

King of Kings Lutheran Church

Church Council Minutes

April 16, 2024

Attendance

Members in Person

Jen McKinnon, President
Todd Dexheimer, Member at Large
Rebecca Kurtz Schwanke, Member at Large
Kevin Schwartz, Finance
Angie Olson, Treasure
Tami Olson, Secretary
Pastor Jon Larson, Lead Pastor
Pastor Amelia Houdek, Associate Pastor
Dianne Johnson, Executive Director

Members Excused

Jason Livingston, Vice President
Tricia Dege, Vice President

Guest Present: None

Past Business: None

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm. by Jen McKinnon presiding.

Opening Prayer – Pastor Jon

Approval of Prior months Meeting Minutes

Jen moved to accept the agenda.

Rebecca moved to accept the minutes of the last regular meeting.

Motion passed (CC.24.04.13)

Approval of Agenda – Jen

Jen moved to accept the agenda.

Tami seconded the motion.

Motion passed (CC.24.04.14)

Connection Quote: What do you think? “God doesn’t change situations, He changes people” (from a Grow Your Church webinar)

- The council shared their thoughts on the quote.

Role of Council:

We empower staff, committees, and volunteers to make necessary day to day operational ministry decisions.

The role of Church Council therefore is to focus on more strategic visioning that will seek to further enhance and move ministry forward.

Guest Presentation: None

Strategic Planning:

1. Approval of finance team's motion to change Financial Advisors.
 - a. We are making a motion to change financial advisors; the Finance team has met with the potential New Financial Advisor twice. We have been with our current Advisor for many years. We are looking for consistent check-ins, and this new advisor is committed to certain guidelines and on-site connections and an outside perspective. What the finance has identified as needs for a financial advisor. This advisor candidate is a member of King of Kings and works for Thrivent Financial.
 - b. Rebecca stated that I think there is too much risk of having a Kings of King member be our Financial Advisor. I think we need a separation, not today but at some point, in time. I think having someone else not a member we are less subject to risk.
 - c. Pastor Jon said we also interviewed others not members, and to give clarification on what they control, they cannot do anything unilaterally, they are more of an advisor, they do not have any control over finances. There are checks and balances within the structure.
 - d. Jen said she also had the same concerns of controls. Making recommendations that they have financial gains.
 - e. Kevin added that there are no commissions, it is based under assets under management.
 - f. Todd added a percentage of assets.
 - g. Jen said we are missing two team members.
 - h. Pastor Jon asked do we have quorum? We could take a vote.
 - i. Jen asked about other Advisors that were looked at.
 - j. There was only other one interviewed and they were not going to provide a lot for us, just allocations funds.
 - k. Jen noted that Thrivent sells Thrivent products. Do we get all other non-Thrivent products available to us.
 - l. Angie said the majority of our portfolio is not in Thrivent.
 - m. Jen said this was a unanimous decision from the Finance Team.
 - n. Todd asked if our entire portfolio is mutual funds.
 - o. Kevin replied, no also Stocks, a lot of that is outside of the scope of what the manager would be dealing with.
 - p. Pastor Jon said, if there were a concern, we would need recommendations on where to go. We could go back to square one.
 - q. Jen asked, is there a timeframe we say, a year and re-evaluate? I don't know if there is a time.
 - r. Dianne said, we do not really use a timeframe. What became apparent is the distance, we need someone to come quarterly to meet with us. We need someone with availability and comfort level of recommendations.

- s. Jen asked if the fee was slightly reduced.
- t. Dianne, I have been hesitant about having a church member as a manager yet his is a bit of a different situation as I handle stock donations. If they leave the church, it does not stop us from moving forward in business, we can quickly move to another adviser.
- u. Jen asked Kevin, is this advisor work at your office?
- v. Kevin replied we are independent of each other but yes, we are in the same location.
- w. Jen asked if there were any concerns, trying to cover issues with appearances.
- x. Kevin said we do not want to talk shop outside of this meeting.
- y. Todd said that the optics may have some members concerned.
- z. Jen added this presents an issue on how this would be viewed by members and not having Trisha or Jason here tonight, I would like to table the vote.
- aa. Kevin added, what if we get Jack Smith from "XYZ" and they decide to become a member, do we fire them?
- bb. Rebecca said if that happens, we will have to decide.
- cc. Pastor Jon said that finance vetted them, do we want to have an advisor that is not actively acting in our best interest? Do we want to push down the line? Do you know of someone who would be qualified, with a background and at least 10 years' experience?
- dd. Jen said what I am hearing is to move the discussion to the full council to May's meeting knowing the recommendation is from Finance. I will make sure Jason and Trisha have minutes to review.

