

## COUNCIL MINUTES FROM MEETING ON DECEMBER 11, 2018

**CALL TO ORDER:** Tuesday, December 11th, 2018 @ 7:30. The meeting was called to order by Council President, Tony Mandik

### ATTENDEES:

Pastor Paul Townsend, Tony Mandik, Steve Moore, Shawn Rogers, Elaine Weinstein, Penny Fatula, Jack Florio, Brian Mickiewicz, Ron Hoinowski, Mindy Swartley, Tia Weinstein, and George Detwiler. Absent were Paul Condrack, Diane Sakal, Amber Statzell, and Evan Dietrich.

### DEVOTIONS

Devotions were led by Elaine Weinstein and included a reading and a short prayer.

Following the devotions we discussed current action items

### ACTION ITEMS

1. **Annual Congregational Meeting:** The meeting will be held on Jan. 27. Committees are asked to have their reports in to Cathy by January 6<sup>th</sup> to allow time for typing them up.
2. **Conference meeting for the election of the Dean:** Planned for February 19<sup>th</sup> at 7:00PM at St. Michael's Church in Unionville. Zion needs 2 delegates for this, one male and one female. Brian Mickiewicz and Diane Sakal have volunteered to be our delegates. A motion was made by Shawn Rogers and seconded by George Detwiler to accept Brian and Diane as Zion's delegates. The motion passed unanimously
3. **MAP (Missional Assessment Profile) Survey:** Additional discussions were held to discuss the results of this survey. Pastor had prepared a handout consisting of several pages of the survey. Key points:
  - a. Results of the survey are to show us where we are at this time and not where we are destined to remain.
  - b. We shouldn't try to figure out the survey without help to interpret the results, namely a representative from The Joshua Group. The reason is that the various choices, from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" may be misinterpreted. Pastor said that we will be getting more help.

Pastor brought up the point raised last month concerning trust in our leadership and how communication may be part of the problem. Some respondents also feel that when they have an idea and propose something, nothing happens. This could also be the result of a lack of communication.

We need to work through the issues this survey raised and tackle them one by one. Pastor proposed a year long strategic planning process to follow up this initial survey, reviewing Zion's ministry and mission with a goal toward planning for the next decade. Results would be reported at the 2020 Congregational Meeting. One result may be a new Zion Mission Statement.

Tony Mandik suggested the possibility of having small group sessions outside of Council meetings made up of members of the congregation with help support from the Synod to help facilitate the process. Pastor said there are individuals in our Synod who have been trained to help congregations through the process.

George Detwiler asked whether there are any suggested ways to draw people out regarding their responses. Specifically, where the choice of "disagree" and "strongly disagree" reach almost 20%, that indicates there may be a serious issue. Issues dealing with "Belonging" and Zion's "Culture" brought out some strong negative feelings. Pastor offered that the small group sessions may be a way to further explore issues and problem

areas. And, of course, The Joshua Group has individuals and programs to help but these are not free.

Mindy Swartley asked if there are guidelines and suggestions available to Zion that would not carry a cost. Pastor said there are. Mindy feels if we undertake a year long process there should be guidelines to provide focus so that something is accomplished at the meetings. Pastor agreed we will need an outside person to guide this process.

Pastor made a motion that we proceed with a year-long strategic planning process that would review our ministry and mission. The goal is to plan for Zion's next decade of ministry. Mindy Swartley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously

4. **First Responders Sunday** : This is proposed for January 6<sup>th</sup>. The event is being coordinated by the Cemetery Board and they have requested the sum of \$2,200 for a catered lunch to be held following the second service. There were concerns raised regarding the cost. The \$22 per person was much higher than that for our 275<sup>th</sup> Anniversary luncheon. Also, given the financial situation at Zion this year there were questions of whether we should be spending that much at this time. After additional discussion it was proposed that a \$1,000 cap be put on expenditures and present that to the Cemetery A motion was made by Mindy Swartley and Seconded by Shawn Rogers to authorize \$1,000 for First Responders Sunday. The motion passed unanimously.

A second potential concern was that some of the first responders may be on duty and in uniform and required to carry a sidearm. A question was put to Council by Tony Mandik whether that would be an issue with anyone. Generally, Council didn't think it would be an issue as we have had members at services in the past who were on duty and armed. Tony suggested that Pastor mention the fact during a prior Sunday service along with the fact that some fire trucks and other apparatus may be on site that day also.

