

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
Church Council Minutes
February 16, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT: via Zoom-- Pastor Karri Anderson, Kim Anderson, Colleen Guilfoile, Terry Hogenson, Diane John, Cathy Johnson, David Johnson, Nancy Johnson, Jim Jordal, Craig Martin, Pastor Terry Nordheim, Katie Roche

MEMBERS ABSENT: Rachel Carlson, Leroy Mitchell

GUESTS: via Zoom--Jeff Fuge, Russ Morris

1. CALL TO ORDER: via Zoom at 7:05 by David Johnson, President
2. DEVOTIONS: Katie Roche
3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA: MM by Katie Roche to approve the agenda. MS by Diane John. MP.
4. APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES: MM by Diane John to approve the January 2021 council meeting minutes. MS by Katy Roche. MP.
5. SENIOR PASTOR REPORT/HOUSING ALLOWANCE MOTION NEEDED-Pastor Terry:
 - There will be another outdoor service this coming Wednesday or towards the end of the month, depending on the weather.
 - Pastor Terry would like to see a staff/council retreat at Luther Point take place this spring, but he has no idea when, where, and how we can do it yet. It is on the "back burner" for now.
 - The tech updates are in place in the sanctuary, so taping can start from the back of the church now. Hopefully the Lenten series will start with the new equipment in place. The Lenten theme this year is "Hope Changes Everything."
 - There will be a Holy Prayer Vigil for three to four days during Holy Week so members can experience a time of reflection.
 - Trinity is approved to meet with the ELCA consultant representative.
 - There is a tool kit workshop offered online by the Saint Paul Synod for Congregational Leaders on the last Saturday in February from 9-12:00. There is no cost, and Dr. Osterholm is a speaker.
 - There are three more baptisms in the works. The first communion will hopefully be held outside in May.
 - There can be funeral gatherings in the church for thirty or fewer people, and people can live stream the service as well. There is a wedding in June, but the ReStart Committee is recommending against large gatherings. They will revisit that possibility in April.
 - Pastor Terry is talking to Matt about putting the Friday Coffee Conversation on Zoom. Right now, there could be ten people live and include others with a link on Zoom. He feels we need that opportunity to connect with each other. The Friday meetings will start the end of February or first week in March.
6. ASSOCIATE PASTOR REPORT/HOUSING ALLOWANCE MOTION NEEDED--Pastor Karri: see below--
7. MET TASK FORCE UPDATE,etc.:

- Pastor Karri said the Task Force is going over the seventy-seven survey responses sent back from the congregation. The survey asked members about what they feel is important in hiring a new Associate Pastor.
- She let the council know that CCC (Community for Creation Care) is meeting on March 11th to form a statement to share with Representative Pete Stauber via Zoom on March 22nd. It will explain what the committee and members of Trinity feel is important as far as what our climate and environmental concerns are. The preparation meeting on March 11th and the meeting with Stauber is open to anyone in Trinity. There is a registration link to the meeting on March 11th in the church newsletter. A link to register for the meeting with Stauber will come out soon. All are invited to register and attend.
- Pastor Karri is attending a seminar on May 3-7 to study mediation.
- The housing allowance for both pastors needs to be approved by the council for tax purposes. The housing allowances cover house payments, utilities, and other expenses.

MM by Diane John to approve a \$27,000 housing allowance for Pastor Terry. MS by Nancy Johnson. MP.

MM by Colleen Guilfoile to approve a \$24,000 housing allowance for Pastor Karri. MS by Katie Roche. MP.

8. TREASURER REPORT--Diane John:

- There is a Finance Committee meeting on Thursday.
- The YTD budgeted income is \$537,764. YTD actual income is \$560,255. The YTD budgeted expenses are \$537,764. YTD actual expenses are \$513,978.
- There is \$25,000 in Annuity that has not been spent.
- The income is over budget, and the expenses are under budget.

9. FINANCIAL MONTHLY REPORT: Tabled

10. AUDIT UPDATE/APPRECIATION GIFT SUGGESTION:

- Trinity's financial review took place on February 6th, and there were no recommendations made for changes. Reconciliation of assets remains incomplete. Other policies and procedures are not finished.
- Paul Ives will not chair the committee next year. Now is a good time to schedule an external audit.
- There was discussion on reimbursing the three individuals who spent several hours on the review process plus travel time, two of whom are not members of Trinity. The Executive Committee recommends that we compensate them \$200 each for their time plus \$50 each for transportation expenses. The total of \$750 can possibly come out of undesignated funds, which has a balance of \$6,000.

MM by Coleen Guilfoile to compensate each person \$200 for the audit/review plus \$50 for transportation to be paid out of undesignated funds. MS by Diane John. MP.

OLD BUSINESS:

11. ReSTART COMMITTEE--Russ Morris:

- The committee met a week ago and will meet tomorrow and every week for the next few weeks.
- The number of Covid-19 cases are dropping, and the number of vaccines are going up.
- The committee feels that now is the time to put a plan together for re-opening the church. They will talk about what conditions need to be in place before that happens.
- In the next two to three weeks, the committee will submit a letter to the council to recommend a re-opening of the church if conditions are such that it can open on a limited basis.
- The committee will make recommendations, for example, of the "how and what" to the Pastors for conducting a funeral. The committee feels that opening up now, on a limited basis, is reasonable. The criteria for the pastors to use would limit the gathering to thirty people. There could be music with a soloist or two, spaced apart.
- Russ said we still need to proceed with caution since new strains of the virus are appearing, and we do not know what impact they will have. He said they will remain hopeful if the vaccines continue, and the committee will have a more formal response in the next two to three weeks.
- The Constitution Task Force needs an in-person gathering in church to get input from the congregation. Russ said that it would be reasonable to meet with twenty to thirty people for up to ninety minutes. ReStart will add that to their agenda. The committee also gave the okay for the council to meet in-person.

