

**Calvary Baptist Church of Denver  
Council Minutes  
December 16, 2020**

**Present:** Jim Armstrong, Rick Breitenbecher, Mick Davey, Jim Dykes, Erin Gangloff, John Kron, Sharon Murphy, Virg Musil, David Peterson, Walter Rowell, Lorene Walker, Bill Warren, Norma Wick, Becky Worford, Denise Wylde. **Staff:** Senior Pastor Anne Scalfaro, Pastor Morgan Fletcher, Pastor Alice Horner-Nelson, Rev. Mary Hulst Pastoral Associate & Pastor Emerita. **Invited Guests:** Gary Diffendaffer, Margie Jonell, Dan Schweissing, Gordon Kieft, and Bruce Whitaker.

**Call to Order and Review of Agenda:**

Co-Moderator Rick Breitenbecher called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. He mentioned that tonight the Council and invited guests would be discussing the November meeting with Reverend Doug Avilesbernal Executive Director of the Evergreen Association.

**Prayer List:**

Senior Pastor Anne reported on celebrations, illnesses, and concerns within our church family. She closed in prayer.

**Approval of Council Minutes**

The November minutes were sent to Council members and invited guests on December 12. There were no additions or corrections. The minutes were approved as sent.

**Financial Report**

Virg Musil, Church Treasurer, discussed the two spreadsheets — January to November Statement of Activity and Budget vs. Actuals which he sent to Council Members.

**Statement of Activity:**

- ❖ **Pledge Income** for the month of November decreased from that received in October by about \$15,900.
- ❖ **Other Offerings** were up from that received in the month of October by about \$850.
- ❖ **Total Revenue** for the month of \$44,387 was down more than \$24,700 from that received in October.
- ❖ **Total Expenditures** for the month of November appear to be pretty normal at \$56,047, and were down from October by a more than \$16,500.
- ❖ However, subtracting total expenses from total revenue results in a negative **Net Operating Revenue** for the month of \$11,660.
- ❖ **Net Operating Revenue** for the year has now slipped to a negative number at -\$16,314.

**Budget vs Actuals:**

- ❖ **Pledge Receipts** for the month of November were \$13,341 below budget, and now stand at \$19,738 below budget YTD.
- ❖ **Total Revenue** for the month of November was a little more than \$20,000 below budget, and is now at \$697,200 YTD, which is about \$14,650 below the YTD budget.
- ❖ **Total Expenses** for the month were about \$6,980 below budget, and are now \$47,350 below budget YTD.
- ❖ Since we had budgeted a negative **Net Operating Revenue** of about \$49,000 at this point in the year, we are actually about \$32,700 better off than what we had budgeted - as of the end of November.
- ❖ However, the budget that was approved at the congregational meeting in January included using \$50,000 of existing “cash on hand” and a \$15,000 distribution from the Endowment Fund. We would prefer not to use either of these items, but probably will need to use the distribution from the Endowment Fund.

❖ All documentation has been submitted for “forgiveness” of the PPP loan, but we anticipate that it will be after the first of the new year before it becomes official. Therefore, it will probably not show up as revenue until it is forgiven in 2021.

There was a question about why pledge income may be down. It was suggested that people may have met their pledges earlier in the year, there have been deaths in the church family, families not able to fulfill their pledge because of economic losses during the pandemic, and the possibility that pledges may still come in.

### **Church Highlights**

Happy Birthday to Pastor Alice on December 26!

The Pastoral Staff was thanked for sending masks to members of Calvary.

The Christmas Pageant has been fun to do and will premiere on Christmas Day and thanks to those on Council who helped with it.

Thanks to all who sent a Christmas Card for the Virtual Christmas Card which will premiere on Tuesday, December 22.

Thanks to the Council for approving the Bequest Proposal to fund the new live-streaming equipment for the sanctuary. It is being installed.

Thanks to the sixteen people, who have signed up for the Facing Racism facilitated by the Souls 2 Soul Sisters. These seven sessions will begin in January.