2. Finance Update – Kevin / Dianne

- a) Jen asked for the financial update.
- b) Angie gave a finance update; March was positive about ten thousand dollars. We are about 60,000 ahead of last year.
- c) Todd asked how we compare to last year.
- d) Angie said we are behind in giving.
- e) Todd asked if expenses were better?
- f) Angie said this Includes investment fund, we have 800,000 in money market account.
- g) Jen asked Dianne if we are still seeing the impact of 3M changes?
- h) Dianne replied that has leveled out, some people have moved. We have been able to handle expenses with the funds received. You can see where I can hold back as we have positions that have not been filled. March contains Easter, not a big boost as we thought it would be. Next few months the amounts revenue will not be as large.
- i) Angie said that is the other thing the annual budget is bigger than last year, and we asked congregation to push contributions.
- j) Dianne said people have increased their contributions, and that property insurance has gone up. What I am finding is that some companies are no longer ensuring churches, feelers out looking at 5 companies. One of the things is to increase our deductible. It has not been making a difference. When money seems tight, we look at ways to look at expenses.

	<u>March 2024</u>	<u>Year-to-date</u>
Contributions	181,761	500,814
Expenses	153,329	400,375
Net	28,432	100,439

3. Off Site Meeting Follow Up – Tactics (Tricia to lead)
 - a) Jen said we will continue in May since both Tricia and Jason were absent.

Worship / Community Engagement:

1. Organ Committee – Update on construction / engineering from Todd
 - a) Todd said I have reached out to an engineer who will do work for free and give us an estimate on what we need and the cost. The Engineer asked if we were a Christian church, and he will do estimate for free.
 - b) Todd said he sent him all the drawings and he should have minor questions.
 - c) Jen said to Todd, thank you for making connections.
 - d) Todd said it was hard to find someone, a lot of people were retired or would not call back.
 - e) Kevin asked, can we go back to the organ. How do we want to go about raising funds?
 - f) Jen said we don't know what we will be talking about yet.
 - g) Kevin asked, is there going to be a committee?
 - h) Jen replied, once the discovery phase is done and know what kind of money and steps are done, then at some point there will be a need for a fundraising committee.
 - i) Pastor Jon said in my report I have put some firm financial bids of what we are looking from the congregations all the pieces of the puzzles will fall into place. Then we can move forward with a concrete ask. There is a void, what is in the best interest of the congregation. Like with do with any project.
 - j) Todd said I am trying to get additional bids but it's a weird project and they don't really understand the project.
 - k) Jen asked if there was anything else on the organ front? Thank you for your time.

Staff / Ministry Updates:

1. Monthly Staff Updates
 - a. Jen said she liked the learning the power of invitation, it was fun to read about the Retreat and what Pam has been working on.
 - b. Jen asked for any other updates.
 - c. Jen asked if we should do the Off-Site Meeting Follow Up updates?
 - d. Pastor Jon said we should wait with a couple being missing and Trisha is leading efforts.

Other Committee Updates / New Business:

2. Facilities - Alarm system update (Bid received).
 - a. Jen said the bid from Collins has been received but not yet reviewed.
 - b. Pastor Jon said this has become more of a priority with state of world and RSG.

Upcoming Events and Meetings

1. May 14 - Executive Council Meeting
2. May 21 - Council Meeting

The meeting adjourned at **7:31 pm**

Adjourn Meeting – Jen

Closing Prayer – Prayer Request. – Pastor Amelia

Appendix A: Staff Reports**Pastor Jon****Leadership:**

- As part of our Leadership Meeting on April 9 we took time to discuss what the team needs to adhere to our May planning cadence timeline as outlined by our Key Planning Events Projection Calendar 2024 Doc. Out of this conversation the following statements were utilized as part of April 16 staff meeting. These statements are intended to generate conversations surrounding ministry updates and highlights. 1) I'm celebrating... 2) I'm working on... 3) I'm learning... 4) I'm needing help with... 5) I'm reading or listening to... 6) I'm reflecting on... (What to start, stop, let go of, add or build on - i.e. Relevance). Great discussion today in terms of staff engagement and storytelling.

Stewardship:

- Leveraged quarterly statement letter to share a stewardship connection with the congregation.
- Language being crafted for personal thank you/congregational connection notes.
- As with other congregational initiatives, I took an opportunity to create a framework for the possible upcoming Organ Appeal. There are still some financial and structural questions that need to be solidified before we get into the process of asking for funds from the congregation to support this initiative. As with other congregational asks, we are seeking to create a healthy opportunity for engagement while supporting our current budget as outlined in our 2024 stewardship campaign. Clear and concise messaging needs to be developed that will speak to the importance of general budget support and this congregational initiative so that ministry and benevolence support is not significantly impacted.

