

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH
Annual Congregation Meeting Minutes
November 13, 2016

1. **Call to Order** – Austin Adams, President
 - a. Called to order at 12:02 pm.
2. **Invocation** – Richard Hinojosa, Council-at-Large
3. **Confirmation of Quorum** – Alyssa Jacobs, Secretary
4. **Designation of Parliamentarian** – Austin Adams, President
 - a. Pam Nelson designated as parliamentarian.
5. **Election of President, Vice President, Member-at-Large Positions 2 & 4 and the 2017 Nominating Ministry Team** – Shawn Elder, NMT Leader
 - a. 2017 Council Nominees:
 - i. Larry Patterson – President
 - ii. Anna Geleske – Vice President
 - iii. Richard Hinojosa – Member at Large #2
 - iv. Cynthia Murphy – Member at Large #4
 - b. 2017 Nominating Ministry Team:
 - i. Marcia Gackle
 - ii. Bruce Turner
 - iii. Brian Weaver
 - iv. Bob Vidmar
 - v. Austin Adams
 - vi. Ben Owens
 - vii. Jennifer Marvel
 - c. No Floor Nominations
 - d. Acclamation Motion: Move to direct Secretary to cast a ballot in favor of each nominee and then close the balloting.
 - e. Motion by Ken Kleid, Seconded by Steve Allshouse, Motion carries unanimously.
6. **Status Updates**
 - a. **Sale of Land Update** – Austin Adams, Liaison to Realtor
 - i. One offer of \$6 per square foot. Did not counter. We have had no other offers. However, we are getting someone looking at the property online almost daily for the last several months. Took a survey of all properties 1-5 acres for sale in

Flower Mound. There were 12 properties available. The average price of those properties was \$9 and change. Feel price is reasonable at \$10 per square foot. Looking for a buyer that would allow us to have a mutual parking agreement.

- ii. Clarification of what land is for sale. Land for sale is the land starting at the parking lot and going all the way back. 3.25 acres, plus or minus.
- iii. Land is being used for soccer as a community outreach. However, there are teams inquiring about using it and paying for usage.

b. **Branching Out Update** – Austin Adams, President

i. **Not moving forward with as much speed as we wanted.**

We have remodeled sanctuary. Next step is an associate pastor. Branching Out is dependent on associate pastor. However, Associate pastor is not dependent on Branching Out. We are slow walking it. We are exploring options for a space. Ron Swenson has looked at a place that would have equipment and space we would need. In the best of situations, council expects it would be 9-12 months.

- ii. **Associate Pastor Call Process:** Kim Franklin: At this point we are waiting for more candidates. We interviewed one candidate recently. That candidate is not totally off the table, but not the right fit yet. We are just waiting for a few more names for the committee to review.

Pastor Rusty: Even if we find the right fit we need to make sure we can pay for them and resource them. We will be asking an associate pastor to make a commitment to us and we need to be able to commit to them financially, with prayer, love and support. Right now if we find the perfect candidate we could not afford to pay for them. We are working on it. We need everyone to pull together.

- iii. Denise Harbert: When we kicked off the Branching Out campaign we were all very excited, and I left the meeting feeling that we already had commitments. Where is that money? Austin Adams: Branching out had one component that was the remodel of the sanctuary and that was funded by lead gifts. The second component was to reduce principal on our note. The third component was a tithe. Matt Engelmann: Last years budget included the cost for an associate pastor so it was not part of branching out. And it will be a part of next years budget as well. Denise Harbert: I thought that part of branching out was going to associate pastor. Austin Adams: if we were not doing branching out we would still need an associate pastor. That is why we included in the last two years base budget

Don Messinger: What is the size of the congregation? Austin Adams: For the purposes of this meeting the definition is that they are confirmed members of the congregation, attended at least one worship service in the previous and current calendar and given at least one gift of record in the previous and current calendar year. Around 350.

Don Messinger: What is building capacity? Austin Adams: A little less than 305. 285-290.

Ron Swenson: What about funding from ELCA for associate pastor? Austin Adams: Yes, it is still approved and pending until we call associate pastor. Ron Swenson: how is it dispersed? Pastor Rusty: It can be dispersed any way we want it, but not until we extend call. Ron Swenson:

Branching Out campaign funding of 100k? Austin Adams:

Yes, we have a verbal but will not receive funds until we branch out. Ron Swenson: Can we get into a place at a very reasonable cost and then use some of that money for an associate pastor? Austin Adams: I cannot answer that today as it is not part of our application but we can look into it.

Don Messinger: How come you cannot give you an exact answer of how many members we have? Kari Voight: We have 324.

c. **Sanctuary Furnishings** – Austin Adams, President

- i. **Still on council agenda.** We will be talking about it in December. Already adopted a process. There is a broad spectrum of how we will use these furnishings to honor God and give glory to those that gifted them.

