

# Christ Lutheran Church (CLC) Call Committee Minutes

Thursday, December 9, 2021 from 5:45pm-6:45pm

Call Committee Present: Sharon Ammerman, Chris Dubak, Julie Lange, Martin Morud, Kevin Noeldner, Karen Nork, Berit Strom, Paul Nasvik (alternate), Sarah Warren

Call Committee Absent: None

Meeting called to order at 5:59pm by chair, Martin Morud. Quorum established with 9 of 9. Guest – Pastor Sandy

Communicated with Lake Area Discovery Center in Stillwater (13 locations within churches), variations between WI/MN daycare center laws. Received first referral – Pastor Pete Miller has a gentleman who went to Augsburg and is awaiting a call, interested in area, and their church may want to do a financial partnership between their church and ours.

Next meeting, Thursday, December 16, 2021 at 5:45pm where we will continue working on the MSP.

Pastor Sandy joined us via phone and was reflecting on the questions she answered (see responses to the questions).

1. Is there enough of a base left in our congregation for a full-time pastor to change the trend to a church of growth and vitality?
  - a. Pastor Sandy's response: If you are relying on the pastor to change the trend, then I don't believe there is enough of a base. However, if you can think about your next pastor supporting you in the ministries that you already do well, and your next pastor working/serving with you in new ministries as well, then I believe that there are truly enough "ministers" within the congregation of CLC.
  - b. Call Committee's response: we agree with Pastor Sandy's response. We can't look for one person to fix everything, we would set them up for failure. We are looking for guidance, a leader, and someone to help us with a plan. The plan can come from a contractor, a pastor, or Trinity Lutheran Church to be able to see what is possible. There is no long-term strategic plan amongst the council and we need those who will be there for a long time. It's a combination of both, a pastor who desires to be a leader and support from the congregation.
2. Is there something about our congregation that may be blocking us from our dream?
  - a. Pastor Sandy's response: Not having been a part of your committee conversations I'm not certain what your dream is for CLC. If you are imagining the days when families traditionally went to church on Sunday morning, had Sunday dinner together, and watched The Wonderful World of Disney on Sunday evening, those days are in the rearview mirror. **And I think that is a**

**good thing.** I think God is inviting us, the church, into a new time and it will look very different from the church of the past.

The call committee is comprised of a wonderfully diverse group of people with different life experiences, backgrounds, years on the planet, passions, and levels of participation in both community life and the life of the church. It may serve you well to share your individual dreams as a means of shaping your dream for CLC.

- b. Call Committee's response: What are our dreams as a call committee? We are not ready to bring in more people just yet. What do we say? What do we offer? Wish to have a more intimate congregation with close connections.
3. If we decide to call a half-time pastor, what kind of growth could we achieve?
    - a. Pastor Sandy's response: I think it depends completely upon the person who is called and your definition of growth. God is in the mix and guiding the call process. When considering growth, are you thinking about the ways we grow in faith, the ways we grow in trust, the ways we grow in community?
    - b. Call Committee's response: She's challenging us to think outside of the box with the growth of faith, trust, and community. These three must happen before we can physically grow in numbers. Grow in faith, trust, and community. We need to focus on the mission and stewardship. Can they be measured? Yes, we have to be able to measure.
  4. Paint the picture of what it would be like with a full-time pastor.
    - a. Pastor Sandy's response: I think that the person who is called will bring gifts to CLC that serve the congregation, community, and the wider world. Those gifts will enhance those already present in the work and service of Christ Lutheran.
    - b. Call Committee's response: We believe this could be the same response if we asked for a PT vs FT pastor. It's not about the time, but the gifts we all can bring.
  5. What currently is a challenge to cover as a PT pastor?
    - a. Pastor Sandy's response: I came on board as your bridge pastor knowing that my focus would be leading worship, preaching, visiting homebound members, attending to end-of-life visits, funerals, walking with the existing ministries of CLC and being your encourager in this time of transition. It is my hope that I have met that bar.
    - b. Call Committee's response: Pastor Sandy has done very well and is determined to accomplish what we asked her to do. She lists the PT expectations of leading worship, preaching, visiting homebound members, attending to end-of-life visits, funerals, walking with the existing ministries of CLC, and encouraging us. It's our job to get out in the community. Faith gets lost

with the sporting activities. Examples of activities, going to the Christmas Tree Lighting event, being a part of the Chamber of Commerce, visit retirement homes/facilities, and develop support groups for various medical ailments. We rely on a pastor to be there more as parents are both working FT.

6. What are the things that are requiring you to put in more time than should be expected as a half-time pastor?
  - a. Pastor Sandy's response: As your pastor I am with you to serve in whatever pastoral role presents itself. I am especially interested in meeting with people to encourage them in their passions. It is in my nature to collaborate with others to address new kinds of ministry and create opportunities for people to be involved and engaged. Faith is not a spectator sport. (And knowing as I do that you are a devoted call committee, I am "preaching to the choir.") While I am attentive to what I can achieve in a half-time position another pastor may accomplish ministry in a very different way.
  - b. Call Committee's response: Connections can be created through access to new home builds and sending them a post card. If we had a member committee, it would be helpful to engage the community. Faith is not a spectator sport; we need more congregation involvement in community engagement. We are very protective of Pastor Sandy's time and want to make sure she is not overwhelmed. With a FT pastor, we are probably less protective and expect more. We need someone who loves what they are doing.
  
