

Tree of Life Church Council Meeting Minutes
Monday, June 15, 2020 6:30PM (ZOOM)

Members Present: President Jack Zimmer, Vice-President Kevin Solberg, Treasurer Jim Voelz, Financial Secretary Heidi Beckham, Secretary Susie Rust, David Fischer, Tom Gros, Larry Klotz, Jim Lemaux, Richard Schaper, Julie Timmins, Pastor Chris Lake

Visitors: Youth and Families Director Bunny Stoutes, Music Director John Burkwall, Pat Rowe

A. President Zimmer called the meeting to order at 6:34 PM. Pastor Chris led the opening prayer and read from I Kings 3, the story of King Solomon's judgment between two women.

B. Consent agenda

I. Motion: Adoption of agenda *.

II. Motion: Approval of minutes (May 18, 2020)

III. Motion: Ratify new members: none

MOTION: Lemaux moved to accept the Consent Agenda; Voelz seconded.

Amendments to the minutes included adding the names of Aprill Rambarran and Pat Rowe to the Covid-19 Task Force. All were in favor of the minutes as amended and the **motion passed.**

C. Discussion agenda: Covid-19 Task Force Report and Recommendations

To address the issue of when in-person worship services might resume, Jim Lemaux, Chairman of the Covid-19 Task Force, presented a thorough analysis of coronavirus case statistics to date using digital spreadsheets. The general trend of new cases plateaued through early June and ultimately Sunday, June 28, was the recommended date to reopen in-person worship at TOL. However, significant uptick in new cases from June 12 onwards suggested some caution. Discussion followed. Perhaps the uptick was due to younger populations (ages 20-40) downplaying risks and resuming gatherings without social distancing or masks. Many of the new cases included people in this age group. Will this spike in the numbers be temporary following holidays and/or the phased reopening in Texas? The number of coronavirus deaths is still predominantly in the above-70 age group(50%). Lemaux suggested preparations continue for the June 28 opening date, with a watchful eye on the number of new cases each week. The Task Force meets later this week to reassess.

To address the issue of how in-person worship might resume, Pat Rowe presented the Task Force recommendations (see attached). These included taking baby steps towards reopening. There are federal, state, ELCA, Synod, and insurance guidelines, all of which have been resourced by the Task Force. Currently we are in "pre-phase" using ZOOM for meetings and live-streaming worship services. Phase one would include a combination of live-stream and in-person worship and ZOOM meetings; Phase two

would add in-person Bible studies. Discussion followed. Should we have a survey to see how many people would attend a Sunday morning service? Stoutes has already prepared a survey and it will be sent out tomorrow (June 16) by email and on FB. Recommended conditions for in-person services would help make those decisions; plans are to send the attached recommendations to the congregation later this week.

MOTION: Pastor Chris moved to accept the Covid-19 Task Force Recommendations (minus one which suggests any and all staff medical expenses related to Covid-19 being covered), which includes the opening date of June 28, 2020. Lemaux seconded. Discussion continued. It is important to protect everyone, especially staff, with social-distancing within the sanctuary. Should we offer testing expenses for the staff, if required? Do we have six volunteers to serve as greeters/ushers for a worship service? How shall we handle drop-in visitors, beyond the pre-reserved sign-ups to keep within sanctuary capacity of 60 persons?(Keep pre-reservation numbers lower to allow for this) Should we have communion for those who attend and if so, how?(We will not offer communion when we first open) Will we include taking temperatures of attendees? (No, congregants are not trained to do this) Should we shut down for 14-21 days if we have an active Covid-19 case among attendees? (Take an initial photo of attendees if follow-up tracking is needed) These questions inspired helpful feedback to initial and continuing issues.

MOTION AMENDED: Lemaux moved to divide the former amendment into two motions: #1: accepting the Task Force Recommendations as to how to open (see attached list) and #2 accepting the Task Force Recommendations as to when to open (June 28, 2020). Voelz seconded this motion.

MOTION: Pastor Chris moved to accept the Recommendations on how to open in-person worship services. Voelz seconded this motion. Fischer abstained from the vote; the rest of the vote was unanimous and the **motion passed**.

MOTION: Pastor Chris moved to accept the start date for in-person worship services as June 28, 2020, subject to relevant feedback from the congregational survey and the provision of six volunteers to handle recommended supervisions. Beckham seconded this motion. The vote to approve was unanimous and the **motion passed**.

Zimmer led the Council in thanking the Task Force for their diligent and thorough efforts to address the issues of reopening in-person worship services.

D. Financial reports

Voelz reported that the May monthly financial statement was unfinished; discussion was tabled until next meeting. Voelz says that operating funds are in good shape right now and going into July. Currently there is reserve from the PPP funds and it appears that we will not have to return any of that federal money.

E. Pastoral report covered in discussion of Covid-19 Task Force Recommendations.

F. Old Business

I. Pastor Chris and Zimmer will meet this week to continue working on the Employee Policy Manual.

II. Klotz reported that the Memorial Walk/Prayer Path work will resume by the first week in July. Work will continue on the TOL brochure to feature examples and prices of engraved bricks.

III. Deep cleaning continues in the church, with focus on bathrooms and sanctuary in readiness for in-person worship services. The PPP monies help cover these costs.

G. New Business.

I. Timmins asked about resources for the 2019 Audit. Suggested resource persons included Melissa Minieri, Peggy Little, Bunny Stoutes, and Jill Waldrup. Zimmer suggested a Labor Day completion date.

ACTION ITEM: A format from ELCA Synod will be forwarded to her.

H. Zimmer adjourned the meeting at 8:20 PM and Pastor Chris closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Susie Rust
Council Secretary

NOTES: **2020 Congreg. Mtg.:** Jack Zimmer President (second 2 yr. term), Kevin Solberg VP, Jim Voelz, Treasurer, Susie Rust, Secretary, Heidi Beckham, Financial Secretary, Larry Klotz, George Timmons, Richard Schaper; and elected for 3yr. term in 2020: Jim Lemaux, David Fischer, 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),