Debbie Glaeser : Many of use thought this was the reason we came today. This is no longer a sanctuary. Where is our sanctuary? Austin Adams: I look around and still see a sanctuary. All of the worship experiences we want to provide need flexibility beyond the cake. I look around and see elements of a cross, dove, baptism, etc. I do not understand the statement. Debbie Glaeser: There is no cross, no altar.

Austin Adams: There is processional cross and one over your shoulder. Debbie Glaeser: A very small cross. Austin Adams: Do you measure your faith by the size of the cross? Our council has promised there will be a cross. The one that was there before was very heavy and could no longer be used in our flexible worship space. We will find a way to use the cross that was here before. Steve Allshouse: Janis and I have been here since 1989 and when we built this building Janis and I donated money for some of those furnishings. And while I am sad those are no longer there, it doesn't really matter. What matters is that we are here. It matters

that we come here every week to worship. Not the size of our furnishings.

Denise Herbert: would the church leadership allow us the opportunity – some of us have made commitments to Branching Out, I would like to redirect some of money that I have committed to Branching Out. Would the church leadership allow me to transfer some of my future funding to a fund to support an associate pastor instead of Branching Out. I do not want Pastor Rusty to get burned out. He is the reason why so many of us stay and I would like to keep him. Maybe take it back to the council? Austin Adams: I want to say thanks and I do not necessarily want to single you out. Thank you for your commitment. Not everyone is willing to put down a written commitment and it makes our job as council so much easier to have that written commitment. In a general way, we are always open to you modifying your commitment. We want people to do that. Things happen in life that change your personal financial situation. We invite you to come and talk to someone about changing your commitment. The best person to privately do so is Kari Voight. Denise Harbert: Is there a fund for an associate pastor? Austin Adams: There is a line in the ministry plan that would pay for an associate pastor and their benefits. The amount of cash flow that we have been short for the past two years was roughly the salary for an associate pastor and a part time ministry leader: Larry Patterson: As president elect, when you have these great opportunities throughout the year you can change it up and often – thank you. Austin Adams: The ministry takes what is take to fund the operations of the church including staffing. If someone wants to change their Branching Out to fund operating, talk to Kari. Denise Harbert: Something to consider for council as it is a business versus emotional decision. Austin Adams: I would agree and not always easy.

Don Messinger: are you at liberty to say what the annual budget is including an associate pastor? Austin Adams: Budget is 1.154 million. Don Messinger: I think we have one of the best pastors we have ever known. I asked because we should have 500 active members divided between the two services. What is the ratio between the two services? Pastor Rusty: Our average worship attendance annually for Sundays is just around 300 for our weekly worship in sanctuary. 130 in traditional and 150-175 at contemporary. That is seasonal. If you come in July you are not going to see 300, if you come in December you might see 400. Don Messinger: with your qualities, the location, the beauty of the

facility, the population, and the nature of things around here. I cannot see why we don't have 500 active members every Sunday. 250 in the early and 250 in the later. Pastor Rusty: Our church is a great church, you make it a great church. This is a place of grace, inclusiveness and a place that the world needs more and not less of. It is our duty to grow the kingdom of God. You don't know how hard Kitty works to prepare our worship experience. We can work hard to make it great but takes you to go out and share our story. If they are not connected anywhere they need to come here. These walls ought to be brimming with people. We ought to be talking about building a bigger building not selling.

7. Discussion and adoption of 2016 Ministry Plan Vision – Austin Adams, President and Matt Engelmann, Treasurer

- a. **2016 vs 2017.**
- b. Missional expense \$800,897 vs. operational expenses \$353,202.
 - i. Current year, we are \$33 under budget for operational expenses year to date. This is very much a fixed cost. The missional expenses are the ones that vary. Administration costs are staffing. We have every one of our staff at their capacity. Associate pastor and all their benefits are built in. Dave Bruns: Is relocation included? Austin Adams: No, in the past we have taken a special fund to cover that cost. Could be a local person. Could be a single individual. We would find a way.
- c. Slide show of where each dollar goes.
- d. Thank you: 122 giving units. 95 are tracking or ahead. Given 150k more than what they committed to. We are doing some things right. We are so very close into being able to live into our vision and mission.
- e. What you can do to help: Pray, take another step into becoming a tithing disciple, let church leaders know you want to help, speak to others in your small groups about our ministry goals, and invite others.
- f. Motion by treasurer, made a motion to put on floor that we adopt ministry plan, seconded by Steve Allshouse.
- g. Questions:
 - i. Gene Davenport: Mentioned that last two budgets have included associate pastor but he have not met budget. What is the gap between recommended and what we are doing? Austin Adams: roughly 9-10k a month. If you take the 30k grant it would be 2500 a month, so around 7k a month. Hard for Kari Voight and Scott Taylor to manage those expenses because while expenses are the same, our giving fluctuates. Part of October our operating account got down to 3k and

fortunately some people came forward. This is why we want to see a giving pattern before we extend a call.

