

**RICHLAND LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**CONGREGATION COUNCIL MINUTES**  
**MAY 12, 2015**

**Members Present:** Steve Ernst Sarah Hagensen, Norm Gillette, Dave Larkin, Todd Maier, Rich Olsen, Don Schmid, Sandy Steele, and Mike Strasberg,

**Members Absent:** Joel Sorensen

**Guests:** Debbie Stankovich, Joseph Farrar, Corey Smith

The regular monthly meeting of the Richland Lutheran Church Congregation Council was held on Tuesday, May 12, 2015 beginning at 7:01 p.m. with Dave Larkin as Chair. Mike Strasburg opened the meeting with devotions and prayer.

**Council Communications** – A letter was received from Mot and Pam Hedges regarding their mission trip this summer to Estonia and Slovakia. They asked for prayers, financial support and a message to present to the Holy Jakob Church in Estonia. Dave Larkin will draft a letter of greeting to the Holy Jacob Church.

**Staff Reports:** (Highlights from written reports)

- Pastor Steve has commenced work on the annual performance reviews for the staff. These will be shared with the Council for approval at our July meeting.
- Over the summer will be moving staff offices to improve visibility of staff.
- *Worship attendance:* Average through April, 2015 – 347/week as compared to through April, 2014 average of 347.
- *Pastoral Acts:* Baptisms – Isaac Destito and Rose Moran (April 12). Charles Hellier (April 15), and Claire Fehrenbacher (April 19). Memorial for Neil Todd (April 25).
- Will host the Hanford High School’s Baccalaureate service on May 19<sup>th</sup>.
- Signed contract with national Maintenance Contractor’s for janitorial services beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Replaced the controller for the irrigation system using up all budgeted funds for major maintenance for the year.

**Financial report/Capital Account** – Rich Olsen

***Monthly (April)***

	<u>2015 Budget</u>	<u>2015 Actual</u>	<u>(Over)/Under Budget</u>
April Total Income	\$78,960	\$67,667	\$11,293
April Total Expense	\$66,963	\$62,175	\$4,761

**Year to Date**

	<u>2015 Budget</u>	<u>2015 Actual</u>	<u>(Over)/Under Budget</u>
Total Income	\$273,840	\$241,163	\$32,677
Total Expense	\$273,344	\$244,752	\$28,592

Total Cash/Investments - April 2015

\$697,758; a decrease of \$39,609 from \$736,758 as of Dec. 2014.

Total Reserves – February 2015

\$306,778; a increase of \$9,145 from \$297,653 as of Dec, 2014.

**ACTION ITEMS**

1. **Consent Agenda** – Council approved the following without discussion:
  - a. The minutes of the regular Congregation Council Meeting of April 14, 2015.
  - b. The minutes of the special Congregation Council Meeting of April 28, 2015.
  - c. The minutes of the special Congregation Council Meeting of May 4, 2015.
  - d. Emily Archibald, Jason Archibald, Karoline Archibald, Lauren Archibald, Carrie Gravois, Charles Hellier, Marianne Kane, Susie Nunamaker, Cynthia Purvis, Mary Reinsche, Gordon Shanley, and Tami Schloss as confirmed members of Richland Lutheran Church.
  - e. Changing the starting time of the second Sunday service from 11:00 am to 10:15 am from Memorial Day until Labor Day.

**MINISTRY EMPHASIS** – Debbie Stankovich discussed her vision of Biblical Stewardship ministry with the Council.

**ACTION ITEMS**

2. **Annual Policy Reviews:**
  - a. The Staff Employment Policy was reviewed and approved with no changes.
  - b. The Common Consent Agenda Policy was reviewed and approved with no changes.
  - c. The Council Self Governance Policy was reviewed and approved with changes. [The changes were to eliminate the words “morally bound” in the first line of Section I.A. and to eliminate the words “to help people build strong effective lives with the resources of God’s grace.” From the last line of Section II. The revised version is attached.
  - d. The Wedding Policy was reviewed and approved with a change. The change was to show the Responsibility for the policy as being Worship. The revised version is attached.
  - e. The Funding, Money Gathering, and Policy was reviewed and approved with changes. The change was to delete the words “of its members” from the first and fourth paragraphs. The revised version is attached.

