

**Salem Evangelical Free Church**  
**Congregational Meeting**  
**November 19, 2023**  
**Location: Salem Moorhead Sanctuary**

**Welcome, Opening Prayer & Introduction of Elder Board:**

The meeting opened at 12:22 PM with Elder Darren Kallod's welcome and opening prayer. Quorum (72) was met with 118 present/proxy and 10 online.

After reading the previous meeting's notes, they were amended to include "Bee Volla's written report stated...."

Elder Darren introduced Salem's current elder board: Dale Hellevang, Doug Sikkink, Gary Edverson, Josh Hawkins, Justin James, Lance Ziebarth, Mark Strand, Pete Youlden, Thomas Inyu and Pastor Seth Dunham.

**Meeting Protocol Review & Introduction of New Members:**

Elder Justin James asked the following new members to stand and be recognized-Mark Flemming, Cheryl Montgomery, Jonathan DeGraff, Lindsey DeGraff and Steven Rogers.

Elder Justin reviewed meeting protocol.

**Assignment of Tellers:**

Elder Darren asked for tellers. Monty Mertz and Eric Hoff volunteered to collect and count ballots from the sanctuary and Bee Volla will count online votes.

**Review & Approval of Spring Congregational Meeting Minutes:**

Craig Jasperse **moved** to approve the amended Spring Congregational Meeting Minutes. A second was given. A **voice vote** was taken and **passed** by 100%.

**Comments from Senior Pastor:**

Elder Darren read Pastor Seth's comments as Seth has had a very emotional week. God's faithfulness has been shown in the following: many new attendees and child dedications, new staff (Veronica Wyland and Peg Knutson), a group from Salem that visited Israel, new Habitat for Humanity builds, Ellen Hopkins school engagement, facility restoration, increased giving and increase in college ministry. There have been challenges like staff turnover, illness, death and attenders who have left Salem. Encouragement was given to remember what God has done, look forward to what He is going to do and don't hesitate to get involved.

**Facility Update:**

Elder Lance Ziebarth stated rent is coming in from Relevant Life Church for the Fargo campus building and the elders are moving toward a new 2-year lease where Relevant Life will be taking care of the building. Relevant Life Pastors Travis Lynn and Stephen Appel will be meeting with the elders and Pastor Seth in the near future. There has been no decision on selling the Fargo campus building.

Regarding the Moorhead campus, the insurance claim with "Churches Mutual" for roof failure in the gymnasium yielded enough insurance money for a new premium gym floor in addition to the new roof.

### **Budget Review, Discussion & Vote:**

Elder Dale Hellevang reviewed giving for 2023, Fargo campus rent and expenses. He stated Salem is sitting in a good position. He also said the elders manage the church's financial affairs in order to be good stewards, staff is working hard and all departments are projected to come in under budget. Salem has reduced payroll expenses by utilizing more part time positions and refining roles. The elder board made a commitment NOT to reduce the Mission Board budget.

Elder Dale made note that the projected 2023 budget is to come in \$99,849 less than the 2023 budget! He expressed the elder board's desire to do ministry and do it in the most efficient and effective way possible. The board is committed to a balanced budget for 2024 and excited to have an opportunity for growth and development. The elder subgroup working on the budget includes Dale, Mark Strand and Doug Sikkink. See separate handouts "2023 Budget-Salem Evangelical Free Church" and "2024 Budget- Salem Evangelical Free Church".

Craig Jasperse **moved** to approve the 2024 Budget. A second was given.

Discussion followed that included the question "Does insurance cover both buildings?" Answer: "The new lease (for the Fargo building) will include the cost of the insurance covering the building and all maintenance care."

Q: "How were savings actualized regarding staff?" A: "Volunteers now manage the front desk. The assistant to the Children's Ministry was 40 hours/week and is now 20 hours/week. The building maintenance person is now part time. We've haven't fired anyone."

Q: "If giving is up, why is the projected 2024 budget under the 2023 budget?" A: "To better align with historical expenses."

Q: "What is the interest on Salem's savings account at Gate City?" A: "4-5%? Not exactly sure."

Q: "Can the congregation have input if there is going to be a surplus? I'd prefer staff raises and increasing the missions' budget."

Q: "Can we have a list of missionaries?" A: Elder Dale will send one out.

Sean Schneider **called the question**. A second was given. A **voice vote passed** unanimously.

Written votes were cast and counted to approve the 2024 budget.

### **New Business:**

Kim Edverson asked to have the congregational meeting not be the same week as Thanksgiving.

Clarification was given-when volunteering at Habitat for Humanity, any hours donated can be credited to the Inyu family hours to assist with their sweat equity requirements.

An update on the Inyu's and Amuri's Habitat for Humanity Houses was given. An open house date for the Amuri house is forthcoming. Work is still underway on the Inyu build.

Grace Youlden gave thanks to the congregation for the many years of support their family has received.

### **Results of voting:**

Elder Darren reported the paper ballot results- the **motion passed** to accept the 2024 Budget.

### **Adjournment:**

Elder Darren closed in prayer and **moved to adjourn**. A second was given. Per voice vote, it **passed** by 100%.

Meeting closed at 1: 41 PM.