

**Ascension Lutheran Church
Congregational Meeting
Sunday, January 27, 2019**

Call To Order: The Congregational Meeting was called to order by Carol Bartell at 12:34 pm.

Mission Statement of Ascension Lutheran Church: *We are called to create opportunities for all people to become devoted followers of Christ.*

Motto: *Invite-Grow-Serve*

Opening Devotion

Pastor Tim read from Philippians 2: "Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed...continue to work out your salvation". It is a call to holiness. Pastor Tim recalled conversations with Roy Foerster who told stories of Ascension's past and how, during difficult times, the congregation worked through it with God's help. God has been faithful to us in the decisions we've made.

Approval of Minutes from September 30 Congregational Meeting

A motion was made (Todd Klipp), seconded (Ted Bartell) and passed unanimously to approve the minutes from the September 30 Congregational meeting.

New Business - ECC Building Plans

Bob Woodward presented a Master Plan Implementation Team (MPIT) update. The cost has increased to \$6.8 million from the original estimate due to a change in the location of the building. Original plans were to use the land currently occupied by the modulars, which is already graded. Grading is necessary on the new site. Also, footprint of the project has grown as the needs of the ECC were studied more closely.

Sources of funds:	\$3,283,000	Mission Possible - Phase 1
	1,100,000	Mission Possible - Phase 2
	835,000	Sale of land
	<u>1,250,000</u>	ALS Loan
	\$6,468,000	

If the Mission Possible – Phase 2 goals are met, there is still a shortfall of \$330,000.

Creighton Van Horn spoke about ways to close this shortfall. The budget includes \$500,000 for city fees but that is a high-end estimate. As much as possible, all costs have been accounted for which should mitigate potential surprises in costs. Mission Possible 1 funds will be coming in over the next two years and Mission Possible 2 funds need to be raised. There will be construction costs during that times that will need to be paid before all of the funds are received. For this reason, the ability to access funds via a short-term loan is necessary to keep the timeline for the ECC project. It's our turn to invest in the future of our children and to live out our motto to invite, grow and serve.

Kaylee Searway reiterated the motion to allow for short-term borrowing is necessary to cover the upfront costs of the project.

Pam Musburger presented a slide show of ECC students. The new spaces in the ECC will allow for additional programming options as well as additional students. A new parent/toddler program could bring in up to 50 more families to the ECC campus.

Motion #1

A motion was made (Jack Keonig), seconded (Delores Ledbetter) to approve building the new Early Childhood Education Center, pursuing a loan of up to \$3,000,000 from Thrivent Financial to meet potential short term and long-term costs.

Questions/Discussion

Mary Wennes Budget-wise, where is Ascension at right now? What is the current debt load?

Jim Glynn - Through December, YTD offerings are down by \$25,000. We are at 90% as compared to December 2017.

Current outstanding loans include:

\$1.3M Thrivent Loan	\$12,916 / month	Due 06/01/2029
ALECC loan for modulars	\$6,000 / month	Due 06/01/2020
\$35,000 Foundation Loan	\$109 / month	Due 06/30/2019

With the proposed loan we would borrow only what is needed which would not necessarily be the entire \$3M. If the motion passes and funds are drawn on the loan, only the interest would be paid during the time of construction. It is Jim's opinion that this could be handled in the budget.

Creighton Van Horn - Confirmed that as money is borrowed, incoming Mission Possible funds would be used to make the interest payments.

Ingrid Isaaksen What is the percentage of members who have made pledges? Are the plans to reach out to those who haven't made pledges? What is the strategy for contacting those who've already pledged and ask for additional giving? Is the school working on plans to address the declining enrollment in the upper division grades?

Sherith Squires - A mailing was sent to Ascension members who had not yet made pledges to the Capital Campaign. No responses have yet been received. Meetings with individual members have taken place and more are to be scheduled. Taking on the proposed loan will be difficult for Ascension but the alternative is not going ahead with the preschool expansion. Citing a PLU football coach: "If you're green you're growing; if you're ripe, you're not." The Capital Action Team has begun the grant writing process. They are considering asking those who've already pledged to continue their pledges for a 4th year.

Todd Klipp - Approximately 50% of Ascension's membership has contributed or pledged to Mission Possible. The CAT team is looking for someone who might want naming rights. Another possibility is charitable gift annuities.

Paul Evenson: A 4th year option for pledges is important. Also, those who've already pledged would be ideal persons to approach friends who haven't pledged. The key to today's Motion #1 is that it allows for *pursuing* up to \$3M of loaned funds. The borrowing is not assured if Ascension is not able to service the debt.

Bob Woodward - (Responding to the question about maintaining enrollment in the upper grades.) Speaking for his family, his two children remained at ALS through 8th grade due to the "family" bonds that started in preschool. He reminded those in attendance that the term for the modulars ends in July 2020.

Karen Jonas - Upper division retention is challenging. For this reason the school has a Missions Director focused particularly on this issue. Currently there are only four 6th grade students but the other grade levels are strong. The school is building from the bottom up. The Kindergarten class is full every year.

Delores Ledbetter Her entire career has been in Lutheran education, including 46 years at Ascension school. In the early 1970's it looked like CLU (CLC back then) was going to be closing. She and Jack left for a PhD program in Nebraska, not sure if there would be a job for Jack when they returned. And now, CLU is the largest Lutheran college in the ELCA. Jack recently preached at a church that has no debt, but it is slowly dying.

Pastor Tim - The ECC brings lots of energy to the campus. The ECC is church in a different way.

Ted Bartell What is the current monthly carrying charge on the current debt? What would be the additional costs with the proposed loan?

Jim Glynn -

Current outstanding loans include:

\$1.3M Thrivent Loan	\$12,916 / month	Due 06/01/2029
ALECC loan for modulars	\$6,000 / month	Due 06/01/2020
\$35,000 Foundation Loan	\$109 / month	Due 06/30/2019

If no additional funds are raised from Mission Possible, additional monthly debt costs would be approximately \$21,500.

Jack Koenig The ECC makes money and it furthers our missions to invite and grow. Called for a vote.

Dennis O'Gorman He has a passion for Ascension. He has an arrangement with the Foundation where he gave money upfront to the Foundation and he receives a monthly stipend which covers monthly expenses. He would be willing to make a similar arrangement with the church to help fund the ECC project.

Sara Wallace It might be possible to raise funds from ALS alumni. Has this been pursued?

Pam Musburger - It's been her experience that once dirt starts moving, people are motivated to give and she believes that will be the case with the ALS/ECC families.

A motion was made and seconded to conduct a voice vote in lieu of a written ballot. They ayes carried the motion.

The ayes carried the motion to approve building the new Early Childhood Education Center, pursuing a loan of up to \$3,000,000 from Thrivent Financial to meet potential short term and long-term costs.

Motion #2

Carol Bjelland presented the motion to change the name of the Missions Committee to Global Ministries Team. The mission statement of this group covers global missions, hunger & health, justice & advocacy, peacemaking, prayer & education. The proposed name change better reflects the scope and breadth of the group's mission and ministry.

A motion was made (Todd Klipp), seconded (Ingrid Isaaksen) and passed unanimously to approve changing the name of the Missions Committee to Global Ministries Team in Ascension's Bylaws.

Closing Prayer - Given by Pastor Steve

Adjournment - Carol adjourned the meeting at 2:03 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Rachael Bowen