

## Calvary Lutheran Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

Koinonia Room

Attendance: Harley Aalfs, Cathy Halbritter, Jan Ruby, Meghan Knott, Lori Holmgren, Dion Warne, Bridget Pederson, Brian Henrickson

Staff: Pr. Rick, Pr. Amy

Absent: None

Guests: Teri Sokulski, Caleb Hanson

Opening Prayer / Devotions: Pr. Rick

**Approval of Agenda:** Motion – Dion, Meghan 2<sup>nd</sup>. None opposed. Motion passes.

Motion to appoint Teri Sokulski to serve on Council for the remainder of the year, up until the Annual Meeting. Lori motion, Dion 2<sup>nd</sup>. None opposed, motion carries.

**Approval of October Minutes:** Motion – Dion, Meghan 2<sup>nd</sup>. None opposed. Motion passes.

**Approval October 2025 Treasurer's Report:** Motion – Cathy, Lori 2<sup>nd</sup>. None opposed. Motion passes.

Discussion about borrowing from the interest on the special funds to pay our bills, behind at around negative \$125,000. Our funds are doing well in the market and get us by. How do we make a budget for 2026 that allows us not to borrow from ourselves? We need our giving to match our needs.

### **Pastor's Reports:**

Pr. Amy – United for Neighbors Program – a plea for donations to 3 funds in the area for food, heating, and housing – Kandiyohi County Food Shelf, WACF Good Samaritan Fund, UCAP Housing Programs. Discussion for special offering to these funds like Thanksgiving Eve Offering – overall consensus is we want to do this, need a vote, plus we need to communicate to the congregation how to donate.

Pulpit Supply – Pr. Amy has a list of people to work with that are retired or in between calls. Thomas Bonnema will be here on 12/28 to preach and will do a presentation at Coffee after. Brian asked that Pr. Amy put a schedule together and share with council so we are aware of who is coming. Some moments where Pr. Amy will preside and the guest will preach and vice versa.

Music Ministry Update – Naomi has had a defibulator placed last week and discharged Friday and has movement restrictions. She has took some things home to work on, she has some weight restrictions, and arm raising restrictions. We have been looking at getting help to assist with music and are putting together a schedule of help for 6 weeks – Molly Aalfs is helping, JoAnn Halverson has played for us, Carter from GLLM has been playing guitar and leading the youth on Sunday mornings. Pr. Amy put a call in to Custom Made Band to see if their band will play for us – looking to have them come on a Sunday in December. On the weekend of 12/13 and 12/14 – Terry Shaw will play on Saturday night and will help with the Christmas Program. We are hopeful that Naomi will be back after that. Elsa will be looking at some Saturday nights to assist us.

Holiday Hours – Thanksgiving Eve 6:30 p.m. worship, Pie Social after, Council helps with that. Blue Christmas is 12/18 at 6:30 p.m. Norwegian Service on 12/23 at 7 p.m. Christmas Eve on 12/24 at 3:30 and 5:30 and 10 p.m. “midnight service”; all held in the sanctuary. Christmas Day on 12/25 at 9 a.m. in the Chapel.

Other – Office Hours for the Church Office – 6 days are paid, Pr. Amy has put it down on the calendar and the staff are aware. The Friday after Thanksgiving we are open for normal business. If staff works it out amongst themselves and takes vacation for their time off that is fine.

Pr. Rick – Executive Committee asked me to update job descriptions – 2 office people, the custodian. We still have work to do regarding the Music Ministry job description – that has not been done yet. Pr. Rick did an annual review with Paula, Marie, and Kim. Their job descriptions have been updated. Kim Larson will get the Personnel Committee together and update Pastors / Exec Committee.

### **Board Reports:**

Worship – No meeting in October. Met by email. Voting regarding communion happened the weekend of the volunteer fair; the majority of the congregation wants continuous line versus kneeling; glasses of wine versus intinction is preferred. Suggestion is that we have kneeling communion during festival times like All Saints Sunday, Lent, Advent, etc. The rest of the year do a continuous line. Utilize glass cups and real bread all of the time. Altar Guild is ready for this. Advertise for a start on 11/30 for this change to begin. We do have enough people for baking bread because we only have one service on Sunday however, still need help in December because there are more services plus some regular volunteers leave for the winter. Array vs. Traditional update – every other is still the preferred method. Traditional on Saturday Nights. Discussion will need to be had about our music programming and will get on the agenda for future Board meetings.

Faith Formation – Youth Leadership Team is hosting a Fall Party from 6:30 – 8 p.m. on 11/14. Met Sunday Night the 9<sup>th</sup> for setting up and planning. Kids are really excited about hosting – they all can invite their friends. Hoping for a good turnout! Dawn Clouse from Hope for Our City did a shout out to the kids on a local podcast regarding their service on Wednesday Nights. Bridget shared the plan for the year for service projects and events that the Youth Leadership Team are planning. New TV installed in the theatre and small conference room. A congregant donated the TVs. In the small conference room we can do zoom meetings better.

