

Council Highlights: July 23

- The June financial report showed a negative cash flow (income - expense) of **\$1,044** for the month. For the fiscal year-to-date (Nov. through June) the cash flow is a negative **\$1,406**. \$494 of this month's deficit is a check to Compassion International per our annual commitment.
- The Christian Life Ministry Team reported on its meeting after the service on Sunday July 21. The meeting was well-attended and there was lively discussion of opportunities and ideas for outreach activities.
- Bob Jordan will be attending the NALC Convocation in Indianapolis, IN on August 7-9 as our congregation's lay delegate. Pastor Hybl will be attending in his capacity as clergy, and will also attend the associated theological conference that precedes the convocation.
- Because of the importance of the election of a new NALC Bishop, members are encourage to study the slate of candidates and biographies to be found at <https://lutheranweek.com/nominees-for-bishop-announced/> and to share opinions with our voting delegates (Pastor Hybl and Bob Jordan).
- It was noted that there have been two recent occurrences where a 'spammer' has sent spurious emails to Emmanuel's members under Pastor Hybl's name (and picture) asking for the 'favor' of purchasing expensive gift cards that he urgently required. The spammer(s) have apparently accessed information on our Emmanuel website, and members are warned that such communications are strictly fraudulent and to be ignored.
- The council voted to approve ***Launching our 3rd Century in Mission*** as our congregation's annual theme (which will include our 200th anniversary observance in May 2020). The council also voted to approve Matthew 25:35-36 as the theme Bible verse. Mack Flood and Joe Ugen agreed to coordinate planning for Emmanuel's 200th anniversary celebration.
- The council addressed the need for Emmanuel to identify a vision of where God is leading this congregation in its mission in this community. MaryAnn Sinwell and Fred Schamber agreed to coordinate this effort.
- The major topic of this Council meeting was a lengthy and frank discussion of Emmanuel's current Pastoral situation. The discussion was informed by a July 19 report from the Mutual Ministry Committee that emphasized the urgency felt by many of our members to translate 'words into action.' A Resolution was generated and unanimously approved by the lay council members (Pastor recusing himself) and specially emailed to the congregation on July 27 (printed copies were distributed on Sunday July 28). A copy of this Resolution and its cover letter follows these Highlights.

July 26, 2019

Dear members of Emmanuel:

On Tuesday July 23 your Emmanuel Congregation Council held its regular monthly meeting. Many items of business were discussed, but one was unquestionably the most challenging: how to proceed regarding our current Pastoral situation. Our lengthy council discussion was informed by a report of the Mutual Ministry Committee, dated July 19, which conveyed a sense of urgency for 'words to be transformed into action.'

In view of this sense of urgency, the Council feels that it is imperative that: (1) Council agree on a clear course of action; (2) clearly communicate this plan to the congregation; and (3) take responsibility to ensure that it is executed to the best of our ability.

After a lengthy and very frank discussion (with Pastor Hybl present) we lay council members found ourselves in unanimous agreement on a plan of action which is captured in the attached *Resolution*, and which was passed by the unanimous assent of the seven lay council members. (Pastor Hybl recused himself from the drafting and voting but has stated his support of the finished product.) We ask you to read this *Resolution* carefully, and if you have questions, to contact one of the council members listed.

We fully appreciate that some may not find this plan satisfactory in that it does not define a firm schedule nor outline an 'end game.' We believe it is not just desirable, but essential if we truly desire to be the Body of Christ, that we do not attempt to constrain the working of the Holy Spirit. This is definitely not suggesting resignation to the status quo, but, acknowledging that it is both unfaithful and unwise to plan 'what if' scenarios until we have 'gone the second mile' to achieve the kind of reconciliation that scripture repeatedly instructs us to pursue. It must also be recognized that the reconciliation efforts that the Council is committed to will necessarily be private and confidential. Thus, we ask the Congregation for your support, your prayers, and your patience.

May God bless our efforts and lead us according to His will.

On behalf of the lay members of the Emmanuel Congregation Council,

Fred Schamber (Secretary)

Resolution of the Congregation Council of Emmanuel Lutheran Church

- Whereas the Mutual Ministry Committee of Emmanuel Congregation has reported to the Emmanuel Congregation Council that a significant number of Emmanuel's members with whom they have personally communicated are expressing strong dissatisfaction with the Pastoral Ministry of Pastor Darian Hybl, which dissatisfaction for some has risen to the level that they are considering departure from the congregation; and
- Whereas, at the advice of NALC leadership, the Emmanuel Congregation Council has initiated a process of Congregational Conflict Intervention and has completed the first phase of this process (i.e., the 'Day of Listening' held on June 29, 2019 and subsequent report to the Council and Congregation on June 30, conducted by the team comprised of Pastor Carl Johnson, Dean of the Mid-northeast Mission District, and Ms. Karen Waugaman, a trusted associate from his congregation); and
- Whereas the Council has weighed the issues that have been brought to its attention through: (1) reports of the Mutual Ministry Committee; (2) Pastor Johnson's summary statement of the issues expressed at the Day of Listening; and (3) the personal contacts, observations, and communications of the individual Council members, and it is the consensus of the Council that, though valid areas of concern have indeed been raised, the Council is aware of none which rise to the level required for termination of Pastor Hybl's Call under section 9.04 of Emmanuel's Constitution; and
- Whereas the second phase of the Congregational Conflict Intervention process mandates sincere Spirit-driven attempts to achieve reconciliation between Pastor Hybl and disaffected members through personal dialogue; and
- Whereas Pastor Hybl has publicly and humbly acknowledged before the congregation his personal failures and a commitment to correct past errors, and is earnestly asking for forgiveness and opportunity to achieve reconciliation through personal discussion with those he may have offended; and
- Whereas our Savior Jesus Christ repeatedly stressed the imperative of extending forgiveness to our brothers and sisters in Christ, such as:
 - when He instructed us to forgive *"seventy times seven times"* (Matthew 18:22),
 - when He taught us to pray *"forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors"* and cautioned that *"if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."* (Matthew 6:12,15), and
 - when he concluded the parable of the unforgiving servant with this warning: *"So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."* (Matthew 18:35)

Be it therefore resolved:

- that in obedience to the clear commands of our Savior Jesus Christ, in faithfulness to the letter and spirit of Emmanuel's Constitution, and in prudent recognition of the grievous and lasting harm that can be inflicted on both Pastor Hybl and Emmanuel Congregation by precipitous action, that Emmanuel's Congregation Council will proceed with implementation of the second phase of the Congregational Conflict Intervention process, whereby disaffected members of our congregation are asked to engage in frank dialogue with Pastor Hybl with the goal of achieving personal reconciliation and healing; and
- that Emmanuel's lay council members will take the initiative to personally arrange such face-to-face meetings between Pastor Hybl and disaffected members and, as appropriate, to serve as facilitators and mediators for candid discussion of issues and potential resolution and reconciliation; and
- that all members of Emmanuel Congregation be asked to whole-heartedly embrace this ongoing process of seeking reconciliation between individuals and Pastor Hybl, and through humility, conversation, and fervent prayer seek true unity of the Body of Christ within our congregation; and
- that ultimate resolution of this matter be laid at the foot of the Cross, in humble and patient acceptance that God's will is done in His time and in His way, trusting that He will guide us to the appropriate next steps.

This resolution is passed by the unanimous vote of Emmanuel's Lay Council Members:

Mack Flood, Lou Hiener, Bob Jordan, Fred Schamber, MaryAnn Sinwell, Joe Ugen, Howard Weigold

July 26, 2019