

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
Concord, California

Sixty-Seventh Annual Congregational Meeting

January 31, 2021 – 10:35 AM via On-Line Zoom

CALL TO ORDER AND OPENING PRAYER

A quorum was established with 25 members in attendance via on-line Zoom.

The 2021 Annual Meeting of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (GSLC) was called to order at 10:40 AM on January 31, 2021, by Kristi Buchholz, Council President.

Opening prayer by Pastor Jeremy Serrano

MOTION made by Sue Hertless to accept the January 31, 2021, Sixty-Seventh Annual Congregational Meeting Agenda; seconded by Mark Deniston; motion passed unanimously.

Review of January 26, 2020 Annual Meeting Minutes, previously approved by GSLC Council

CHURCH COUNCIL ELECTIONS

Review Procedure / Zoom Ballot

Pastor Jeremy created individual polls on the computer - when a vote is taken, a screen pops up on your device, and you can click “yes,” “no,” or “abstain.” Pastor Jeremy does not see who makes what vote, he sees only the total of each vote; thus, no tellers are necessary.

Nominating Committee Report

Kristi reported because of the pandemic, everything was unusual this year. Council members reached out to the congregation and found one prospective person for Council.

Introduction of Candidates

Sue Hertless introduced Scott Etzel. Sue reported she and Scott have known each other for 10 years, both having served on the Thrivent Board, with Sue providing leadership during that time. Sue reported Scott is a Habitat for Humanity leader, with much dedication and organization. Scott is very interested in serving on Council.

Scott thanked Sue, and stated there is a biography on him in the Annual Meeting notes. He is looking forward to coming back to Good Shepherd, and he lives close by the church. Scott stated he looks forward to learning more about Friends Feeding Friends (FFF) and our community.

Candidate Balloting

Marcia Sander stated the 2023 council members expiring are not listed in the agenda. Candace will correct this, and added the following:

Kristi Buchholz	first three-year term of two terms, expires January 2023
Jay Neyenhouse	first three-year term of two terms, expires January 2023
Renee Reis	first three-year term of two terms, expires January 2023

Zoom voting results: Scott Etzel was accepted as a new Council member (1 abstention).

Kristi reported there are three Council positions available starting in 2021: Fellowship, Worship and Music, and Property and Long-Range Planning. She inquired if there were nominations from the floor. Leone McCullough volunteered to represent Worship and Music on Council. **MOTION** made by Greg Buchholz to accept Leone McCullough as a nominee for Council; seconded by Mark Deniston; motion passed.

REPORTS / UPDATES

(Some individual committee reports are contained within the Annual Report)

Laura Mott reported the Finance Committee has been doing well in planning our investments, as they are doing well. We are grateful to the leadership of Finance. Due to the pandemic, a PPE loan was taken out when it became available. We followed all of the specified rules for church payroll only, so we expect the loan to be forgiven. Thanks to Gordon Monroe, we have a balanced budget; investment funds were very helpful. We survived a fraud attack last year, and we recovered all of the fraud charges and bank charges – this was a terrible time for us.

Laura reported we are looking forward to a new roof this year. We are happy there was money available for us to help others. She thanked everyone for their generous donations.

Greg Buchholz thanked Laura for her efforts during the fraud attack, as it took a lot of her time and energy. He thanked Gordon, as every year Gordon is a great shepherd for Good Shepherd – thank you!

Bob Ripley echoed what Greg said, during these uncertain times. Bob said we have a significant amount in stocks and mutual funds. The market is starting to take a turn - we should look at where we are. Should we consider trading now before the bubble pops?

Mark Deniston asked Laura why the budget shows a raise for several staff members, and questioned why Tom Deans-Flegal and Jamie Rodemsky's salaries stayed the same. Kristi said raises were in line with past standards. Pastor Jeremy said Tom specifically is being paid on the higher end already for his position.

Donna Albrecht asked about the budget line item for an organist, and will we get an organist again? Pastor Jeremy said as soon as we are back to meeting in person, we will have an organist again, but too hard during the pandemic and social distancing. Donna asked if the organ music can be prerecorded for our on-line worship services.

Marcia Sander said, regarding the PPE loan we took out, we have retained earnings of over \$243,000, and it seems like an interesting choice to take out a loan when we have reserves. On the Profit and Loss statement, she asked about the services for Vanco charges – interesting, there is not a line item in the budget for those proposed expenses. Laura said it is under “other business expenses.” Marcia said there seems to be a large increase in our telephone bill, and asked if that is because of Zoom meetings, or what is the reason for increasing the phone budget by \$1,000? Pastor Jeremy said we budgeted a certain amount in 2020 and we spent \$1,000 over, so the new budget reflects that. Marcia asked why is there such a big increase? Laura said we had to increase our bandwidth (telephone and internet). Marcia said we should show these as line items, and Laura agreed.

Bob Ripley asked what was the amount of the PPE loan? Laura stated \$22,000, and we will be asking for forgiveness of the loan. She said Bank of America is stalling the procedure of asking for forgiveness.