5. **Council Attendance:** Council President Tony Mandik reviewed that portion of Zion's Constitution dealing with attendance at Council meetings. Our Constitution states that if a person is no longer a member of Zion or has more than two successive unexcused absences from Council meetings a Council member's place shall be considered to be vacant. George Detwiler asked what is a valid cause for an absence? Work related absences are increasingly a factor. Pastor offered that if a member does not notify Council of a scheduled absence it is considered unexcused. And if the absences are going to be ongoing (as with work related situations), it might be better if the person steps aside. There was general agreement among Council members. We have one particular member whose normal working schedule includes every Tuesday night and the number of unexcused absences has now reached over 6 in succession. A question was asked whether anyone had reached out to discuss the situation with the Council member. Apparently, that has not happened. Tony Mandik, as President of Council, said he would have that discussion.

## REPORTS

- **Minutes from the previous meeting:** The minutes from the November Council meeting were reviewed. There were no additions or corrections. A motion was made by Brian Mickiewicz and seconded by seconded by George Detwiler to accept the minutes as written. The motion passed unanimously.
- **Pastor's Report: Pastor Paul:** The Pastor's report was presented in writing. It is summarized here:
  - Travelled to NC at the beginning of the month to visit his Mom who has been ailing. She is, thankfully, showing improvement
  - Held 7 school story sessions
  - Prayer of Commendation (Last Rites)for Pat Buzzard
  - Participated in Zion's Clean-Up Day on Nov. 17<sup>th</sup>
  - Congregational Budget Approval Meeting on Nov. 18<sup>th</sup>
  - (2) Grandparents Day events with the school. This involved 6 separate events, each with over 100 people involved.
  - Conducted Pat Buzzard's funeral service
  - Participated along with several congregational members at the Thanksgiving Community Luncheon at Royersford UMC.

- Attended Living God Lutheran Church in Honeybrook, PA for the installation of Pastor Justin Nickel
  - There were also 9 family visitations, 7 hospital visits, 2 homebound visits, 1 counselling visit, and 11 other member contacts. In addition, there were 8 Council/committee meetings, 1 staff meeting, 1 Zion Nursery School meeting, 4 meetings with Lutheran Pastors, and 1 community meeting. Pastor conducted 8 Sunday services, 3 Confirmation Classes, 1 funeral and 4 First Communion classes.
- **Christian Ed/Youth: Shawn Rogers:**
    - The first Communion class completed their classes and took their first Communion on December 2<sup>nd</sup> at the 10:45 service.
    - The annual Christmas Play was held on December 8<sup>th</sup>. It was a great success and Shawn thanks all those involved. She observed that the level of enthusiasm shown by the kids and the support from the congregation is so important because these are the church leaders of tomorrow.
    - December 16<sup>th</sup> Kelly and Tim will have their class. Unfortunately, without “Donuts with Miss Maggie”.
    - On January 6<sup>th</sup> the Sunday School will hold their New Year’s celebration. This year it will be downstairs as the Fellowship Hall will be in use. That evening the Youth Group Christmas party will also be held
    - On January 20<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 we will again be holding the Zion birthday party. Anyone who wants to sponsor a table for this event should see Shawn. There are 12 tables, one for each month, with each table having a theme.
    - An ice skating event will be held on January 20<sup>th</sup> at Center Ice from 2:00 – 4:00PM.
- **Finance Committee: Jack Florio:** No meeting this month. No report.
- **Property Committee: Steve Moore:**
    - Jiffy Products is currently installing windows in the Preschool. They will also be taking care of the gutters around the church building and parsonage.
    - The driveway paving project has been completed by A&H.
    - A tree service is being looked at for removal of dead trees and an evaluation of others that are not in good shape.
    - Replacement windows and the Bilco doors should be coming in shortly for the former parsonage.
    - Classroom 7 had the thermostat replaced.
    - Bill Marsala from Marsala Electric came in to look at an electrical issue affecting the sign along route 724 and some exterior lights. The underground wiring may be deteriorating and Bill will need to return with additional help to diagnose the problem.
    - Clean-up was held day on November 17<sup>th</sup>. Not much could be done outside but windows in the Fellowship Hall were repaired and some interior painting was completed.
- **Social Ministry: George Detwiler:**
    - The sleeping bag collection for the homeless was very successful. 16 sleeping bags were donated and were delivered to “The Ministries At Main Street” at Trinity UCC in Pottstown along with the remaining 50 food packets that we had packed.
    - On December 5<sup>th</sup> we held the 2<sup>nd</sup> “Lunch and Laughter With Seniors” in the Fellowship Hall. Attendance increased to 16 vs. 10 for our first get together so that is a good trend.
    - Zion participated during the week of December 3<sup>rd</sup> at “Meals For St. Mary’s”.
    - On December 12<sup>th</sup> Zion will sponsor “Hope On the Hill” at First UCC in Spring City.
    - It is Zion’s turn to participate at the Food Pantry this Thursday, Dec. 13<sup>th</sup>.
    - The Christmas “Giving Tree” has been set up and again has been very successful.
    - We will again be holding a “Christmas Caroling for Shut-Ins” this year on December 16<sup>th</sup>. Everyone is welcome to take part. A list of potential people to visit has been put together.
- **Stewardship Committee:** No report
- **Worship and Music: Ron Hoinowski**
    - Deck the Halls Sunday was held on December 2<sup>nd</sup> this year following the second service.
    - Christmas Eve services will once again be held at 3:00, 8:00, and 11:00.

