**HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2024**

**FIRST ENGLISH EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH CONGREGATION MEETING**

* Following a potluck lunch, President Nancy Neuse called the annual congregation meeting of First English Ev. Lutheran Church, Austin, Texas to order shortly after noon on January 28, 2024. Ben Rode opened the meeting with prayer. 40+ members in attendance, in the fellowship hall and on Zoom. We also welcomed a number of guests and friends of the congregation.
* Election of the 2024 council members were held: Charlie Boas, Margaret Bruesch, Leigh Northcutt-Benson, and Mari Ward. These members will a3-year term. Anne Wiebe was nominated from the floor to serve a vacated 1-year term.
* Election of the voting members from First English to the 2024 Southwestern Texas Synod Assembly we held: Claudia and Paul Barlow.
* An annual meeting package was distributed prior to the meeting. Many ministry team and committee reports offered reports, and several ministry areas gave updates:
  + Barbara Wiederaenders encouraged the congregation to actively engage racial justice and reminded the congregation of its statement on racial justice and equity;
  + Betsy Appleton and Nikki Northcutt encouraged the congregation to remain active in learning ministry and creating a culture of engagement and care for children, youth, and adults;
  + Heidi Goebel offered thanks to all who participate in the property ministry and a brief overview of ongoing projects;
  + Bryan Rust, Shannon Aguirre, and Trish Karli reminded folks to worship together regularly and invite people to join us;
  + Anne Wiebe invited the congregation to the Book Club and to Third Saturday Game Night;
  + Charlie Boas provided an update on our Scouting Ministry;
  + Bob Karli reported on our 85-year-old pipe organ and plans for upcoming restoration and fundraising;
  + Mari Ward and Charolette Gilman offered support from the Care Ministry Team through our continuing transition.
* Vice President LaRu Woody presented an overview of our Transition Ministry. We will be in communicating with the office of the synod bishop. We wish Pastor J Mills God’s blessings on his next endeavors and thank him for the work he was able to accomplish during his ministry with First English. During this next phase of transition ministry, Bryan Rust will assume the additional responsibilities of worship leadership, coordination, and scheduling for worship and supply pastors. The Care Team, led by Mari Ward and Charlottee Gilman, will be a conduit for care, and can make direct support and referrals as needed. We will continue to assure that the ministry and mission of FELC grows with the participation and engagement of everyone.
* Transition Team Chair Allen Jensen and Team Member Nikki Northcutt reported on the status of the Transition Team and anticipated actions going forward. We are in a good place with gathering information for our Ministry Site Profile, and the Team anticipates several small group meetings with the congregation to further listen and refine our profile.
* Treasurer Allen Jensen presented the 2023 Financial Report of the Congregation, including previously distributed statements of all the of funds of the congregation.
* Finance Chairman Joe Cain presented the 2024 proposed budget to the congregation as previously distributed. A memo regarding the budget was distributed prior to the meeting. Lois Holck reminded the congregation to place our focus on giving to God from the abundance God has given us. An amendment was added to provide temporary support for worship leadership during this next phase of our transition ministry. Following discussion, the 2024 budget, as amended, was approved.
* President Neuse offered much thanks to leaders of teams, committee, task forces, groups, and the staff for the service that each person gives to God and our congregation and its witness. Special thanks to outgoing council members Derek Bridges, Gwen Flory, Terry Porter, and Elizabeth Zimmermann. Extra special thanks and admiration to Merrily and Terry Porter for who they are and how they serve so well.
* Following a closing prayer by everyone, the meeting was adjourned around 1:30 pm.