

ST. MARK’S LUTHERAN CHURCH
CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING DOCKET
June 20, 2024

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Pastor’s Report

Attendance Record

Date: June 20, 2024	Location: St. Mark's Church
Time Started: 19:20	Time Ended: 20:55

Invited	Jan 25	Feb 29	Mar 21	Apr 25	May 30	June 20						
Nathan Cook (S)	P	P	P	P	P	E						
Lynda Joyal (T)	E	E	P	E	E	P						
Nels Kristenson	-	-	-	P	P	E						
Tom Lewis	P	P	P	E	E	E						
Jodi Pappel	P	E	P	P	P	P						
Cole Parsons (VC)	P	P	P	P	P	P						
Marijus Timmerman (C)	-	-	-	P	P	P						
Pastor Zsófi (exofficio)	P	P	P	P	P	P						
VACANT												
VACANT												
	Guests											
Signe Jewett				P								

Minutes

- 1) Opening Devotions
- 2) Approval of Agenda for June 20, 2024
MSC CC-2024-38 That the Agenda of June 20,2024 be approved.
- 3) Approval of Minutes
MSC CC-2024-39 That the Minutes of the Council Meeting dated May 30,2024 be approved.
- 4) Business arising from minutes
- 5) Finance
Report - in file
- 6) Reports
 - a) Chair - in file
 - b) Pastor-in file
- 7) Committee Reports
 - a) Children's Ministry Report in file
- 8) New Business
 - a) Motion
MSC CC-2024-40 That the Executive Committee be authorized to act on behalf of the council during the period June 21, 2024 - September 11, 2024.
 - b) Motion
MSC CC-2024-41 That the 2024 Photo Release form be adopted as presented.
 - c) Motion
MSC CC-2024-42 That the Executive Committee be authorized to:
 - i) offer Alison Norberg the position of Office Administrator, as an employee of St. Mark's, at the current salary and hours for this position (subject to the submission of a resume, a favourable interview with a St. Mark's team and reference checks);
 - ii)enter into a coordination arrangement with Messiah (if necessary and feasible) regarding the flexibility of hours for special circumstances and potential shared benefit costs.
 - d) Archimedes Math Schools Motion
Motion

**MSC CC-2024-43 - That the Facility use contract renewal for the
Archimedes Math Schools be approved for 2024-2025.**

Adjournment

Council Chair Report

We said farewell to John Himes as our Office Administrator last week as he gave notice to be able to deal with personal matters. John worked diligently to the final minute getting as much done as possible. We are thankful for John's time at St. Mark's and wish him all the best in his future pursuits.

As a result of this circumstance, the last few weeks have been spent gathering information to fill this vacancy. Thanks to Pastor Zsofi and Pastor Courtenay of Messiah for having proposed the opportunity of having Alison Norberg fill the vacancy. The steps taken leading to the motion on the table at our June meeting are outlined in my recommendation and it is my hope that Alison will be in our office by mid July.

Many thanks to Alisha Sherlock who has been willing to make initial contact with interested people to get our Children's Ministry and Sunday School up and running in the Fall. Pastor Zsofi has done a lot of the organizing work as well including creating a survey and compiling the results, searching out curriculum and leading a meeting on June 2 with the core group of volunteers in this Ministry. I also attended that meeting and found it a very encouraging experience.

In preparation for the Fall, Signe Jewitt is leading a group who will be sorting, arranging and perhaps discarding items in the church basement in preparation for a return to that space's use.

We celebrate 12 high school graduates from St. Mark's this Sunday, June 23 as we wish them all the best in their next steps and we pray that God's guidance goes with them. We hope that St. Mark's will remain in their hearts as a friendly, caring and nurturing spiritual home.

The summer months lay ahead and as we enjoy the sun and fun I hope we all return in the Fall refreshed and ready to continue celebrating God's love, caring for God's creation and nurturing all God's children.

Submitted by Marijus Timmerman, Council Chair

Financial Update – May 31, 2024

A Balance Sheet as of May 31 and a Profit and Loss Statement (aka Income Statement) by month for the period Jan 1 – May 31, 2024, are available on G-Drive (see Council / Finance Documents /Financial Statements/ Financial Statements 2024.