Gratitude to the Prayer Study Group for the meaningful discussions on the book, *Caste* by Isabel Wilkerson.

Christopher and Rick have passed their one year anniversary of being married in a beautiful candlelight ceremony in the Calvary Sanctuary.

### **Faith Formation**

Pastor Morgan asked everyone to get comfortable to write and think about the following questions which will help prepare us for the discussion about the Evergreen Association.

1. What if we were to leave ABCRM and join the Evergreen Association?
2. If you could relive any moment of joy and energy with ABCRM from the recent past, what would it be?
3. What moments or times in our relationship with ABCRM drained you or the congregation of energy or frustrated you and put you on high alert?
4. What brought joy and energy with ABCRM or brought frustrations and disturbances with them related to the experience?

Use your imagination:

What would it be like to leave the ABCRM and join the Evergreen Association how does that feel and think about our collective congregation as well.

After thinking on these questions and using our imagination, Pastor Morgan closed in prayer.

### **Review of the Evergreen Association Presentation**

At this time Co-Moderator Rick ask our invited guests to join the discussion. Using the Faith Formation Questions from Pastor Morgan, the discussion began on The Evergreen Association and ABCRM.

One question we did not ask Reverend Avilesbernal in November is if any churches have left the Evergreen Association?

There was a comment about the Evergreen website as it was difficult to find the churches in the Region.

There was discussion about the length of time Calvary members have worked in the ABCRM and all the things that have been well done—the youth camp and youth ministry, the mission projects both local and working abroad, how ABCRM helps churches who are closing, they do a great job of money management, the wonderful staff, and the relationships that Calvary

page 3

members have made through the years with the members of the churches in the ABCRM. It is hoped Calvary members feel comfortable if Calvary joins the Evergreen Association.

There was a comment that Calvary leaving ABCRM will be a loss to them as Calvary members have held leadership positions and have given their time and money to the many projects of ABCRM.

There have been churches leave the ABCRM especially after the closing of Black Forest ( an ABCRM camp) as well as other churches leaving for other reasons.

Another comment was that ABCRM appears they want to discuss Calvary's request, but they are unwilling to bring Calvary's question of church autonomy (one of our Baptist freedoms) to the Region for a discussion. Pastor Anne did mention that Calvary will still be able to use Quaker Ridge for a youth camp but our fees may be slightly higher. She also mentioned that she thinks members from Calvary will still be able to go on foreign and local mission trips with the ABCRM. She also feels that Executive Minister Steve Van Ostran will maintain a relationship with Calvary and will allow members to participate in ABCRM events. The ABC/USA encourages Regions to work together.

The positives of the Evergreen Association are they use consensus building and ethnic caucuses to make decisions and never shy away from difficult situations. All are able to participate. They honor the Baptist freedom of local church autonomy and they allow for a meaningful ordination of all people.

A comment was that Evergreen appears to be refreshing, builds positive energy, and would be a fresh start for Calvary.

Several members discussed their long experience of working with the ABCRM and they will feel grief leaving the region. While the ABCRM has many advantages most of the Council and invited guests feel it is inevitable Calvary join Evergreen as the Statement on Homosexuality from ABCRM doesn't align with our values and its use by Ministerial Leadership Committee for ordination does not honor complete local church autonomy with ordination.

For the past five years Calvary has requested ABCRM to remove the statement on Homosexual ordination. However, the request has been denied by the Ministerial Leadership Committee. Senior Pastor Anne received a letter in September, 2020 from the Rev. David DeMott, chairperson of the Committee, declining Pastor Anne's request for the Ministerial Leadership Committee not to adhere to the Statement on Homosexuality in the ordination review process. Reverend DeMott said this request would require the ABCRM board to mandate the change.