3. **Richland Lutheran Church Anniversary** – By consensus the Council agreed to plan for a 70<sup>th</sup> church anniversary celebration during 2016.
4. **Part-Time Musicians Pay** – Part-time musicians are paid by the service with specific hours of practice credited for pay in addition to the service. Occasionally a musician schedule to play puts in practice time but is unable or not needed for the service. By consensus the Council agreed that musicians should be paid for appropriate hours of practice. The President will work with staff to identify an appropriate pay for these unusual cases.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION** – A brief Executive Session was held to discuss staffing. Following the Executive Session the Council took the following actions:

**5. Ministry Assistant for Biblical Stewardship**

- a. Council approved a minor revision to the Ministry Assistant for Biblical Stewardship job description to indicate that the responsibility for ensuring compliance with state and federal employment laws is shared and not solely the Ministry Assistant's.
- b. Council approved the position for 35 hours per week. Benefits for full time employees based on 40 hours/week will be pro-rated for the 35 hours/week.
- c. Council approved pro-rating a candidates prior experience if they held a part-time, rather than full-time position for purposes of determining the number of vacation days earned.
- d. Council approved an initial salary level equivalent to \$20.57/hour for the Ministry Assistant for Biblical Stewardship position.

Council was reminded that we must begin preparing the annual performance evaluation for the Lead Pastor during the month of June. The President will be sending out a set of questions covering the performance areas.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:36 p.m. and closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Dave Larkin,

Secretary pro tem

## **Council Self-Governance Policy**

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- I. The congregation is represented by the Congregation Council acting as a body, and the Council's actions, pronouncements, and policies always come from the Council as a body, not from individual members. The Council deliberates in many voices but governs in one.
  - A. Outside of Council meetings, individual members are to publicly uphold the decisions of the Council. Exceptions to this policy are allowed if the member believes that the decision is clearly immoral, clearly contrary to Scripture, or not in accordance with the RLC Constitution and Bylaws. The dissenting member who believes the exception applies to a decision shall notify the Council of their position in advance of speaking against the decision outside of the Council.
  - B. Within Council meetings, individual members must feel free to engage in frank discussions and to openly express disagreements with one another. Therefore, the specific content of all Council discussions is deemed confidential.
- II. The Congregation Council primarily serves the congregation by setting policy and engaging in strategic planning that is in keeping with the stated mission of the congregation.
  - A. The Congregation Council expects staff to attend to administrative detail under the direction of the Lead Pastor.
    1. The Council will establish basic policies to guide the Lead Pastor and staff in handling day-to-day operations, establishing priorities, and responding to requests.
    2. Individual Council members will not direct staff members in carrying out their duties (formally or informally).
    3. Individual Council members will not publicly express opinions on the performance or character of staff members.
    4. Individual Council members will not place themselves between staff members in their disputes or negotiations.
    5. Individual Council members will not interpret Council actions, statements, or policy to staff members unless specifically directed by the Council to do so.
  - B. The Congregation Council will keep informed of the congregation's well-being, concerns, desires, and expectations.

## **Council Self-Governance Policy**

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1. The Council will determine for the Lead Pastor what specific information it needs each month to remain appropriately informed.
  2. On an annual basis, the Council will formally solicit and evaluate input from the congregation regarding its concerns, desires, and expectations.
- C. The Congregation Council will keep informed about national and local trends that will affect the quality of ministry the church offers.
- D. The Council will cultivate a sense of group responsibility.
1. The Council, not the staff, will be responsible for excellence in governing.
  2. The Council will initiate policy, not just react to requests.
  3. The Council will use the expertise of individual members to enhance the ability of the Council to operate as a body, rather than substitute individual judgments for the Council's values.
- III. The Congregation Council is most effective when all members participate in a proactive, future-oriented manner.
- A. All members are expected to attend monthly meetings and come prepared for the meetings.
1. Minimum preparation includes reading minutes and agenda beforehand as well as objecting in a timely manner to any "Common Consent Agenda" request
  2. If a Council member does not attend 4 meetings in a row (or 6 meetings during the course of one year), shows a pattern of not following through on commitments, or demonstrates inappropriate behavior, a representative of the Council shall discuss the situation with the member to see if the situation can be rectified or if the member would prefer to resign.
- B. To maintain the Council's focus on planning and policy-setting, the Council and its members shall avoid taking on agenda items that have to do with day-to-day operations or other issues it has delegated to the Lead Pastor and the staff.
1. The Council may find that it has not been clear enough in its policy statements to give the Lead Pastor and staff sufficient direction in dealing with a particular issue. Should this be the case and the

## **Council Self-Governance Policy**

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Council needs to address the issue, the Council shall at the same time clarify the policy so that the same kind of problem does not come up again.