Note that the next report showing actual expenditures compared to the annual budget will be prepared once the June 2024 bookkeeping entries have been completed.

Highlights from May Statements

- \$19,586 received in general offerings in May, down \$1,883 from same period last year.
- YTD, general offering received is \$97,835 compared to \$105,222 for the Jan 1- May 31 period last year.
- YTD, we have received 34.3% of our annual budget for general offerings (\$285,197).
- During May this year, expenses exceeded income by \$5,929. YTD, our operating loss stands at \$9,621.
- Operating losses are financed by drawing down our unencumbered cash reserves.

Unencumbered Cash Reserves as of May 31

Assets	
Bank Account, GST Receivable	20,699
TD Direct Investing – Investment Savings Acct	68,056
TD Direct Investing – interest earned not yet recorded (1)	1,272
Market Value of TD Bond Fund – Unrestricted	<u>26,105</u>
Total Assets	116,132
Liabilities (Visa charges, GSI benefits, designated offering)	26,446
UNENCUMBERED RESERVES	89,686

- (1) Accumulated interest earned in the TD Direct Investing Account is recorded on the Profit and Loss Statement and Balance Sheet on June 30 and December 31.

Recommendation To Church Council Re Office Administrator Vacancy

RECOMMENDATION

That St. Mark's:

- i) offer Alison Norberg the position of Office administrator, as an employee of St. Mark's, at the current salary & hours for this position (subject to the submission of a resume, a favourable interview with a St. Mark's team and reference checks)
- ii) enter into a coordination arrangement with Messiah (if necessary/feasible) regarding flexibility of hours for special circumstances as an example.

BACKGROUND

St. Mark's office administrator, John Hines, has given notice effective June 15, 2024. The office administrator position at St. Mark's currently offers 15 hours per week and 12 hours in the summer months.

On June 5, Pastor Zsofi informed me that Messiah Lutheran Church might be interested in sharing their part-time office administrator, Alison Norberg, with St. Mark's, as Alison is interested in acquiring more hours.

One arrangement under consideration (through discussion between Pastor Zsofi and Pastor Courtenay) is for St. Mark's to enter into a cost-sharing arrangement with Messiah for the position, as an independent contractor, who in turn would retain and pay Alison as an employee to perform the duties at St. Mark's. There is potential financial advantage to this arrangement, if feasible, as employee benefits would be payable

at a lower rate in a shared context. Currently the St. Mark's contract does not meet the threshold for such benefits as per Synod guidelines.

However, my understanding from speaking to a legal practitioner in the congregation is that failing to classify Alison as an employee runs the risk of causing complications and potential violation of provincial and federal laws, regardless of the wording of any contract.

The other option is for St. Mark's to hire Alison directly as an employee of St. Mark's and perhaps have a letter of agreement with Messiah to cover any potential coordination arrangements with Messiah.

Since the initial information provided by Pastor Zsofi Schmiedge, I have had informal, in-person discussions with the potential candidate, Alison Norberg and on a separate occasion, an informal, in-person conversation with Zita Fomgbami, Council Chair at Messiah Lutheran Church.

DISCUSSION

Based on my meeting with Alison, she is highly experienced and qualified for the position. It is unlikely that St. Mark's would find a superior candidate if the position were advertised. Advertising will delay the start date of the position which could potentially be as early as mid July and would force St. Mark's to either rely on volunteer resources or go without certain duties being fulfilled.

Subject to receiving a favourable resume and a formal interview, I recommend retaining Alison directly as an employee of St. Mark's. This option is simpler, avoids legal risks and potential liability and establishes a direct line of accountability between St. Marks and Alison. Alison has indicated that this type of arrangement is acceptable to her.

A spirit of sharing and cooperation has existed between Messiah and St. Mark's for some time and there is no intention in this recommendation to stifle this relationship. It is my belief that autonomy in managing the day-to-day operations of the church office is a healthy and necessary principle and can eliminate potential misunderstandings of operation and expectation.