- ii. Gene Davenport: if we always wait until there is money in the bank to hire an associate pastor, we will be here next year and the year next saying the same thing. How do we get to the point where there is money in the bank that we feel we can take a step in faith and where the associate pastor will help us attract new members and synergy. Austin Adams: I have asked the same question and been approached with the same question. I know you were a superintendent of schools, would you have hired 100 new teachers without the tax increase? If we had commitments to 100% fund the ministry plan, whether the cash is received or not, I know those who commit will follow through. So if we had 100% of ministry plan covered by commitments, bring on associate pastor. Then God would have to put person in our path. 30k grant would also be considered in resourcing.
- iii. Dave Bruns: It is a balancing act between waiting for God to speak and acting in faith. This ministry plan is the same plan we have had for 3 years. Been doing a lot of waiting and not a lot of doing. If we are just waiting for an associate pastor to materialize we are missing out on opportunities. If each one of us were identifying one person who is not connected and connecting them this would be a different church.
- iv. Kim Franklin: Commitment cards, you didn't send them out so what are you basing budget on? Austin Adams: it didn't work the way we did it last time so we are trying something different. We are worried about those not in the room, they are our friends and we need to reach out to them. This is the amount of money it takes to run our ministry. Now that we better understand what the commitment is called for we are looking for process to come. February/March time frame we will look at commitment process. Ministry plan we are proposing is almost a copy of the 2016 plan. Carrying forward with same set of expenses. Can't spend money we don't have.
- v. Austin Adams: Motion to adopt 2017 ministry plan as presented with direction to council to call a special congregational meeting to review the plan if commitments do not total to resource plan.
- vi. Kim franklin. But we are not going to do that commitment until February/March? Austin Adams: Problem is September is so busy, it takes us almost to end of October to put together ministry plan, trying to do something else to give it justice as we pull it together

- vii. Richard Hinojosa: What can we do as a congregation to close the gap? One thing we talk about month after month, is that 120 families have been funding ¾ of our budget. More than 120 in our church. Most of that 120 are sitting here in this meeting. Reality is that those resources are here and we need to engage those that are already at our church. Engage those who are not here. Talk to your friends and build relationships.
- viii. Steve Allshouse: a lot of people have said how much they enjoy Pastor Rusty, and I enjoy Pastor Rusty. But honestly the two best sermons I have heard this year have not come from Pastor Rusty. The two best sermons I have heard came from Savannah and Dan Lund. Both very very powerful sermons. The difference, they went out there. Savannah went to Africa and Dan went to prison. We can sit here every week and listen to Pastor Rusty but we need to have the same story of going out there and taking action. We need to find what we can do to go out and have our Africa experience and prison ministry. Time for Faith Lutheran church to go out there and stop waiting and that starts with everyone here living into budget.
- ix. Kristen Strange: As we talk about engaging other mission partners, I love that we have our associate pastor grant, but we need to look beyond that and live into our commitment. We need to step up and live into what we said we would do.
- x. Denise Harbert: With the utmost respect I do talk to people about coming. But I do not feel that I should have to talk to my fellow mission partners as to what they are giving. That makes me uncomfortable. I think it should be council or secretary. Austin Adams: that was not the intended message, not to talk to neighbors about what they are giving in dollars but in time and talent. Council does not know what individual givings are.
- xi. Don Messinger: Any way a church cannot augment their coffers. Austin Adams: I will discuss that with you after meeting.
- xii. Ken Kleid: We talk about treasure here a lot, but there are a lot of opportunities for time and talents. We have a lot of talents here. The Parish Lay Mission Academy meets at Briarwood. It is training and education to help equip you to further serve the congregation. It is a great opportunity to be involved in our NTNL mission area. I would also like to say we have a motion on the floor and I call the questions.
- xiii. Motion carries unanimously.

8. New Business, Announcements and Glorias

- a. Ken Kleid's Parish Lay Mission Academy
- b. Austin Adams: Took large alter off wedding cake and it is in storage. We have a member, Maryann Conrad, that brought to us the altar that we are now using.
- c. Matt Engelmann – Thank you to all outgoing council members.
- d. Pastor Phil – Thank you to all the support our congregation gives to Briarwood. Faith is involved and an intrical part of ministry and we are making a difference. Briarwood is an extension of ministry and we are grateful
- e. Jennifer – Should out to Elizabeth and Christian to all the work they do with our youngest disciples.
- f. Janet: Praising god from bringing husband back from mission trip in Bangladesh.
- g. Austin Adams: Gloria of thanks to God and congregation. 8 of the last 10 years I have been in leadership positions of this congregation. I have personally felt God call on me as he spoke through many of you in words of encouragement and frustration. I was comforted that God was with us. If God was with us, then what could stand against us? Serving God and you has been such a humbling experience and yet the greatest faith building experience of my life. I will be forever grateful. Thank you.

9. Motion to direct Congregation Council to Approve Minutes from this Congregation Meeting & for Secretary to destroy the ballots – Austin Adams, President

Moved by Laurie Stokes Bell and seconded by Ray. Motion carries unanimously.

10. Closing Prayer – Maury Tiller.

11. Adjournment at 1:34 pm– Austin Adams, President