

## MINUTES TAKEN AT THE INFORMATIONAL ONLY VOTERS MEETING ON APRIL 30<sup>TH</sup> 2023

President Shawn Mahoney began the meeting at 11:45 am.

Shawn first read a letter from the Church Council and from the Call Committee out loud to the members in attendance.

Then Shawn asked the members for their opinions and preferences regarding the number of Sunday services, the times of services, and the kind of services they prefer and why.

Below are some of the answers---\*

- 1) Prefers two services if one can be contemporary to draw in young families. If 1 is not a blended or contemporary service, then 1 service is preferred because we are stronger together.
- 2) Let Elders and Pastors determine the type of worship service and Sunday school after service. Regarding the time(s), each age group has different issues affecting time preferences, what works for their family or not. Also, what works for their individual health issues or not.
- 3) We need to set criteria like we did back when we went to one service because we lost so many members over a dispute about building a new church building. Then we set the criteria at 185 regular attendance at the 9am service before we would go back to 2 services.
- 4) We need to go back to one service because when new people come to check out our church, they see only 40 or so people in attendance, and they wonder what is wrong and do not come back.
- 5) Prefers one set time for the services, including 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays, because changing times can get confusing or people forget the time change, come at the wrong time and miss the service.
- 6) Prefers 2 services because it gives people more choices for times of services.
- 7) Prefers 2 services to better accommodate everyone.
- 8) One Sunday service during the summer and two during the year.
- 9) One service to grow the church. Small attendance turns new people off.
- 10) We come here to worship God. We should not be selfish. Any way we can praise God is fine, what the majority wants is fine.
- 11) One service because it is wonderful when we are all together. It feels more welcoming. Time preference is 9am but will go at any time.
- 12) One service because when the parking lot is full and the church is full, we look like a church that is alive. When the church is full we can go back to two services again.
- 13) One service, now.
- 14) Can't get here by 9am.
- 15) It is like 2 separate churches with 2 services. You don't see everyone and get to know those who attend the opposite service that you attend. Prefers 1 service.
- 16) Any time is fine. People shouldn't sit in the back. Move up front.
- 17) With only one service, if you can't come at 9am, you are out of luck.
- 18) Our church will keep shrinking with only one service.
- 19) We went to 2 services during covid to please those who wanted everyone to wear a mask, and to please those who did not want to wear a mask. Just like Thursday/Saturday services, not everyone can be pleased. We want input, not fighting. We are a family and should work together.
- 20) We need to look at the problem before you try to find a solution.

- 21) Likes any service, but if we want to grow, it is about the style of the service. A contemporary praise service would draw in young people. We need to reach out to another generation.
- 22) We need people to sign up to welcome people who come for worship. Especially newcomers to our church, to show them around, answer questions, and take them to the Welcome Center for information and a gift.
- 23) Likes the option of an early or late service.
- 24) If we have only one service, make it late enough for older members to get to. For the one service during the summer, we should make it later. Studies show two services attract more people.
- 25) Overseas large churches are very welcoming. It would be fun to see everyone here at 9am.
- 26) Pastor Skamser said you never take away a service.
- 27) We will be having greeters, please sign up.
- 28) Some people have conditions where they can't make it early. We all want to be accommodated, but it can't be done. For some 8am is too early, and the 10:30 is too late. We need to be careful to make God's Word available.
- 29) Consolidate if too empty/or evangelize. It is all of our responsibility. Invite your neighbors.
- 30) People today want different values preached, not so strict. LCMS holds to stricter values, from God's Word, not what the world wants.
- 31) We need more modern music.
- 32) Let's not forget the shut-ins or those who have fallen away.
- 33) We can't choose for those who aren't here today.
- 34) Those who aren't here today had the opportunity to have their say. Therefore we do need to choose for them or we will never make a decision.

#### ASSOCIATE PASTOR CALL UPDATE---

It was presented to the members that giving is about the same level while costs are rising greatly. Mark Wrolstad looked at the trends for 5 years, giving has been basically flat. Some of our older givers have died, new young families are not coming in. Our workers needed raises or it would be like lowering their salary with the cost of everything rising. At this time, SOTH can't support the burden of another called pastor and family. We should not call another pastor now until our finances can maintain that pastor.

Pastor Kolander will provide assistance preaching at some services and visiting new people in their homes, and wherever he is needed.

THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 12:45pm.

Pastor Baumgarn closed with a prayer.

Submitted by Carolyn Bey, Council Secretary

\*Above are the responses pretty close to how they were said. I did very little editing. C Bey