Marijus Timmerman
St. Mark's Council Chair

Report on Children's Ministry

Date: June 16, 2024

Prepared by: Alisha Sherlock

Introduction

The Children's Ministry committee at St. Mark's met in May to discuss our church's mission to nurture and educate the youngest members of our congregation. This report outlines the necessary action items to enhance our Sunday School program, ensuring it meets the spiritual and developmental needs of our children.

Action Items

1. Update the List of Sunday School-Age Children

Objective: To have an accurate and up-to-date list of all children eligible for Sunday School.

Steps:

- **Review Church Records:** Begin by reviewing the current church membership records to identify children within the Sunday School age range.
- **Community Outreach:** Utilize church communications (bulletins, emails, announcements) to invite families to register their children for Sunday School.

Responsible Party: Completed by Pastor Zsofi

2. Engage Volunteers for Sunday School

Objective: To ensure sufficient and committed volunteer support for the Sunday School program.

Steps:

- **Identify Potential Volunteers:** Identify members who have shown interest in helping with Sunday School.
- **Personal Outreach:** Contact each potential volunteer individually to confirm their interest and availability.

Outcome:

I have emailed and reached out to the members who indicated that they may be interested in helping with Sunday School. I have several volunteers for the younger class, and I will continue to look for extra support for the older class. I have reached out to the youth group leaders to see if any of the youth would be interested in helping with Sunday School. I have also contacted Mabel to see if she would be interested in helping with the Sunday School music.

Responsible Party: Alisha Sherlock

3. Select an Appropriate Curriculum

Objective: To choose a curriculum that fits the spiritual, educational, and developmental needs of the children at St. Mark's.

Steps:

- **Assess Needs:** A needs assessment was conducted by gathering input from parents, children, and teachers to understand what they seek in the Sunday School program.
- **Review Options:** Pastor Zsofi recommend the Spark: Activate Faith program from Augsburg Fortress. This program connects to the Splash program sent out to the children under the age of 2 and the Bibles presented to the Grade 5 class.
- **Responsible Party:** Pastor Zsofi

Conclusion

By updating our list of Sunday School-age children, engaging dedicated volunteers, and selecting a curriculum that meets the needs of our children, St. Mark's can ensure that our Children's Ministry continues to thrive. These steps are crucial for providing a nurturing and educational environment that supports the spiritual growth of our youngest members.

Next Steps

- Finalize curriculum and order program
- Meet to get supplies organized for Sunday School in the fall
- Reach Out to Families: Contact families who regularly attend services to confirm their children's participation and send out invitations to children who are eligible for Sunday School in the fall.

Submitted by:

Alisha Sherlock
St. Mark's Church

A world where Christ's unconditional love is felt by all of creation.

Photo Release Form

On behalf of myself or the child identified below for whom I am the parent or legal guardian, I hereby:

1. consent to the use of my/my child's name, photograph, voice, statements, image, and likeness ("the Materials") by St Mark's Lutheran Church for any promotional, publicity, programming, or communications purposes, in any media, in perpetuity, without compensation or notice;
2. waive my/my child's right to the integrity of the Materials, the right to be associated with the Materials and other similar rights in favour of St Mark's Lutheran Church;
3. release St Mark's Lutheran Church, its administrators, partners, affiliates, employees, representatives, and agents from any liability or claims that relate in any way to the use of the Materials in the manner described above; and
4. represent and warrant that:
 - a. I have all of the rights in the Materials and that St Mark's Lutheran Church's use of the Materials will not violate or infringe upon the rights of any third party; and
 - b. I have reached the age of majority in my jurisdiction of residence.

