – March 29-April 30 (Volunteers filling in M-F 10 am to 2 pm)
- c) Property: Michele W. reminded us that the UT students who helped with our March workday will still be at school until mid-May and may want a few more work hours before they leave.

5. Correspondence, updates, building use requests, etc.

Jenny Adams has submitted a request for use of the Fellowship Hall on Saturday, June 8, in the event that rain requires her family to move their son’s planned outdoor wedding to an indoor space. Council approved that building use request unanimously.

6. Small Group Meetings Update – Reflections from notetakers

Council members who have attended their small group meetings report that the meetings seem to be very informative and engaging for all attendees.

7. “Messiah Forward” Task Force update

Mike Driskill notified Council that their team is in discussion about possible uses for the upper lot, particularly what those options might be since the Deanne Hill neighborhood still has a current HOA contract with all property owners.

8. Building Use Committee update

The Building Use Committee had its first meeting April 16 to start the process of reviewing and revising MELC building use policies and fees.

9. Other Business

- a) Since the June meeting falls on Father’s Day (June 16), we will have the June Council meeting on June 9.

- b) Oktoberfest Committee has decided to cancel the 2024 Oktoberfest Festival due to the upcoming 70th Anniversary MELC activities this year.
- c) Michele asked Council members to review the policy for assistance to our unhoused neighbors before the next meeting.

10. Adjourn with prayer: Michele Wilson adjourned our meeting with prayer. The meeting ended at 3:00.

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING: Sunday, May 19 at 12 Noon

DEVOTIONS & MEAL provided by Susan Hamilton

UPCOMING DATES: Reports due: Thursday, May 9

Executive Committee: Tuesday, May 14 at 6:30 pm