2. In cases where Council approval is required for decisions ordinarily under the purview of the Lead Pastor and/or staff, it may be placed on the Common Consent Agenda.

## Weddings Policy

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### I. Objective

Richland Lutheran Church and its pastors consider it an honor and privilege to help couples move from engagement to becoming husband and wife through the sacred institution of Marriage. We provide these guidelines and expectations to help assure a meaningful and memorable wedding will be planned and prepared.

### II. Biblical Basis

Above all, the sacred rite of marriage is a God instituted and ordained concept. The very first commandment to humankind was, "*Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it*" (Genesis 1:28). The writer of Hebrew's reminds us, "*Marriage should be honored by all*" (Hebrews 13:4). Richland Lutheran Church, as an LCMC congregation, upholds "A Pastoral Admonition" developed by the LCMC.

***"We affirm that God created us male and female, and that it is God's will and intention that human sexual expression and fulfillment take place only within the boundaries of marriage between one man and one woman (Genesis 2:24-25; Matthew 19:4-6; and Mark 10:2-9). And, we confess as individuals and as congregations that we have not fulfilled God's will in our decisions, modeling, and teaching."***

### III. Wedding Worship Service

#### A. Pre-Marriage Counseling

An understanding of the biblical foundation for marriage is essential for any couple considering marriage. The officiating pastor retains the responsibility to offer pre-marriage counseling to include this biblical understanding and the couple's prerequisite to meet with the pastor with open and willing hearts. Each pastor has his/her own specific procedure and requirements relative to pre-marriage counseling.

#### B. Wedding Service

1. A wedding is a special worship service. We encourage the couple, along with the pastor, to design a ceremony that is personally meaningful and glorifying to God. Members of the wedding party are expected to conduct themselves

## Weddings Policy

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- at all times in a manner appropriate for a place of worship. Each pastor has his/her personal preference regarding the ceremony/service and will communicate with the couple his/her service expectations.
2. Members of the wedding party must refrain from using alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs, narcotics, and other controlled substances including marijuana on the day of and during any activities held at the church. No alcoholic beverages, drugs, or related paraphernalia may be brought to the church or served/used on the church premises at any time. The bride and groom are responsible to be certain this policy is understood and followed by all the members of the wedding party and those who service the wedding (florist, caterer, photographer, etc.)
  3. RLC makes its church facilities available to God's people who wish to use it for weddings if the facility is available (no regular worship services will be displaced or cancelled for the sake of a special wedding service). The building, however, does not make a church; the "church" is the Assembly of God's people. Where God's people assemble - there is church.
  4. Arrangements for participation of pastors other than RLC pastors will be made through the RLC Lead Pastor.

### C. Music

The wedding ceremony and accompanying music is expected to be Christ-centered, God honoring, spiritually edifying, and in good taste. Any departure from more traditional music and ceremony requires prior approval of the pastor overseeing Pre-Marriage Counseling and wedding preparations. To achieve this, the couple should ask themselves how their ceremony and music will bring honor to the Lord.

### D. Rehearsal

The rehearsal is normally held the day before the wedding. Participants are reminded that the rehearsal is intended to be as much a part of the wedding preparation as anything else.

### E. Fees

Richland Lutheran church provides most services to members at a reduced rate. The fees charged to non-members are designed to recover the cost of providing



## **Weddings Policy**

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the service. Please refer to the wedding and reception fee schedule for current rates.

### **F. Honorariums**

RLC sets no fee for pastoral honorariums. The bride and groom should determine their level of generosity. Considerations in determining the amount includes the size of the wedding, the number of pre-marriage sessions, and the value of the time the pastor spent preparing you and your fiancé for marriage.

### **G. Wedding Coordinator**

The coordinator for the wedding normally will be a member of the wedding committee. The wedding coordinator's role is to assist the couple with the details around the facility such as the placement of candelabras, use of pew candles, decorating, etc.

