**MINUTES OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING**

**OF PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**Through Zoom, on Tuesday, January 25th, 2022 at 7:04 pm**

**Vision Statement:** *Peace Lutheran Church is a welcoming, worshipping and witnessing community in Jesus Christ through whom healing, wellness, love and peace are offered unconditionally to all.*

**Mission Statement:** *Celebrating and Sharing God’s Love for All.*

**ATTENDANCE:** Janet VanderWees (Acting chair/vice chair), Rosemarie Lantzsch (secretary), Giselle Bischof, Ina Toso, Tapio Haapalehto, Pastor Ronnie, Jeremy West and Gloria Zorn. Absent: Dawn Soulis Guest: Sunny Wishart and Wayne Ruhnke

**Call to Order:** J. VanderWees called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm.

**Opening:** I. Toso did the opening devotion “Blessing for Everyone Struggling” and prayer. I. Toso will do it in February.

It was moved by G. Zorn, seconded by I. Toso: **THAT the agenda for Tuesday, January 25th, 2022 be approved. CARRIED.**

It was moved by I. Toso, seconded by G. Bischof: **THAT the Minutes of the Church Council Meeting held on November 16th, 2021 and the Minutes of the Church Council Budget Meeting held on December 14th, 2021 be approved.** There was no discussion. **CARRIED.**

The Treasurer’s Report to Members for Q4 2021, the financial statements for the months of November and December, and the Financial Team report were previously sent out by email for our review. **Discussion**: Sunny told us the December financials detail where the funds came from. December was our usual big donation month bringing in $21,148 in donations and our 2021 surplus is just over $21,000. T. Haapalehto asked why the surplus funds have not been moved on December 31st, further to the approved motion made on December 1st, 2021. Sunny stated that the Minutes of November and December were not distributed until January 17th, 2022 which included the carried Motion, therefore it was too late to act on it. The accountant will do it in January since they are not redoing the December books. The transfer of the surplus funds at the end of December 31st to the “Family of Funds, Special Purpose Funds, Capital Projects” will be reflected in the January financials. G. Bischof asked why the financials list the Parish Nurse under Expenditures together with the secretarial expenses, since we have not had a Parish Nurse in 2021 and will not have one in the foreseeable future. Since there are no expenses incurred, we should delete the name “Parish Nurse” from the expenditures. We all agreed. Sunny explained they were holding this open in case the position is filled in the future but she is willing to amend the financials to delete the name “Parish Nurse”. R. Lantzsch noted in the Treasurer’s Report to Members for Q4 2021 that the YTD totals for Olive Branch, Food Bank and CLWR include the final quarter figures from 2020. As Sunny previously stated, the cheques were sent to them in the first week of January, 2021. Could Sunny clarify this in the Treasurer’s Report as it is misleading and doesn’t represent the real 2021 totals. Yes, Sunny will amend this, remove mention of the Parish Nurse, and will send to R. Lantzsch. She will send to the office for distribution to all members. There was no further discussion. It was moved by T. Haapalehto, seconded by R. Lantzsch: **THAT the November and December financial statements and the Treasurer’s Report to Members for Q4 2021 as amended above, be accepted. CARRIED.**

**New Business:**

**Financial Working Team:** The Finance Team’s Revised Notes for Presentation to Church Council Jan 25/22 was previously sent out by email to Council for review. Wayne told us the following:

1. The Reviewers Report Letter was signed and approved by the reviewers for the two periods as noted. The reviewers were happy with the financial information provided to them and the letter will be included in the PLC Annual Report 2021. No approval needed by Council.
2. The Finance Team put forward a proposed Motion for Council to consider: “to create a working team to develop strategies and implementation plans by the end of Q1 2022 that will address our deficits going forward to reach at least a break-even position as quickly as possible”. Janet thanked Wayne and the Finance Team for all of their hard work. Wayne stated that this working team will be there for the financial governance of our congregation and will need some sort of support by Council. It’s an important step and it will be good for Council to be prepared for any questions that the congregation may have with regards to the future forecast. General donations have decreased due to COVID and assuming income of $130,000 to $140,000 for 2022 is a stretch. If we don’t do anything, we could be bankrupt in 4 years. There are four churches in Hamilton that have amalgamated into one. Wayne leaves this with us in how we wish to proceed.

