

Tree of Life Church Council Minutes
Monday, December 21, 2020 6:30PM ZOOM Meeting

Members present: President Jack Zimmer, Vice-President Kevin Solberg, Treasurer Jim Lemaux, Financial Secretary Heidi Beckham, Secretary Susie Rust, Russ Bliese, Tom Gros, Peggy Little, Richard Schaper, Julie Timmins, Pastor Chris Lake

Members absent: Larry Klotz, Russ Bliese

Visitors: Office Manager Jill Waldrop, Pat Rowe

A. President Zimmer called the meeting to order @ 6:31 PM and Pastor Chris opened with prayer and read Zephaniah 3:14-20.

B. Consent agenda

I. **Motion:** Adoption of agenda *.

II. **Motion:** Approval of minutes (November 16, 2020)

III. **Motion:** Discussion about presenting staff gifts (in financial report)

MOTION: Little moved to accept the Consent Agenda; Schaper seconded. All were in favor and the **motion passed**.

C. Financial reports

I. Monthly Statements (November, 2020)

Lemaux reviewed the November financial statement, indicating that income was about \$30,000 and expenses were as expected. The process to approve bills was working well: Lemaux, Little, and Waldrop meet weekly to handle this. We have had a relatively close balanced budget every month this year and November financials have followed suit. We did not pay anything back to the Seeds Account. The new Scholarship fund for Bunny Stoutes has been set up. Interest on our mortgage remains the same through 2022.

MOTION: Little moved to accept the Financial Report; Timmins seconded. All were in favor and the **motion passed**.

II. Stimulus Package PPP Update on Grant

Lemaux reported that the paperwork was still in the process for the 2020 PPP "loan" to be forgiven and therefore be recognized as a grant. Lemaux plans to get an application for another PPP "loan" for 2021 through the most recent federal stimulus plan.

III Budget 2021

The Council reviewed the Budget 2021 worksheet. On the Revenue side, Little reported that our projected income for 2020 is \$423,400, which is about \$105,000 less than the 2020 budget. Lemaux reviewed details from the 2020 Stewardship Campaign in order to estimate our 2021 income. Our pledged income from 46 families was \$228,000; our pledged income thru Realm from 12 families was \$32,000. Non-pledged income from 38 families over 2020 totaled \$94,000 (through October) and was estimated through December to be \$110,000. One-off giving in 2020 from families totaled around \$12,000. The Financial committee projected \$383,000 revenue for 2021.

We have lost families on the TOL roster in the upheaval of the pandemic and therefore lost about \$40,000 in anticipated revenue for 2020. Fortunately, our PPP "loan"/grant made up for this loss. Zimmer suggested we anticipate new members in 2021,

replacing lost members, and conservatively estimate \$20,000 for unpledged income; Schaper agreed. Our total estimated income moved from \$423,400 to \$443,400. Discussion followed on other Revenue line items.

The Council reviewed the proposed Expenses budgeted for 2021. Zimmer reported a federal Cost of Living increase at 1.5%. Waldrop will move from a part-time to a full-time staff member with benefits. As Bunny Stoutes heads off to Wartburg Seminary, we will increase the amount for substitute pastors (10 for the year) to \$3000. Zimmer suggested that we hope for a full-time Youth Director to begin in fall 2021 and keep the line item proposed at \$12,000, though we may require more upon hiring someone full-time.

Discussion continued on the remaining line items, including Mortgage, Administration, Benevolence, Building, Education, Evangelism, Fellowship, Grounds, Insurance, Worship & Music, and Camp/Youth Trips. Expenses totaled \$226,684.

Zimmer excused Pastor Chris and Waldrop for a short time to discuss the proposed salary for Pastor Chris among the Council members.

MOTION: Lemaux move to accept the proposed 2021 Budget as amended; Solberg seconded. All were in favor and the **motion passed**.

Little will compile all our edits to the proposed 2021 TOL Budget to present for ratification at our congregational (ZOOM) meeting on January 17, 2021.

IV. Christmas gifts to the staff will be presented by Little on behalf of the congregation at the 7 pm Christmas Eve Service.

D. Pastoral report

Pastor Chris gave the congregational update including the following points:

- Connections with direct giving through Vanco have been closed
- The stained-glass artwork donated by Russ and Linda Bliese in memory of Joan Bliese has been completed and Russ Bliese will go pick it up.
- Pastor Chris will travel in the second half of January, first, to accompany Bunny Stoutes as she relocates to Iowa for Seminary and, second, to attend the interment of Jim Voelz at Arlington Cemetery in Washington DC. Preaching will be covered by John Stephenson and Matt Kinspotter (Lutherhill)
- We have visitors attending in-person services and 3 families interested in joining.
- There are 115 people signed up among the 4 Christmas Eve Services.
- Pastor Chris is considering teaching a preaching class in February.
- The Mutual Ministry Committee/Coaching Team will continue in 2021.

E. Old Business

I. Solberg provided the Covid Task Force Update. Attendees at in-person worship services have cooperated with safety protocols. Reservations are requested but not required and there is room for walk-ins.

II. The Memorial Walk/prayer path update will be tabled until the January Council meeting.

F. New Business.

I. The Annual Congregational meeting is scheduled for January 17, 2021, at 9:30 AM during the Sunday school hour. The two big topics are the election of Council members and the proposed 2021 Budget. Pastor Chris assured us that we could handle this meeting by ZOOM; the Synod Assembly this year will also be by ZOOM.

G. Zimmer adjourned the meeting at 9:06 PM and Pastor Chris closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Susie Rust
Council Secretary

NOTES: **2020:** Jack Zimmer President (second 2 yr. term), Kevin Solberg VP, Jim Voelz, Treasurer (Peggy Little appt. to fill 2020 Council term), Susie Rust, Secretary, Heidi Beckham, Financial Secretary, Larry Klotz, George Timmons, Richard Schaper; and elected for 3yr. term in 2020: Jim Lemaux, David Fischer (Russ Bliese appt to fill term), Tom Gros. **2018:** Jack Zimmer. President 2yr. term, Jim Voelz (Treasurer), Linda Baumgartner (Sec 2018), Kirk Helberg, George Timmons, Heidi Beckham (Financial Secretary); elected for 3 yr. terms: Susie Rust (Secretary 2019), Richard Schaper, Kevin Solberg, Larry Klotz (VP). **2017:** Jim Voelz (Trea), Linda Baumgartner (Sec.), Kirk Helberg, George Timmins, Jack Zimmer (3Yr. terms) **2015** - Heidi Beckham, Elected 2014 - Jim Voelz. (2nd term),