



St. Mark's Congregation 2020 Annual Meeting Minutes

January 26, 2020 | St. Mark's Sanctuary

St. Mark's is a growing Christian community rooted in tradition and open to new expressions. Responding to God's compassionate love, we reach out in service to the community and the world. With openness of heart and spirit, we welcome all.

Call to Order and Regrets – Mark Semonian

Semonian called the meeting to order at 12:10 pm.

Secretary Confirmed presence of quorum (75 present)

Reading of the Mission Statement – All

All read the mission statement

Approval of Agenda – Semonian

Cong2020-1 Motion to approve the agenda (Oakley & Elford) - Passed

Council President Remarks – Semonian

Semonian introduced all council and staff members (present and not present) and provided gratitude for their service. Thank you to Jane Borg and Aaron Greig who complete their years of service on council. Winnie Heslin (Director of Operations) will be leaving at the end of the month. Semonian thanked her for her 4 years of service and presented her with a token of thanks. A Physical Needs Assessment (PNA) has begun for the church, which is a needs assessment to care for the building for the next century. This includes: when the roof needs repair or replacement and when a new boiler is needed. Semonian will end his term as council President.

Pastors' Remarks – Pr. Elizabeth Ekdale & Pr. Moe- Lobeda

In addition to the written reports, Pr. Ekdale expressed being humble and proud of the depth and service of our congregation and celebration of 175 years as a congregation. She expressed thanks to Semonian who steps down as president but continues to serve on council another year. Pr. Ekdale thanked the staff, especially Heslin, who ends her time at St. Mark's and the active volunteers of the congregation who serve faithfully.

Treasurer's Report – Rick Seefeldt

Seefeldt expressed gratitude for Steve Ernst (past Treasurer) who provided many templates and words of wisdom. Seefeldt spoke to the congregation about our goal to fund the mission and ministries of St. Mark's and the budget is the means to how this is accomplished. Our goal as a 501c corporation is to break even. Seefeldt encouraged everyone to reference his written report for details and provided a summary of the 2019 income and expenses. General envelope giving was as estimated at \$470,000 and was actually \$468,342. Giving did increase by 2% overall from 2018 but not all pledges were realized. Building use was also lower than budget. 2019 income was \$874,886.00 Total expenditures were \$923,002.00. Unexpected expenditures included Legal and professional fees, which were required to improve our governance structure and ensure agreements, have legal transparency as well. Expenditures also included a new Accountant, required to replace our old firm. This was not anticipated but required, our books required a lot of clean up and for this task a bookkeeper was also required. These 2 investments will help carry St. Mark's into the future. Drawing on our unrestricted contingency reserves offset our unexpected 2019 shortfall.

Questions – David Lam: Asked about expenses and changes in line item recording, specifically equities. He notes that it is not a separate line item in the 2020 budget but it was separate in the 2019 budget, why is this different? Heslin and Seefeldt respond that there was an account change and a change in accounting for improved recording and legality purposes. Heslin also explained some 2019 expenses that will not need to be budgeted for in 2020: staffing transitions and hiring of a graphic designer, replacement of our old accounting firm and a new accountant and bookkeeper to clean up our books.

2020 Budget Recommendation – Rick Seefeldt

Cong2020-2 Motion to approve the 2020 Budget as presented. (Oakley, Ernst) - Passed

Questions/Discussion – Brandee Markman: Asked about information about income from increased building use and expressed her concern about morale of Sunday school families and staff and the use of the Sunday School rooms to generate this income. Especially the concern for less child friendly rooms for use of Sunday school. Heslin stated the challenge that went into the need to make this decision and the need to make sacrifices as a congregation to balance the budget and not continue to operate on a deficit.

Tapio Boles – Asks about the \$240,000 increase in general expenses from 2019 to 2020? Heslin and Seefeldt explain that these are new lines in our budget this year for more transparency; this is the rent for our office space. This is netted out by an in kind rent donation by MLT inc.

Election of 2020 Council Members – Susan Sall, Nadine Robinson & Aaron Grieg & Pr. Ekdale (Nominating Team)

Sall presented the Council nominees on behalf of the Nominating Committee. They worked hard to find a talented slate of candidates that represents both the 9am, the 11am service, parents and non-parents and a diverse slate of members. Incumbent council member Beth Dioli and new nominees: Brandon Battaglia, Rachel Boles, Jeremy McClain, Jesse Peirce and Rick Seefeldt were all nominated for 3 year terms. The floor was opened for other nominations. There were no other nominations from the congregation and voting occurred via ballot.

