

Immanuel Lutheran Church & School
Voters Meeting Minutes
01.30.2023

Attendance: 71 (55 voting members, 16 new members)

Meeting was called to order by Tom Ruff at 7:00 p.m.

Pastor Jason Auringer opened the meeting with a reading and comments on Proverbs 3:3-12.

Attendees reviewed the Minutes of the September 26, 2022, Voters Meeting. John Waddell made a motion to approve the Minutes as presented. Forrest Van Ness seconded the motion. Motion approved by unanimous vote.

Before moving forward, Paul Edwards asked for clarification regarding a necessary meeting quorum as it pertains to Constitution requirements. Tom Ruff stated the quorum for this evening's meeting complies with the requirement of 25.

Attendees reviewed the Minutes of the November 6, 2022, Special Voters Meeting. John Waddell made a motion to approve the Minutes. Becky Hoskins seconded the motion. Motion approved by unanimous vote.

Long-Range Planning Assessment Phase Presentation

Tom Ruff opened the presentation of the Long-Range Planning (LRP) Assessment report with the planning process.

Becky Hoskins presented a Community Context, including area demographics.

Russ Hoppe presented Immanuel Lutheran Church population and membership history.

Rod Kumm presented information pertaining to Immanuel facilities.

John Waddell presented information pertaining to organization staffing.

Tom Ruff presented key considerations for Immanuel's ministry and long-range planning next steps.

Town Hall Questions

Tom Ruff opened the meeting to questions pertaining to both long-range planning and the ministry at large.

Nancy Minton asked a question about the possibility of building "up" structurally and regarding the school vs. church budget. Russ Hoppe stated buildings are at height max based on original structural plans.

Dawn Hennessy asked about the percentage of church member:non-member as it relates to the school. Tom Ruff stated approximately 40% of school families are also Immanuel Lutheran Church members.

Gerald Sahd highlighted key considerations: (1) the Wentzville population dynamics and growth are in areas that churches are struggling bringing in, (2) defining the mission purpose along with understanding the opportunity social media brings will help how Immanuel connects to traditional church life, outreach, and membership growth, (3) how to translate school growth into Immanuel church membership growth.

Susan Maag asked about the connection between Immanuel's social media and mission work.

Dan Ebert stated how Immanuel has gone from a small, almost rural church mindset to the growth it has experienced and expanded facilities. Dan asked what is under consideration regarding reaching people in the key demographic areas.

Paul Edwards suggested considering those outside groups who rent Immanuel facilities, e.g., sports and wellness activities. Debbie Anderson shared that Immanuel has maxed out the facilities with its own events and currently has limited to no outside rental opportunities.

Karen Sansone asked if Immanuel has tapped into LCEF insight. Tom Ruff shared that the LRP committee met with a LCEF representative prior to the January BOD meeting.

Jim Meyer asked about the number of members who live outside the Wentzville School District. Pastor Auringer stated that number is unknown, however, Immanuel serves individuals from at least six to seven different area school districts.

Linda Waller presented a letter to attendees regarding Immanuel's land usage, which Tom Ruff read to those in attendance. Tom thanked Linda for her comments and stated that careful thought will be given to the remarks she shared.

Dave Riutzel asked about the Executive Director position requirements, etc. Tom Ruff spoke to the role, noting that such a position is needed. A key point of consideration is the type of directorial leadership that is needed for a church of Immanuel's size, which would allow the pastoral office to preach/teach/shepherd and the school principal to lead the school.

Arlene Sahd asked about the target date for posting the position. Tom Ruff stated that currently the top priority is to get the position description right and that posting will follow.

Paul Edwards asked for clarification about the LRP report classification of a "mega-church" and how many LCMS churches fit that category. Tom Ruff stated Immanuel Lutheran is in the top 2% of LCMS churches.

Kathy Rawlings brought to the attention of the group the St. Louis Archdiocese's consideration to close a catholic church located in Wentzville.

Tom Modde asked about Immanuel's projections on church growth. Tom Ruff stated projections are part of the next phase of the long-range planning process.

Pastor Auringer reviewed questions that had been received by e-mail: Expanding use of the entrance digital display board to highlight events, coffee machine repairs, tracking worship and communion attendance, and the Overflowing campaign status.

Carol Waddell provided a financial update of the current Overflowing campaign in response to a question of using funds exceeding the pledged amount of \$946,881 to pay down principal. Fifteen months remain in the campaign.

Carole Vahsholtz asked about the outcome of the previous church survey. Tom Ruff shared that a report, which summarized the 2020 survey findings, was addressed at a previous Voters Meeting (January 24, 2022). Tom stated that the demographics of those who responded to the survey are not representative of the community in which we live.

With no further business, Tom Ruff asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Rod Kumm made a motion to adjourn. Tim Hennessy seconded the motion.

In response to Kathy Rawlings' inquiry about the updated church website, Pastor Tom Roma presented a brief "showing" of the site that is in the works.

With no further business, the Motion to adjourn was approved by unanimous vote.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m. with the singing of the Doxology.

HANDOUTS:

- Meeting Agenda
- September 2022 Voters Meeting Minutes
- November 2022 Special Voters Meeting Minutes
- Long Range Planning Assessment Phase