**Discussion:** G. Bischof stated if we have enough funds to subsidize for 4 years, then we are in an enviable position. Having said that, the last two years were an anomaly – it’s not a proper picture, which made a huge impact on our finances. What we haven’t done in the past few years was stewardship. We may need to rethink this. Wayne stated that the Stewardship Committee has been inactive and it should be activated. We have good business savvy people in our congregation that Council may ask after the AGM. J. VanderWees asked if Arnold is interested. No, Pastor Ronnie already asked him. T. Haapalehto stated we are lacking in “people resources”. It is tough to fill Council positions. We need strong people to take this on and it will take time. If Council takes it on – it becomes the responsibility of Council. G. Bischof stated no, we don’t need to take it on now, perhaps longer term. We need to get back to normal first. R. Lantzsch asked Wayne if they have any candidates for the new working team. No, they don’t have a specific list of candidates for the working team. Wayne advised Council not to wait until the end of the year to decide. J. VanderWees and G. Bischof stated, no, not now, but as soon as possible before the end of the year. If it comes up at the AGM, our response is that we are planning on it but we have no definite plans right now. Wayne suggested the Q1 2022 target, but it can be a certain time after that. He leaves it with Council to decide. If we leave it until Q4 2022, then it is too late. G. Zorn said she doesn’t know how many people come to church. Is it realistic to plan for March, maybe wait until September. J. VanderWees asked if Council is comfortable with making a motion now? Pastor Ronnie stated we can solicit our intentions at the AGM and make an announcement at the AGM. I. Toso stated we should table this at the AGM and garner interest from the congregation. As T. Haapalehto stated, we need to get new Council members first. It was decided to discuss it in the next few Council meetings and table it on the Agenda until it is dealt with.

1. **E-Transfer:** Wayne told us that J. West asked about setting up E-Transfer for parking and rentals, since Kateryna feels it is sometimes difficult to get cheques. T. Haapalehto doesn’t handle money, only the Financial Recording Secretary handles E-Transfer. Wayne asked if we need to do a motion to approve setting up E-Transfers for tenants. He will also put this item as an Addendum to the Financial Handbook. T. Haapalehto asked, what if the tenant leaves the “memo” section blank as to where the monies should go to. T. Haapalehto stated that people need to fill this in so that the Financial Recording Secretary knows where to place the money properly. Jeremy mentioned that Kateryna asked since this question was raised by one of the tenants. There is no rush on this. Wayne stated that Kateryna can tell the tenants to make sure that the memo line is properly recorded and can outline it carefully to the tenants. Since this is a new area, we should try it. Sunny stated that a description should be sent to Kateryna as to what is needed. It needs to be clear. T. Haapalehto stated that there is no motion required for this as long as we are all in agreement. Wayne will send the wording to Council. Pastor Ronnie stated that it offers our people another level of convenience. We all agreed.

**Budget 2022 – Final Approval required?** No, there is nothing further to discuss.

**Nomination Committee Update:** The 2022 Nominating Committee consisted of Pastor Ronnie, Fiona Haapalehto and D. Soulis. Pastor Ronnie reported that out of 14 members contacted only Mike Balzer agreed to serve on Council. Based on this result, Fiona decided to put her name forward to serve on Council and as Council Secretary. Pastor Ronnie thanked D. Soulis and Fiona for all their hard work.

Sunny and Wayne then left the Zoom Council meeting at 8:04 pm.