Worship:

- Well... the gauntlet of Lent, Holy Week and Easter is behind us. It's strange to think that it was only 3 weeks ago that we shouted, "Christ is Risen." Sadly, I got a bit run down during Holy Week but was able to preach on Easter. A big thank you to Pastor Amelia for providing worship support and for leading worship on April 7.
- Work continues on the "Paired Up" series for Fall which will live into our Engagement Strategy as people are encouraged to connect with the church (i.e. updated pictures, contact information, service opportunities, storytelling, stewardship, etc.). This series will also encourage us to connect with others in the congregation in order to foster a sense of community. Please see last month's report for additional details.

General:

- Though a bit “under the weather” I was able to officiate the March 29 Committal service at Union Cemetery and April 3rd funeral service and burial at Fort Snelling. Both families were very gracious.
- Unlike years prior, 2024 is turning out to be a slower wedding season which is a welcome change.

Nominating Committee

- A key component is the re-connection with those who submitted names for election. These individuals are already involved in other capacities and it is great to see their investment in their church community.

Pastor Amelia

I’m celebrating

- Holy Week. It was my first. I learned so much and can’t wait to plan for next year. Our volunteers did an outstanding job!
- Development of expanded Prayer Ministry. Intercession prayer group will meet every Wed. From 12-1pm. All are welcome as we pray for the church, our church, the world, and all who are in need.
- Development of King of Kings Visitation Team/Ministry. This team did a wonderful job while I was out for surgery. New things are in the works! We are looking at a Caregiver Support Group; Care giving awareness for our congregation; and a ministry highlight Sunday
- A great team to work with. :-)
- I’m back playing PICKLEBALL!

I’m working on

- Bringing a greater understanding, awareness, and action of Gospel Hospitality. I’ve begun using language in various groups that I will use in identifying staffing needs for Sundays for a welcoming worship experience. Gospel Hospitality says: We’ve been expecting you. We’ve prepared a place for you. We’re so glad you’re here. We know that God will meet you in this place.
- Protocol and Procedures for Worship Coordinators, as well as ushers.
- April/May Bit of Encouragement. I am playing with the theme from the Sunday prior to the Wednesday it is uploaded. The “Team” is considering ways to be out and about for the summer.
- Investment in the teams and people I lead, which means I am in a lot of meetings. This is good and holy work.
- Leadership Development material for our ministries and teams, focusing on LEADERSHIP. We are all leaders even if the only person we lead is yourself.

- Continuing Education. I am in a five week Leadership Cohort with Vibrant Faith to hone my pastoral coaching skills and development a personal/professional approach to gopal setting and achievement that is focused on transformation of myself and those who I encounter.

I'm wondering

- How do we assess and approach change in this post covid era?
- What would it look like for us to explore the vastness and mystery of God? (I have specific things to which I am referring but it's a start)
- How can we work smarter not harder. I know it's a cliché but as we work on organizational development, new hires, expanding needs, how do we need to offload some things in order to focus on other things.
- What would need to change in order for our congregation to know that church doesn't happen without them? What attitudes, actions, and assumptions do we need to address?

I'm reading

- *Everything Belongs* by Richard Rohr. This little book is dense and rocking my world! Such good thoughts to stretch me theologically and spiritually!
- *The Anxious Generation* by Jonathan Haidt. This book addresses the staggering statistics that cite increase of mental health issues in teens and young adults, especially since 2010. This book is a parenting and faith praxis game changer.
- I'm listening to "Everything Belongs Podcast", All Sons and Daughters song "All the poor and powerless".
- Church leadership through coaching materials through Vibrant Faith.

Jake Pickett

Michael Carmack

Still recruiting students for the Middle School Mission trip - excited about this trip happening!