- Removing of the greens and decorations will be on January 6th.
- **Capital Campaign: George Detwiler:**
  - November marked the most successful month thus far for the Capital Campaign. Donations exceeded \$26,000 while expenses totaled just \$5,000.
  - Total donations now total \$220,000 which exceeds the total pledged amount of \$214,000. A few unplanned large donations have been a very pleasant and welcome surprise.
  - Overall expenses total \$188,000 leaving a balance of \$32,000.
  - Jack Florio asked us to keep in mind that 10% of the funds collected are earmarked for community outreach. This means that of the \$220,000 collected close to \$22,000 is for outreach which brings down our available surplus for improvements from \$32,000 to \$10,000.
  - We need to put together an updated priorities list on work that needs to be done. Steve Moore (Property) and Ron Hoinowski (Worship and Music) agree and, especially with potential improvements to the sanctuary, we need some outside help. Some ideas were discussed. Raising the platform area, increasing the versatility of the area, improved lighting and sound are several of the ideas. Possible input from architects with experience in church related construction would be helpful. Elaine Weinstein said she would ask her husband, who is an architect, if he could recommend anyone with that background to help us. Improvements to outside lighting and installation of handicap-accessible doors also need further investigation. Other projects (outdoor lighting improvements and handicap accessible doors) were brought up and need further discussion in committees.
- **Zion School: Shawn Rogers:**
  - On December 20-21, the school will have their annual Christmas program.
- **Zion Cemetery: Steve Moore:**
  - The Board is attempting to organize the Board's finances and also working to organize the records of the cemetery into a registry that helps people find the graves they are looking for.
  - Planning for First Responders Day is ongoing.

## FINANCIAL REPORTS:

Jack first reminded us that 10% of the Capital Campaign funds are earmarked for community outreach programs. That is \$22,000 of the \$32,000 remaining in our Campaign account. Ron Hoinowski emphasized that it should be local programs.

Jack then reviewed the monthly financials. The monthly total of \$44,000 looks impressive until you realize that over \$26,000 of the total was the Capital Campaign donations.

A review of the Income and Expenses statement reveals that our Current Fund deficit increased in November from \$38,000 to over \$42,000. Envelope giving continues to be weak. Through November it is tracking over \$30,000 below budget and the months of October and November were among the weakest months of the year in terms of total income. Plate offering is also down substantially (\$8,000 budget vs. \$3,500 actual).

Jack says, regarding the above, that he needs to take a closer look at individual giving units to get a better idea of what is causing the decline.

The Improvement Fund balance went further into the red due to repairs (\$1,800) to the baby grand piano.

Jack then discussed a few particular items that need further review.

- Insurance: Actual expenses total \$18,500 YTD vs. \$15,800 budgeted for the entire year. Counting December's payment we will end 2018 with expenses of \$19,200. There may be some variance

when the school's portion is factored in but there needs to be an evaluation of our insurance costs.

- Church maintenance: Budgeted \$3,000. Actual is \$7,800. Trash removal has cost \$700 more than we budgeted. We will be looking to see what can be done to reduce that number.
- Zion Anniversary: We spent \$2,000 that was not budgeted. A question was asked whether that expenditure should come from the Capital Campaign funds? There was general agreement that the money spent was to have been considered a normal expense, not tied to the Capital Campaign.

In addition, there was \$4,600 that did not show up in the report. State and Federal Payroll taxes were late being paid as a result of a clerical error. So our overall deficit is really \$4,600 higher than shown in the reports.

A motion was made by George Detwiler to accept the financial reports. Seconded by Mindy Swartley. The motion passed unanimously.

### **OPEN DISCUSSION & CALENDAR**

Tony Mandik asked us to remember that the Audubon Symphony will be performing on December 12<sup>th</sup> at 7:30, Christmas Caroling for Shut-ins is on the 16<sup>th</sup>, First Responders Sunday is on January 6<sup>th</sup> and the Congregational Meeting is on January 27<sup>th</sup>. Also, all Annual Reports are due to Cathy by January 6<sup>th</sup>.

Shawn also offered a thank you to everyone who helped with her Mom's funeral

A motion was then made by Shawn Rogers to close the meeting. It was seconded by Steve Moore. The motion passed unanimously.

Our next Meeting will be on January 8<sup>th</sup> at 7:30. Devotions will be by Brian Mickiewicz.

The meeting closed with a prayer by Pastor Paul and Council praying The Lord's Prayer.