Name (please print): _____

Child's name (if applicable): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

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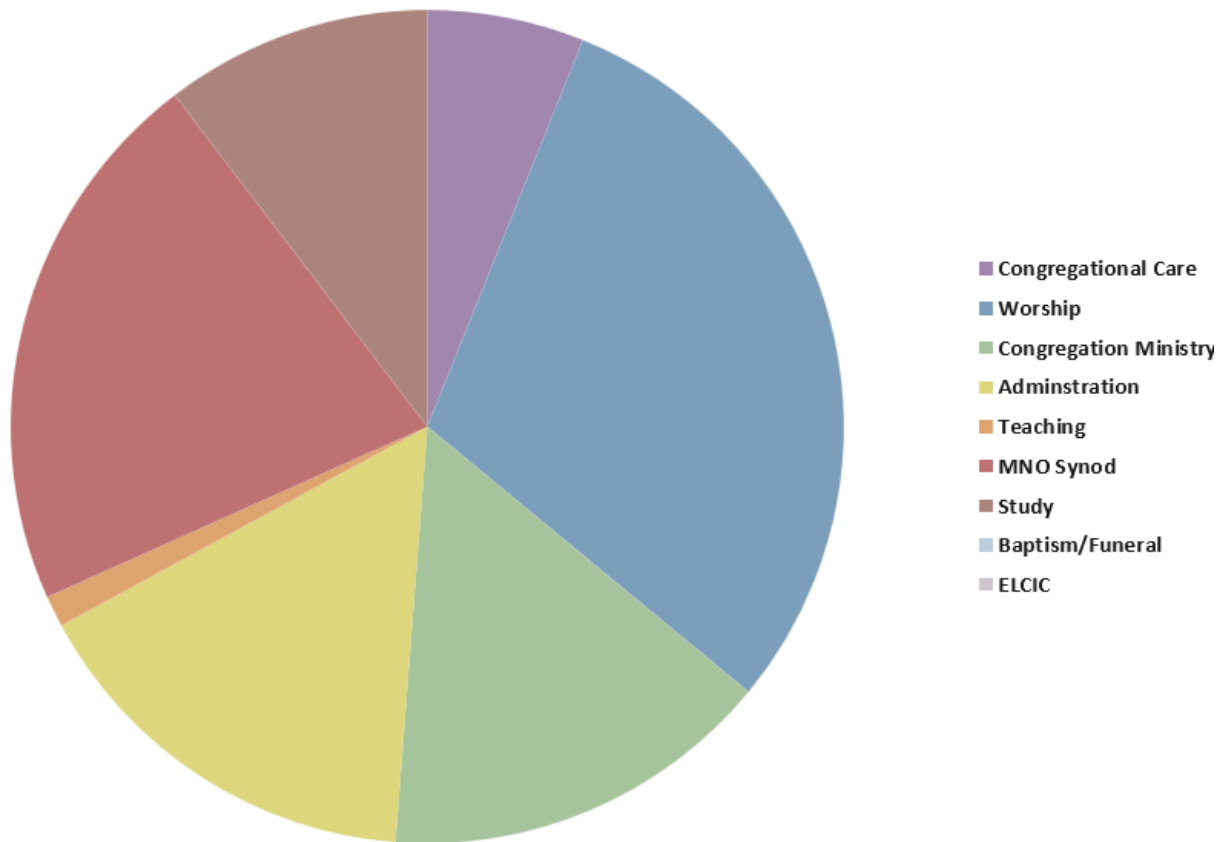
Signature of Witness: _____

Name of Witness (please print): _____

St Mark's Lutheran Church, the MNO Synod, and the ELCIC are committed to protecting the privacy of the personal information submitted to it by all members. The information that you provide will be used for the purposes of ministry for St Mark's, for which such information was provided. Personal information will not be shared with third parties without your expressed consent. The information that you provide will be protected and retained in accordance with the personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) and the Privacy Policy of the ELCIC.