There was a question about Calvary members leaving the congregation if the church left ABCRM. Pastor Anne reported that she has talked with a few members, who have worked in the ABCRM, and they were supportive of Calvary joining the Evergreen Association on the basis of aligning our values. Many people involved with the ABCRM from Calvary have been invited and in attendance at the last two Council meetings to discuss their feelings about a possible change. If Calvary were to leave ABCRM, many members of Calvary have little knowledge of regional denominational affiliation as people often choose a church for other values. It is Pastor Anne's hope that people who were not welcomed by ABCRM will feel comfortable in the Evergreen Association. Calvary joining the Evergreen Association maybe an opportunity for Calvary to grow. Some of our members may feel more at home if we should join Evergreen.

One member of the discussion group left the meeting but wrote the following comment in the chat room. "I support joining Evergreen. But would also want to push the Region to reconsider the policy. And for all to consider what we might be losing."

page 4

The discernment about Calvary leaving ABCRM continues to be more of a discussion about our values and our Baptist freedoms. There is much to consider. There will be more follow-up conversations, presentations and education on the Regions before this is presented to the Calvary members. Pastor Anne invited any of the invited guests to email her, Sharon, or Rick about concerns or comments they may still have. Co-Moderator Rick thanked our invited guests for attending this meeting and participating in the discussion.

### **Committee and Ministry Team Reports**

#### **Mick Davey, Staff Relations**

Mick reported that Pastor Morgan will not be taking her Sabbatical in April, May and June 2021 because of the COVID 19 regulations as she wants to spend part of her time in Canada.

#### **Bill Warren, Resource Management**

The shingles had been removed above the sanctuary and some snow melted in the sanctuary but the crew has been on top of it and nothing in the sanctuary has been ruined by snow melt. He mentioned how amazing the roofing crew is because they have been working in the snow and cold and doing an excellent job.

Gordon Pelton has recovered from the virus and is out of quarantine so Bill and Gordon will begin working on the bathrooms again.

#### **John Kron, Stewardship**

John reported that the number of pledges are down from last year. He and the committee will meet next month to find some alternative and creative ways to promote stewardship and to ask members to support different programs in the church. Pastor Anne commented that as a Council we need to think about shifting our thinking about pledge cards as an exact science for our budget. There may be other ways to support our budget in addition to pledges by the church members.

#### **Walter Rowell, Nominating Committee**

Walter was pleased to announce they have 18 nominees for the Church Council ballot for the January 27, 2021 Annual Meeting. He mentioned Bill Poniikvar and Sara Sieker were great committee members.

### **Staff Updates**

#### **Pastor Alice**

The Gathering is going very well.

Communication is frustrating at times because not all the members are getting the emails about the virtual activities being premiered on You Tube. It seems that the internet providers are down at times. If and when one does not receive the emails they should call and let her know.

She is working on the Messenger and has asked for feedback from the congregation about how they feel about the virtual ministry being provided.

page 5

### **Pastor Morgan**

The Home for the Holidays letters have been sent by mail to all members. Some received their letters right away and others have not.

Home for the Holidays files will be out in the e News—there were 30 days of Thanksgiving, Advent devotions and various activities. David Farwig put together a Caroling Book which he will be recording an audio and a video of the songs. This will be out this week.

The Virtual Christmas Card will premiere Tuesday, December 22.

The Virtual Christmas Pageant will premiere on Christmas Day.

The Faith Formation Team has met and Pastor Morgan has met with Diana McGahan and they are looking at working with small groups virtually. The team will have their first training in February or March.

### **Senior Pastor Anne**

Please let the pastors know if you are not getting emails from the church.

She feels she is doing the December Tango as she is splitting her time on worship/Advent and budget/stewardship/ finances. She is hoping that people will give a Christmas offering this year.

Family Promise gifts can be placed in the coat room and are due by December 21.

Bootstraps and Blessings and Kentucky Village Items are there as well.

The Mission Ministry Team met to discuss how they can extend an invitation to our missionaries to engage and be a part of the congregation virtual meetings such as Tuesday Gatherings, mission meetings, Monday night Pub and other opportunities to meet with members virtually.

### **Wrap Up and Adjourn**

**Next Council Meeting date has been changed to January 13, 2021** two weeks before the Annual Meeting on January 27,2021

Co-Moderator, Rick adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Norma Wick, Council Secretary