Constitution and By-Laws Amendment – Pr. Ron Moe-Lobeda

Pr. Moe-Lobeda presented the proposed amendments to St. Mark's constitution, which was brought forward to the council more than 60 days ago. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America requires every congregation in the ELCA to use the Model Constitution and amendments in this Constitution as approved by the ELCA Voting Members at any scheduled National ELCA Assembly. Pr. Moe-Lobeda presented the changes recommended in years 2013, 2016 and 2019 to the congregation in his written report. Which, for example, recommend keeping current with the ELCA policies and practices explanations of liability, process of call and seasonal members.

Cong2020-3 Motion to approve the proposed amendments to the St. Mark's Constitution as presented and recommended in the National Assemblies of 2013, 2016 and 2019, to keep current with ELCA policy and practice (Pr. Moe-Lobeda, Robinson) – Passed

Discussion – none noted

Cong2020-4 Motion to approve section 6 of the St. Mark's By-Laws as presented (Pr. Moe-Lobeda, Dioli) - Passed

Cong2020-5 Motion to replace all references to Parish Life Committee(s) in the By-Laws to Ministry Teams. (Pr. Moe-Lobeda, Engmann)- Passed

Governance Update & Open Questions/Annual Goals – Pr. Elizabeth Ekdale

Pr. Ekdale updates the congregation on the work of the governance committee, for example, to establish written agreements to replace our handshake agreements and establish the work of the council on strategic planning. Thank you to Randy Schieber who has served as chair of the Governance committee. Pr. Ekdale speaks of the 3 goals and open questions that were part of the council's annual retreat. The congregation feedback from the 2019 open questions (e.g. the Global café and interactive sermon) served as the formulation for new goals and open questions.

2020 Goals

- 1) Increase the financial stability of St. Mark's by maximizing the use of its facilities through housing of non-profit organizations.**
- 2) Provide opportunities for members to be known and deepen connections in order to build up the body of Christ.**
- 3) Create educational opportunities to study racism in our society and in our church in order to support our mission of being welcoming to all people.**

2020 Open Questions

- 1) How will we attract new and existing members to regular attendance in worship and active participation in ministries?**
- 2) What is our vision for the use of space designated to St. Mark's in future development per our church council's guiding principles?**
- 3) To what ministry with youth and children is St. Mark's called in years to come?**

Martin Luther Tower (MLT) Report & Development Update – Jerry Lundblad, MLT President, Barbara Engmann and Jeff Kohler

Lundblad introduced the MLT board and thanked them for their service. Lundblad provided an update on the new staff positions for MLT this year and changes around the tower. MLT plans for resyndication this year, a process to renew their 15-year tax credits to ensure re-investment in the property and its mission.

Engmann & Kohler reports on development – She thanked the Pastors and other members of the Development committee for their hard work. Efforts continue and are on a positive path. The Ella Rohlff Foundation plans to provide a 5 million dollar grant for the Ellis street building. The project will provide needed units for affordable senior housing. Development on this lot planned to start this year.

Resyndication – (MLT) must determine if they want to self represent or partner with another non-profit. The difference is workloads and profits. The question of the potential partner/decision is to be made at the March MLT inc. Corporation meeting.

Questions – About the relationship with St. Mark's and Urban life center, who owns what property? Answer – The church owns the church building and the upper parking lot, MLT

the tower, ULC and lower parking lot. Question – Can Resyndication be explained?
Answer/definition – tax credits on senior tower building. These tax credits need to be renewed every 15 years. (MLT's by end of 2020). MLT needs to re-establish new credits. Once of the requirements is affordable housing. Question - How St. Mark's interacts with MLT (Who owns MLT?) Answer – Lundblad, MLT functions as a mission of the church. The church provides services for MLT. MLT inc. is the governing body of MLT, which consists of the MLT board, and church council is the governing body. As MLT is a non-profit there is governance but not ownership, due to tax credit is owned by a partnership (formed of investors – MLT inc.) MLT board members are members of the church congregation.

Report on Council Election & Constitution & By-Laws – Teller Committee

Report that all nominated council members were selected by written ballot.

Closing Prayer – Pr. Elizabeth Ekdale

Pr. Ekdale closed the meeting in prayer

Adjourn Meeting – Semonian

Semonian adjourned the meeting at 1:19pm

Respectfully submitted, Cristin Owens, St. Mark's Council Secretary