Finance – Shawn Swenson wants to step down as Board Chair and Treasurer, we plan to ask Bill Fenske to step in to this role. The Board is still meeting twice monthly, lots of discussion that we will use the Edward Jones money to pay down our general fund; \$120k from it to pay our general fund. Heritage Bank went to Bremer / Old National Bank. Discussion was had by the board about spending Jerry Anderson funds on fixing the church. Dion commented that the Jerry Anderson funds can be used for the “physical plant”. The Board plans to make a budget after the Stewardship Drive is done. Shawn shared 2 full time Pastor model will continue to put us in arrears. Dion updated that Shawn met with us at the Exec Meeting in November – 2 budget scenarios came to us this afternoon – one with calling a lead pastor which would be a 2 Pastor model, and one where we budget for 1.5 Pastors which is 1 pastor and then pulpit supply or other type of help hired. We can get the budget balanced with the 1.5 model. Will we actually form a call committee? Still want to finish ministry site profile, want it updated and done. Council has to decide soon – will we actually call another full time pastor? This needs to be a

discussion at the annual meeting in January. If you want two pastors at this church – would need 15% more than what you are currently giving. Historical giving detail was shared from Shawn – we have a revenue problem. We have some that come and give less, we have some that don't come and don't give, and then those that left and stopped giving. Finance committee does not support a deficit budget going into 2026.

Stewardship – Temple Talks in October and November – Caleb, Scott, and Chuck all gave talks. Mailed out commitment cards. Weekend of 11/22 and 11/23 will be an offering during communion. Will tabulate that and formulate what we see as giving for 2026 based on the pledges. Discussion of hiring a professional or stewardship experts to run our stewardship drive for an entire year – one is out of Sioux Falls, there are some retired Pastors that do this work, etc. Pr. Rick explained what the Consecration Sundays are, you need to start messaging that you want to give out of gratitude not just because the bills need to be paid. Caleb shared that he believes we need to have messaging about purpose. Pr. Rick shared that giving needs to be what the congregants want to do not what they are begged to do. Want to have a message for the year that ties into the Stewardship Drive – brag on our current ministries, build momentum and excitement. A building project could be a thing to get excited about.

Thanksgiving Eve Pie Social Set-Up: Brian, Teri (6:00 p.m.); Serving: Lori, Cathy, Dion, Jan; Clean-Up: Harley, Meghan, Bridget, Jan

### **Special Reports:**

First Fruits recognized – will need a presentation at the Annual Meeting.

Coffee w/the Council – November 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> – Jan (Sat & Sun), Dion (Sun), Meghan (Sun), Brian (Sat & Sun), Harley (Sun), BP (Sun)

- Teri is gone
- Pr. Amy will put a message together about gratitude
- First page of the financial report will be good handout, topic is finances

Nominating Committee – Bridget updated that we have met once and meet again on 11/19 at 6:30 p.m. We have ballot slots filled with the exception of 1 Nominating Committee Member and the Synod Assembly Representatives. We also need to shore up that there are Board Chairs in place for 2026. Presentation of Ballot should happen at the December Council Meeting.

### **Unfinished Business:**

Conference Room Video for Zoom is done. Pr. Rick installed it for us.

Call Committee and Ministry Site Profile was discussed previously in the meeting. We will finish our MSP – that group is Sue Roepke, Kim Hanson, Caleb Hanson, Dion Warne, and Brian Henrickson. Pr. Amy will assist going forward in Pr. Rick's absence. MSP will then need to be given to the Synod and Council.

### **New Business:**

MN Paid Leave Act: Dion shared that small businesses would do .44 from the employees and .22 from the Church. MN plan is available to us and most businesses are going through this. Benefits packet for the church how do we want this set up? We have to tell CDS. There is a zoom on Thursday the Synod is

hosting regarding the MN Paid Leave Act to clarify about what this means for Pastors. Paula has attended 2-3 info meetings on this topic, council reviewed the handout she left for us.

Motion that employee pays .44 and the church will pay .22. Dion – motion, Teri – 2<sup>nd</sup>. None opposed, motion passes.

Motion to take the offering on Thanksgiving Eve Service and donate it to the United for Neighbors – Dion, Bridget 2<sup>nd</sup>. All in favor, none opposed.

Reminder to have Boards do their reports, remind the committees. Deadline for Paula is 12/5.

Motion to appoint Cathy as acting secretary for December. Bridget – Motion, Teri – 2<sup>nd</sup>. None opposed, motion carries.

Thank you to Pr. Rick for serving us, round of applause.

Motion to Adjourn – Dion, Harley - 2<sup>nd</sup>. None opposed. Motion carries. Meeting ended with Lord's Prayer at 8:00 p.m.