Further information on this policy can be viewed on the ELCIC website: www.elcic.ca

MAY



Where've We Been/Are

Ministries of St Marks – Two training sessions for a total of 11 new Acolytes have taken place, and I am pleased to discover that most of them are feeling confident enough in wanting to step forward. Additionally, the response of not having assigned volunteers each Sunday this summer has been good – with many of the younger children eager to hold the baskets for communion and people offering to help in ways that they haven't before. It is a good example of how people rise where they haven't otherwise been able to. I have been to one Pastor Party and have five others in various stages of coordination and planning. These will likely go into the fall in terms of when they happen. I have compiled a list of children under the age of 15 for the Children's Ministry Committee – there are currently 4 toddlers; 36 Sunday school aged children; and 28 confirmation aged tweens and teens in our membership records for a total of 68! (That's more than our average summer attendance). I have also been looking for a good new curriculum, coordinating with folks on a basement cleanup, mapping out the program year while looking to important congregational ministry dates that could be of impact. I had a meeting with the CCCO Chair and planned out a few options for the first half of our program year beginning in the fall.

Wider Church – The MNO/Diocesan Clergy Study Conference was in Gimli from June 11th until the afternoon of June 14th. We began as an MNO group only on the 11th to consider together what the main purpose of MNO Congregations may be. We also took some time together to look over the data from the keynote presentations at convention in May. It was a very fulsome conversation that reminded me that my experiences in the MNO have been the most affirming in my career so far. The Study conference keynote speaker was Dr KSG, who spoke engagingly on the topic and gave us a lot to think about and talk to each

other about. It's not always the case, but this conference was dense with information for me to consider and felt incredibly full – I was most grateful to fall into my bed each night. I am looking forward to how this information all unfolds into ministry soon.

Office Management & Staff – John's last day at St Mark's was June 15th. I have been meeting with colleagues and with the council chair to determine the best path forward for the sake of the ministry of the congregation. In the meantime, Melissa and I will attend to the office duties in the physical space and congregational volunteers have been found for some of the most important tasks (for example, financial reporting and e-news). Admittedly, this changes my focus a little from what I hoped it would be this summer, but I am confident we will have this sorted out before the summer is over.

Where We're Going

Ministries of St Marks – My attention continues to be focused on Children's Ministry for the moment, though I am also attentive to the office staffing and the need for supervision once we've hired someone. I sent out an invitation to the graduate families for our worship service on June 23rd. And I have been working on a poster and announcement for the July Shared worship summer series with Gloria Dei and Messiah to be shared next week. I am also looking to visit a few of our elderly members over the next couple of weeks as it seems to be a good time health wise for extended care facilities. Season of Creation worship resources were recently made available for the year, so I will be planning those services soon as most of the summer has already been worked out.

Wider Church – For now, a break from the wider church responsibilities. But we will have a few shared ministry opportunities throughout the summer months.

Personally – I will be taking summer holidays from July 29th through August 12th and some of that will be spent visiting my parents in Victoria. Pastoral Care will be in place in case of emergencies as necessary at that time.

STATISTICS

HR Reporting

SYNOD GUIDELINES		MAY (Guidelines)	YEAR TO DATE (Guidelines)
Days of the Year	366	31	152
Workdays (<i>5-day work week</i>)	251	20 (22)	94 (106)
Days Off	104	08 (08)	40 (42)
Statutory Holidays	011	01 (01)	04 (04)
Vacation Days	D-26	--	04
(<i>incl. days off + D-02 rollover</i>)	S-04	--	01
Study Days	014	--	05
(<i>incl. days off</i>)			
Sick Leave	018	02	04

Congregational Reporting

Baptism – n/a

Reception by Transfer, Confirmation/Affirmation – n/a

Death – n/a

Removal by Request - n/a

Pastoral Acts(year to date)

Baptisms	00		Confirmations	00
Weddings	00		Funerals	01

Congregation Activities (year to date)

Worship Services	04 (28)	Communion Services	03 (19)
Baptismal Counselling	-- (--)	Wedding Counselling	-- (--)
Visitation/Family Prayer	03 (15)	Council Meetings	01 (05)
Meetings	02 (11)	"Home" Communion	01 (04)
Confirmation Classes	-- (08)	Other Events	02 (07)
Hospital Visits	-- (03)	Staff Meetings	01 (05)

Wider Church Responsibilities (year to date)

MNO Meetings/Events	03 (13)	Mentorship & Collegiality	02 (09)
Other Meetings/Events	01 (08)	MNO Synod Leadership Conference	☺