7. Are there things that we are not covering at all?
  - a. Pastor Sandy's response: I think most of the pastoral duties I mentioned earlier are being covered: leading worship, preaching, visiting homebound members, attending to end-of-life visits, funerals, walking with people serving in the existing ministries of CLC. I would need to hear from you as to what isn't being covered.
  - b. Call Committee's response: We need a growth in faith, trust, and community. Low attendance at Sunday services. Same people there. Imagine you have a group of fleas on a table and you have them in a high tall glass container they bounce really high, then put them in a smaller glass with a lower ceiling. They get tired of hitting the glass and start jumping lower. When the glass is removed, the fleas jump the same short height never reaching further than before. During COVID, people have become use to the norm of not being involved with the world, staying home, and staying away from church. The one constant is there is all this change, but we shouldn't stop for fear of what may be coming. We shouldn't be afraid to look ahead. When a pandemic occurs, there is a heightened awareness of finances and church attendance may be low as a norm. We could look at bringing church into the home vs into the church.
  
8. Besides money, what else could a congregation offer that would be of value to a pastor?

- a. Pastor Sandy's response: To be generous in praise, prayer, support, understanding, communication, participation in ministry
  - b. Call Committee's response: Agree
9. Do you think a full-time pastor would necessarily increase membership?
- a. Pastor Sandy's response: No
  - b. Call Committee's response: Agree
10. What do you think about a part-time pastor working with a media specialist/community liaison vs. having a full-time pastor?
- a. Pastor Sandy's response: I think the question shows that you are thinking outside the conventional box. And that is a good thing. Covid has really kicked our...Covid presents CLC, all churches, an opportunity to look at new ways of being church, so I would encourage you to be creative. While there are things that may seem challenging, if not impossible, nothing is impossible with God.
  - b. Call Committee's response: Agree
11. What qualities make a congregation stand out to a prospective pastor? Good and bad.
- a. Pastor Sandy's response: It is good to see people: excited to "be Jesus" to the neighbor, willing to serve in ministries that they are excited about, participating, enthusiastic, curious, open-minded, creative, hospitable. Think about this. What if a potential pastor were to visit CLC, unbeknown to any of us. What would that person experience? When familiar with a setting like CLC, we take comfort in our familiarity, and we don't ask ourselves what it might be like for a newcomer to step through the door on a Sunday morning or a Wednesday evening. It is important that we care for those we know, but likely even more important that we care for "the stranger" who has found his/her way to CLC.
  - b. Call Committee's response: When you see someone you don't know, go sit by them. We need name tags. Red/yellow/green dots used at a conference to provide the visual aid to state how you wish to interact due to COVID.
12. What can our congregation do to support our pastor? What do you think about the possibility of opening a daycare in the church?
- a. Pastor Sandy's response: I think I addressed the first question earlier. Part 2 – When I think about the possibility of CLC offering a daycare my heart is warmed. If the idea is to care for the children of families who need the service, if the idea is to enrich the lives of those same families with excellent child care, if the idea is to love the children that are a part of the daycare, if the

idea is to “be Jesus” to the children and their families, if the idea is to open the doors of the church on a daily basis in order to provide care and compassion to those you serve, I think the idea is amazing.

- b. Call Committee’s response: A daycare needs a richly religious based curriculum. It isn’t a money maker, it’s a service. We are putting in a daycare in our church because we love them and care for their children. The daycare needs to be Christ centered.

13. Is there anything you can think of that can encourage a long tenure from our next pastor?

- a. Pastor Sandy’s response: I think when a Christ-centered pastor who treasures doing God’s work with her/his hands is matched through the call process with a congregation that is Christ-centered and open to doing God’s work using their hands, that would lead to a healthy relationship between pastor and congregation.
- b. Call Committee’s response: Agree

Pastor Sandy’s additional thoughts: Some additional thoughts I had to add to your very thoughtful questions. In my responses I never used the word “growth” as relates to numbers/membership. If your focus is on ministry and “being Jesus” to others, God will manage the number/membership concern I sense that you have. Some themes that I think are helpful:

- this is a call process and God is truly present
- congregation and pastor accompany one another in the work and service of the church
- enthusiasm for a life of faith that makes a difference in the world
- where do you see God at work at CLC? In Somerset? In your home? In your neighborhood?

Jed has a story that he tells of a time when we were having lunch in a restaurant with a group of people and we were engaged in rich conversations, talking and laughing and having a wonderful time. The wait staff serving our table stopped and asked what group we were a part of and Jed replied that we were with “the church.” To which the wait staff replied. “I want to be a part of that church.!”

An additional question the Call Committee wishes to ask Pastor Sandy: If we looked at calling you 15 years ago, what would your working plan look like? Lastly, the committee continued to debate the pros/cons of a half time versus a full-time pastor. Maybe we look at a 30hr pastor with full time benefits.

Meeting adjourned at 7:13pm.

Closing Prayer by Sarah.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Julie Lange

Original: 12/09/2021  
Revised: N/A