**AGM Planning – Feb. 6th:** J. VanderWees confirmed that she will be at the church along with Pastor Ronnie, D. Soulis, R. Lantzsch and asked I. Toso if she would also be there – yes. R. Lantzsch asked if we would allow some members to attend the AGM in-person since the church is planning to reopen on January 30th. After some discussion, it was agreed to leave it virtually, with only the five noted above being in-person. T. Haapalehto stated that in the AGM Pre-Meeting Zoom outline it has the wrong meeting ID and Passcode numbers. They are the same as last year. Pastor Ronnie confirmed that he will send out to all members the correct information. R. Lantzsch asked if we are doing a trial run. I. Toso stated she will test out the polls in advance, maybe with Pastor Ronnie. On February 6th, the five of us agreed to meet at 12:30 pm to set up before the Zoom meeting at 1 pm. R. Lantzsch confirmed that she will put the AGM Reminder Notice in the PLC February newsletter.

**Old Business:**

**Constitutional Changes:** It was decided to wait until after the AGM and put it forward to discuss at our next Council meeting in February when Fiona is onboard.

**Prayers for the People:** Confidential

**Correspondence:** Pastor Ronnie received correspondence from the Synod with the Bishop’s recommendation to keep the church closed for in-person worship services, but Pastor Ronnie wants to reopen on January 30th with Council’s approval. We all agreed.

**Reports:**

**Property:** The property report was previously distributed by email to Council members. In addition to what was written in the report, T. Haapalehto thanked J. West for all he does. J. West got the light working in the storage area and helped Kateryna reorganize her office space. R. Lantzsch thanked both T. Haapalehto and J. West for going above and beyond. T. Haapalehto said, “It’s our building”.

**Health Cabinet:** Nothing new to report.

**Worship & Arts:** G. Bischof stated since the pandemic started, there hasn’t been much to do. We had one meeting in November, 2021. It was in-person and we had a good turnout. G. Bischof reviewed the tasks of W&A and if still relevant. Kateryna did the list of AM’s, readers, etc. and J. VanderWees did the list of greeters. G. Bischof will take over doing all the worship related lists so that everything is in one place. It makes it easier with no overlapping of duties. R. Lantzsch mentioned we need to consider the Counter schedule. Ushers are not necessary right now and greeters have a different function than before – checking the vaccination status of all attending worship services. G. Bischof plans to post the list of the different positions on the bulletin board.

**Mutual Ministry:** G. Zorn heard from Fiona that the salaries for Pastor Ronnie and Kateryna have gone into effect.

**Pastor Ronnie’s Report:** Pastor’s Report was previously distributed by email to Council members. Pastor Ronnie was happy to announce that Vanessa Lanch and friends are doing a concert at Peace on March 10th – poster to come. It will be in-person and livestream. He met with GTA East Ministry Area – not much happening there. He is coordinating the David Maginley event, “the Direct Experience of God” for April 6th. Poster is available. Since Peace has exclusive rights and is hosting, he is doing it on a free will offering basis which will hopefully pay for this event for all who wish to participate, not just for Peace members and friends. It is contemplative and reflective and will only be for one evening. R. Lantzsch asked if it will it be posted on YouTube – yes, after the concert event. Pastor Ronnie feels very optimistic that good things will happen this year for Peace. G. Zorn thanked Pastor Ronnie for calling her this past week. Pastor Ronnie stated that he makes himself available and tries to call everyone on the membership list. J. VanderWees mentioned that Pastor Ronnie should call Dale who is not on the membership list – just to touch base. She has faithfully come to Peace since reopening in October.

**Other:** G. Bischof stated this is her last Council meeting. She is 88 now and has been on and off as Council member for 40 years with the required year off between terms. She will miss it, but there comes a time to “bow out”. We all thanked her for her outstanding service.

I. Toso did the closing prayer.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:41 pm.

**Next Council Meeting – Tuesday, February 15th, 2022 at 7 pm**