Continuing to plan for the National Youth Gathering trip with our HS

Planning for serve camp experiences

Wrapping up programming for the year with our confirmation students

Beginning to work with our 8th graders to prepare for confirmation in the fall

Laurel Bornholtz

- The Women's Ministry Team (plus Annette Sherrill and Dawn Swenson) had 57 women registered for our first RefreshHER event in 4.5 years. Our speaker, Ericka Andersen, was very well received. Our breakout sessions were popular, lunch was good and the women leading worship set a beautiful tone for our day. Pastor Amelia joined us for opening and closing words and prayer. It was a great day. Ericka had books delivered to KofK for attendees to purchase for \$10 (list price is \$16.99). The few books left unsold will be offered to the congregation to purchase - there are probably women who wanted to attend but were unavailable.
- We are almost halfway through our series of drop in play sessions on Monday mornings. Participation has been uneven. We've had as many as 11 and as few as 2. An announcement about drop in play will be posted on social media again next week.
- The Wednesday night parenting group completed their series on April 3. The group would like to continue in the fall.
- God's GALS (all but Precept) and our Monday evening studies have finished for the program year. There are two options for women's monthly summer studies - one on Monday evenings and the other on Wednesday mornings. These monthly gatherings are a fun yet important way to stay connected.

Paula Arland

- 1st graders celebrated their learning of the Lord's Prayer by leading it in worship this weekend with ASL. Grateful to have opportunities to highlight what kids are learning in worship.
- Kinder Bible is April 28 with a blessing in worship and learning following the blessing.
- Wapo and Ox camps are almost at capacity for our scheduled weeks/weekends. Looking forward to our Pre-Camp Gathering on Sunday with families. We'll go over what to expect and how parents can help their students have a successful time at camp. A few camp counselors will join us to lead some community building activities with the kids.
- Kids of the Kingdom Early Bird registration for 2024-25 opens on Wednesday. With that, volunteer opportunities for next fall will also be available for people to sign-up.

- American Girls Camp planning team continues to prepare for their fun week in July. Most activities have been identified and we are now working on ordering supplies and prepping for the week.
- Scuba VBS is right around the corner. Had an opportunity to go to a workshop to learn all about the new stations and experience a day at Scuba. I'm really excited for the week that our kids will be having as they dive into friendship with God. I have identified a few items that we will be needing for our week: pool noodles, clean bottle caps (milk bottles, water bottles, soda bottles, etc...), clean 2 liter bottles and caps (for PreK Scuba gear), ocean theme inflatable floaties (like whales, dolphins, turtles and can be loaned to us for the week).
- Working with Andrea from RSG to send out fall enrollment information to families of 3 year olds for RSG preschool and Kids of the Kingdom.

Pam Hoeffel

Celebrating -

- March **Food Donations to Basic Needs** - 2,651 items. 1581 pounds of food. Celebrating the 12 volunteers that helped to pack and deliver the food. It was the largest food donation that Basic Needs has received. They are grateful.

-**The Community Dinner.** Bringing together different ethnic groups to cook and serve others in our community. We were able to serve 50 people and 80 volunteers. Many of the volunteers were refugees. They would not take a free meal so they volunteered to cook and serve. King of Kings had 8 volunteers. Connections were made. A King of King family picked up the Honduras family and brought them to King of Kings for church service.

-**Easter Egg Hunt.** Families loved it. It brought their neighbors together. They would do it again. People are still talking about it.

I am learning

-the power of the invitation when it is extended in person.

Working on

- the Sock Hop/ Block Party. (Open to suggestions)
- 2025 trip to Tanzania
- Mission Sunday for the Fall
- sharing the stories
- Community Dinner

Andrea Villanueva

I continue to do tours and enroll three year olds. Slowly, they are coming. Paula in the Children's Ministry will soon be sending KOK families information about Sunday School starting in the Fall to families with 3 year olds. She had the great idea to have an RSG flier added to that mailing. I'm excited to connect with these families and hopefully all of the children register for preschool!

The RSG staff together do a service project each Spring. For the 2nd year, we purchased, donated and repackaged Feminine Hygiene Products for Neighbors Inc. Food Shelf in South St. Paul. These items are very much in demand but very rarely donated. After a day with kiddos, a staff meeting, and an inservice training - the teachers packaged over 1,000 items for Neighbors Inc.! I'm so proud of the RSG Teachers - for what they do inside and outside of the classroom.

We have only 30 days until our 4's and 5's Graduate Preschool!

It's been such a great school year! I'm so blessed to get to work with the best kiddos, families, teachers and all KOK staff!!

Dianne Johnson

Continuing to manage the blast/website communications aspect

Built registrations for Early Bird PreK and Middle School and they actually work 😊

Working with Gemini on the E4 page of the website

Working with Isabelle on the first quarter newsletter

Working on quotes for property/liability insurance along with worker's comp

Thank you to Jo Rettke and Jen McKinnon for watching the front desk this past week as Patty and Kathy were both gone- because of that- handled front desk duties along with donation entries.

Scheduling inspections of facility with the City.

Managing the schedule and fees with the Music Series Groups

Reconciling all paypal transactions

Provided notary service for 10 families

Sold 3 Columbarium niches