

Grace Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, November 17, 2020
7:00 pm, Zoom



Elders Present: Bob Eggink, John Galli, Marlin Golnitz, Brian Hauptmann, Eric Johnsen, Christine McGraw, Carole Ryan, Jon Timmons, Pastor Chris Tweitmann

Elders Absent: Valerie Wiegman

Staff Present: Pastor Marv Combs, Betty Wardle, Drew Williams

Staff Absent: Darin Zylstra

Guests Present:

This is a special council meeting called to discuss cancelling in-person worship due to Covid 19 restrictions.

I. Call to Order and Opening Prayer

- a) The meeting was called to order at 7:05pm by President, Marlin Golnitz
- b) Pastor Chris gave the opening prayer.

II. Covid 19 Church Closing Update

- a) Orange County has moved into the purple tier of Covid restrictions. State guidelines recommend that churches do not meet inside.
- b) Currently a county must stay in a tier for 1 week before moving to a more restrictive tier. They must remain in a tier for 3 weeks – the last 2 being consistently lower – before moving to a less restrictive tier. The county's equality measurement also must meet guidelines.
- c) Because Orange County has moved to purple, we need to discuss closing.
- d) Upon review of the Orange County/State guidelines, the church has until Wednesday to close.
- e) Pastor Marv discussed options for tomorrow's WOW service. The accompanist and volunteers are available to have a service tomorrow. Pastor Marv can announce in the service that this will be the last WOW service until conditions change and Grace council approves re-opening. Pastor Marv's second option is to meet all attenders at the door and let them know there will be no service. Council recommendation was that tomorrow's WOW service go on as scheduled.
- f) It was noted that our congregation has been very cooperative during in-person services regarding following all covid guidelines.
- g) Discussed doing drive-in services again. It was decided not to pursue that in the near-term.
- h) It was suggested that council make a long-term decision for the sake of consistency for the congregation and for planning purposes. In-person service attendance has ranged from 60's to 100 people. Probably not over 50 people who are attending every week.
- i) It was suggested that the option of in-person services on Christmas Eve be left open. It would be difficult to let people know about the service and have them register on-line with the short amount of time after our required 3 weeks in the purple tier. Also noted concerns about visitors coming that did not know about registration. We would risk having to turn people away.
- j) Pastor Chris will do something on-line on Wednesday nights during Advent.
- k) Pastor Chris expressed frustrations with churches who are remaining open. He addressed the ramifications of ignoring the government and reminded the council about Grace having legal liability for our decisions. He said that as a leader he can't be defiant. These decisions can affect the entire institution of Grace.

A Motion was Made to suspend in-person worship services at Grace while Orange County is in the purple tier – at least until December 13.

Motion was Seconded.

Discussion

Motion was Amended to add: When Orange County moves to the red tier, the Council will meet again to plan future action.

Motion was approved with 7 yes votes and 1 abstention

III. Suspension of Campus activities

- a) Council recommended that on-campus activities should be cancelled.
 - b) Continuing to hold the Thursday night AA meeting was agreed to with restrictions.
 - c) After further discussion it was agreed that the Grace staff would decide which meetings could continue on campus.
- This can be reviewed at the regular council meeting in two weeks, Tuesday, December 1st.

IV. Adjournment

- a) Marlin Golnitz adjourned the meeting at 8:15pm.
- b) Pastor Marv gave the closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Betty Wardle, Council Clerk