12. MUSIC TASK FORCE UPDATE--Kim:

- Kim said the congregation has returned about 118 survey reports concerning what they want in church music. Their opinions on what they want in the music are varied, but Kim said that was expected. The committee is close to pulling together a recommendation to present to the council, but first they want to bring a document and presentation to the congregation to give them a chance to have input. To that, the committee will bring recommendations from the extended music community within the church, ie; the choir, Staff, and the contemporary band, then make revisions and bring a presentation to the congregation in the form of listening sessions. The history of the church and its music will be an influencing factor.
- Last week, Pastor Terry met with a new person to Trinity who is playing the organ, and she and others have recorded everything for the Lenten services.

13. STAFF PERFORMANCE REVIEWS AND STAFF VACANCIES UPDATE--Kim:

- Staff vacancies remain the same.
- For music positions, the church is paying per performance instead of with a salary.

14. CONTINUED DISCUSSION OF ANNUAL MEETING AND ANNUAL COMMITTEE REPORTS:

15. ANNUAL MEETING DATE NEEDS TO BE SET:

- May 23rd was discussed as a date for the Annual Congregation Meeting.

MM by Katie Roche to make wMay 23, 2021 the date for the Annual Meeting. MS by Kim Anderson. MP.

16. ANNUAL REPORT MAILING:

- There was discussion about how to send the Annual Report to the congregation. It could be sent electronically and some paper copies mailed to those who do not have or use a computer, or mail a paper copy to everyone.

MM by Diane John to authorize mailing the Annual Reports to all family units and to be paid for out of the Administrative Budget. MS by Nancy Johnson. MP.

- Nancy suggested that a large print copy be sent to those who need it.

NEW BUSINESS:

17. MOTION NEEDED ON VISA CARD FOR DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

(Avery)

MM by Diane John to authorize the staff to get a Visa card with a \$1,000 limit for Avery. MS by Katie Roche. MP.

18. PROPOSED REVISIONS TO TRINITY'S CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS-- Coke:

- Coke and her committee have worked for about a year on updating the Constitution and By-Laws. The last time the Constitution was updated was 2004. The Synod/ELCA made changes since then, and we have many more changes now. The last time the By-Laws were updated was 2017. The goal is to be as transparent as possible.
- It was strongly recommended that we combine the Constitution and the By-Laws. The Continuing Resolutions are in the appendix. The council can make changes to those without having to go back to the congregation.
- The job description of Treasurer is different in the Constitution than in the By-Laws. There are proposed amendments that will change how the Treasurer is appointed and how long he or she can serve consecutively and will redefine the job description.
- There was much discussion on whether the order and timeline of approval of changes to the Constitution and By-Laws would allow enough time for input and for question and answer sessions conducted with the congregation.
- *The order of approval for amendments to the Constitution is: (order for amendments to the By-Laws is similar...can find that in the Constitution)
 1. Voting members must submit proposed changes or amendments filed in writing to the church council sixty days before a Congregation Meeting.
 2. The council will notify congregation members of the proposed changes and its recommendations thirty days prior to the Congregation Meeting.
 3. The proposed amendments are voted on for revision or approval by members at the Congregation Meeting.
 4. Any amendments will be sent to the synod for review.
 5. Then the amendments are ratified without change at the next Annual Meeting by a two-thirds majority of the voting members at the meeting.
 6. Ratified amendments will be sent back to the synod for a final review.
- *The Constitution and By-Laws are on the church website.

- Jeff Fuge suggested leaving room for congregational feedback to have a chance to make changes before it is ratified. Jeff said once an amendment is in play, it can not be substantively changed
- Pastor Terry would like to have the opportunity for face-to-face conversations with the congregation for their input and for questions and answers rather than meeting on Zoom..especially for larger groups of sixty-five people, for example. Also, there was a sense that some on the council started feeling rushed to schedule member input and question and answer sessions before the process to ratify starts. Coke felt that church members could attend more than one session if they had more questions so that the committee and council could keep the whole process moving on schedule for the May 23rd Annual Meeting. Otherwise approving and voting on the Constitution and By-Laws will be subject to a timeline delay.

MM by Craig Martin to get council approval of the draft of the constitution as it reads and send it to the synod for review. MS by Katie Roche. MP.

- More discussion followed and some on council wondered if there was enough time to meet in small group sessions with the congregation for input and questions they might have about the amendments before the Annual Meeting takes place in May. Katie felt there was too much pressure about having enough time to meet with members, so it was suggested that we need to step back and make a new timeline for all of this.

MM by Craig Martin to rescind the previous motion to accept the draft of the constitution and withdraw the motion he made, clear the date, and let the Task Force get feedback. MS by Katie Roche. An individual, verbal vote was taken: eight voted "yes", one voted "no", and one "abstained" MP.

19. OTHER:

- Correspondence--Boy Scouts of America: There is a letter from Boy Scout Troop # 159, and they would like some information on what they can do for Trinity to be helpful. When we receive their request, the Executive Committee will work together with them.
- We received several thank you notes from staff for Christmas gifts.
- We need names for committee and council positions.

MM by Diane John for Nominating Committee to solicit more names for Council positions to be put in the church newsletter. MS by Kim Anderson. MP.

REMINDERS: Next Month's Devotions? Other?

ADJOURN and CLOSING PRAYER: Meeting adjourned at 9:56 P.M., closing prayer by Pastor Karri.

MINUTES SUBMITTED by Cathy Johnson, Secretary