Mark Deniston asked why the Stewardship Committee budget went down to \$0. Laura stated it was probably because we did not use the money – she said she will talk with Gordon as to why that amount went down to \$0 in the budget.

Pastor's Report

Pastor Jeremy reported it has been a rough year. We have been through a lot. People have died this year and we cannot have funerals. People are lonely. He suggested calling people when they come to mind. He is proud of our congregation because, in our history, we all have prepared for a time like this. We are doing well financially because of our dedication to our church. FFF is doing a great job, Dana Deniston is keeping our volunteers safe, spit guards have been installed, and we are doing the work of the kingdom because of our church family, financially and with our dedication to each other.

Social Ministries – Mike Henry

Mike thought an amendment was made to his report because the numbers diminished slightly. He said volunteers diminished significantly, but FFF still managed to reach

43,000 people. He talked about expanding our ministry into the community. CPR and other events were put on the back burner for now, but we will keep moving forward.

Fellowship

Pastor Jeremy said we do not have a liaison for Fellowship so would appreciate anyone wanting to represent this team.

NEW BUSINESS

Presentation / Adoption of 2021 Budget

MOTION made by Donna Albrecht to adopt the 2021 Budget; discussion; seconded by Reyanne Freeman; discussion; motion passed unanimously.

Report of Council Elections

Kristi welcomed Scott Etzel and Leone McCullough as new members of Council. Kristi thanked Nancy Judge and Tony Rogelstad for their work on Council and committees.

Congregation Authorization for Council to approve today's Sixty-Seventh Annual Congregational Meeting Minutes at the next regularly-scheduled Council meeting.

MOTION made by Greg Buchholz for Council to approve the January 31, 2021 Sixty-Seventh Annual Meeting Minutes at its next regularly-scheduled Council meeting; seconded by Marcia Sander; motion passed.

OPPORTUNITY FOR CONGREGATIONAL INPUT (questions, ideas, comments)

- Rosemary Fassl said we may have skipped over the Evangelism report, but Kristi said the report is in the Annual Meeting booklet.
- Marcia Sander realized that, as a congregation member, she has not been receiving a lot of information this past year about what is going on at church, when we can come to service, or a report that we could see. Can we do a quarterly update? She stated we get the newsletter, but not a Council update as to what is going on in the workings of the church. Laura said the email blast has been changed from e-blast to newsletter format, and maybe we can put some of the Council minutes in the newsletter. Pastor Jeremy said the Wednesday after each Council meeting, he posts the approved previous month's Council minutes on the church website. We started that probably two years ago. Rosemary asked that we receive an email to inform us of when the minutes are posted. Pastor Jeremy will post a link to the Minutes, making them easier to find.
- Susan Metzger talked about communication within the church and with people who are not on line, especially our more senior folks. She appreciates the weekly updates. Laura talked about mailing hard copies to those who do not have email,

and we can put links in the weekly newsletter. Pastor said he does not know how to give people without electronics access to our services and media information. This Annual Meeting has been advertised for a month. Some people do not know where to look on line. Pastor suggested we can get a service with a prerecorded message, as in a phone tree. Bob Ripley said we should identify those individuals who cannot or will not use computers/devices, and maybe we can make phone calls to them. Pastor said we will discuss this topic at our next Council meeting.

NEW BUSINESS (continued)

MOTION made by Pastor Jeremy to accept the Sabbatical Resolution; he said it does not clarify when the sabbatical will happen, but that we are planning for it financially; Renee Reis seconded; discussion – Pastor is hoping for the sabbatical in 2022. Concern about the timing of Pastor being gone due to this pandemic. Mark Deniston said if it is to happen 2022, it will need to be in the budget. Pastor said the grant he will apply for should give us pulpit supply. Tracey Rentner said this is invaluable for a pastor. Donna Albrecht thought we should introduce the concept through the newsletter to inform the congregation ahead of time; it's an incredibly valuable opportunity, grant covers his expenses. Bob Ripley said we may consider setting aside a reserve each month now to fund the sabbatical ongoing, to minimize the financial impact for up to three months' leave. Greg Buchholz agreed with Pastor that we discussed this as part of the call process, and we did not let the congregation know about it ahead of time. Kristi said this is the first time in 20 years where a pastor is requesting a sabbatical. Mike Henry asked if we would have the same pulpit supply during the sabbatical time - Pastor said the church and the pulpit supply sign a contract for the leave time. Pastor said summer 2022 is his hope for this time off, but he is flexible. He has been our pastor for 7 years, so is eligible to take a sabbatical. Council never got around to approving a sabbatical policy. Pastor shared his computer screen so we could see the Resolution. This resolution says we are establishing a policy, and the Mutual Ministry Team will develop the wording for this policy. Motion passed (**23 yea, 1 abstention**).

CLOSING PRAYER / ADJOURNMENT

MOTION made by Donna Albrecht to adjourn; seconded by Mark Deniston; motion passed, and meeting was adjourned at 11:57 AM, with the Lord's Prayer.

Minutes respectfully submitted by,

Candace Bradley, Council Secretary
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church