



1515 N Cascade Ave
Colorado Springs, CO 80907

March 18, 2025 FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Present (via Zoom)

Yoshiko Anspach, Larry Bagley, Brenda Bocek, Bill Busovsky, Jason Fox, Julie Furstenau, Terry Hjelkrem, Joan Kuehn, Kiersten Lehmkuhl, Pastor Travis Norton, Chris White

Absent

None

Opening

The regular meeting of the First Lutheran Church council was called to order by Terry Hjelkrem at 7:00 pm.

Devotions (Brenda Bocek)

Brenda shared a portion of a Wall Street Journal article that discussed the Russian novelist Dostoyevsky and his doubts about faith. She found it surprising that the only reading material Russian prisoners were allowed to have in his time was the New Testament. Brenda noted that like Dostoyevsky she has had doubts about faith, going back to confirmation classes and wondering “how do we know what we believe is right?” As she has grown as a Christian, she has realized that it’s ok to have doubts, but is strengthened by Mark 9:24 “I believe; help my unbelief.”

Approval of Minutes

COUNCIL APPROVED THE FEBRUARY MINUTES

Finance Committee Report (Brenda Bocek)

- Brenda reminded council of the monthly budget adjustments for giving made by Yoshiko, which result in a more accurate representation of the financial situation. The report showed that the member pledged offerings are over by \$20,000 year to date. Several line items were discussed (office supplies reimbursement, music, evangelism and salaries) and deviations from budget were explained. The Asset Funds balances were discussed, and it was noted that the new GOLLA truss system and the upholstering of the new kneelers was paid for out of the Memorial Fund. Pastor Travis noted that the church is in a healthy financial position.

COUNCIL APPROVED THE FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Senior Pastor Report

- There are 16 new members that will be joining the church this coming Sunday (3/23).
- There was a good turnout for the first Lenten Wednesday soup supper and midweek service. Pastor Travis likes that the people who attended went to a variety of activities after the meal, and hopes to have more opportunities like this in the future.
- A question came up about why the ages of first communion and confirmation are different (not the norm for many of the council members growing up). Pastor Travis discussed the theological difference between communion (a gift from God that anyone can receive) vs. confirmation (something that you must understand to know what you are saying “yes” to).

- A few members of the congregation have entered hospice care this week, so we are expecting more funerals in the coming weeks.
- Sam Norton is scheduled for surgery to get a new pacemaker on April 9th.

Old Business

- Vicar Michaela was approved by a vote of 291-4 to be called as our third pastor. Her ordination service will be Thursday March 20 at 6:00, with a reception to follow in the Peel House.

New Business

- Pastor Travis is planning on giving raises to several members of the staff (Cheryl, Pastor Michaela, Anna, Robert, and Pamela). There is money available in the budget for these raises since the Financial Assistant position was eliminated.
- The council discussed the request from LFS Refugee Services to lower their rent due to funding issues. Pastor Travis explains that LFS Refugee Services didn't provide a specific proposal, and council members agree more information is needed. They consider potentially negotiating the rent for the carriage house, as it might be difficult to rent otherwise. The council also debates the implications of lowering rent and whether it could be raised again later. Pastor will ask LFS Refugee Services for more details about their plans and needs before making a decision.
- The transportation committee has met with Harry to discuss the buses and are meeting individually with staff members who use/schedule bus use (Candi, Marshall, Eric) to get more information about what the current level of use is. They will continue looking into what the options are in terms of repairs vs replacement vs rentals, and will report to council again in April.

Reminders

- The next council meeting will be on April 22nd, not the 15th (due to Holy Week activities) in person in the library. Julie Furstenau will have the devotion.

"Last Chance" Updates

- Council discussed Cheryl's request about continuing to clean up the number of members who receive envelopes for giving in order to reduce costs. Several people note that encouraging online giving and making it the default for new members would be preferable, as it reduces workload and expenses. A suggestion was also made about including a "catch-up" envelope with quarterly statements as a reminder.
-

Adjournment with Prayer - Pastor Travis 7:59 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Furstenau

Julie Furstenau
Secretary