## **IV. Wedding Reception**

### **A. General**

Richland Lutheran Church has facilities and equipment to serve approximately 200 guests with refreshments. Couples provide all the food and beverages for the reception according to the fee schedule. Those who wish to provide a dinner or luncheon to their guests will need to consult with the reception coordinator to determine feasibility and additional costs. No alcohol is allowed on church grounds.

### **B. Reception Coordinator**

The couple will have access to a Reception Coordinator. The Reception Coordinator must be consulted to assist with planning the reception to include room layout, traffic flow, menu, and decorations.

### **C. Equipment and Furnishings**

The church has equipment and furnishings the couple is welcome to use for their reception. The couple will work with the reception coordinator for usage needs. The couple can elect to use local rental companies for these items if coordinated with the reception coordinator.

### **D. Decorations**

## **Weddings Policy**

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Candles may be used as long as the flame does not extend above a glass cover. No open flames are allowed except on the cake table. Approval for all other decorations including balloons, streamers, and hangings must be secured through the Reception Coordinator prior to the reception.

E. Set-up

The couple will let the church office know when they need access to the room to set-up and decorate.

F. Music

There is a sound system in the Prince of Peace fellowship hall. The sound system has a CD player if you wish to provide background music. Music played or performed at the reception must be tasteful and not in conflict with Christian values.

G. Fees

Richland Lutheran church provides use of the reception area to members at no cost. The fees charged to non-members are designed to recover the cost of providing the service. The cost of serving the reception is extra to all users. Please refer to the wedding and reception fee schedule for current rates.

**V. Wedding Photography**

A. Before the Service

Taking of pictures in the sanctuary must be completed one hour before the service begins. Anything moved to facilitate picture taking, such as candelabras, flower baskets, or the kneeler, must be returned to their original placement.

B. During the Service

Taking of pictures during the service is allowed but the photographer must use good discretion and reverence staying “out of the way” of those participating in the service. The photographer may not ask those processing down the aisle to stop once the processional has started.

C. Videotaping

## **Weddings Policy**

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The television ministry of Richland Lutheran Church, Good News Media Ministry will videotape your wedding if you choose. The couple will indicate interest in this on the Wedding and Reception Facility request form and refer to the enclosed fee schedule for current fees. The couple may use another videographer but he/she must use the same guidelines as the photographer.

### **D. After the Service**

The photographer is welcome to accompany the couple and the officiating pastor to take pictures of the signing of the marriage certificate. In most circumstances, if time remains, the photographer may arrange to take additional photos following the service.

### **E. Family and Friends**

Family and friends are permitted to take pictures as well. To the extent possible the couple will advise them of these policies prior to your wedding.

## **Funding, Money Gathering, And Memberships List Policy**

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### **Objective**

Funding of Richland Lutheran Church programs, as approved in the annual budget, is through the voluntary contributions in accordance with Biblical precedent and teaching, e.g. II Cor. 9:6-9. *“Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.”*

Collection of these offerings will normally be made at regular worship services.

Funding of other groups or needs not previously included in the annual budget may also be made through contributions using specially designated envelopes. The Congregation Council must approve these requests before the Congregation is asked to support them.

### **Funding Raising**

Although it is expected that the primary support of church activities is through the contributions, groups such as church auxiliaries, Boards, and church-related corporations such as Good News Media Ministry and Richland Lutheran Church Foundation may engage in special fund-raising activities. These fund-raisers must meet the following criteria:

1. The funds will be used to support activities in accordance with the Constitution and By-Laws of Richland Lutheran Church.
2. The fund-raising activity is in accordance with good stewardship and Christian witness. Casinos, games of chance, lotteries, and other such activities are not permitted.
3. Fund-raising activities using church facilities will not be done on Sundays, festival days, or at other times when there is a scheduled worship service or when they would conflict with other Richland Lutheran Church activities.
4. Funds raised through special fund-raising activities are not to be used to support the regular operating budget of Richland Lutheran Church.
5. Approval for each fund-raising activity must be obtained from the Council.

### **Membership Lists**

Congregational membership lists shall not be released for commercial purposes. Understanding that there are organizations that carry on work which Richland Lutheran Church endorses, requests for approval for use of our mailing lists by such organizations could be considered on an individual basis through action of the Council.