

**MINUTES FOR A MEETING OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL  
FOR TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH  
May 17, 2022**

Members present: Pastor Karri Anderson, Colleen Guilfoile, Sherry Holt, Diane John, Cathy Johnson, David Johnson, Nancy Johnson, Craig Martin, LeRoy Mitchell, Jackie Otte, Gary Peterson, George Popa, Linda Popa

Members absent: Michelle Kok, Pastor Terry Nordheim

Guest: Gail Seaver

**Call to order**

Craig Martin, president, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Devotions by Pastor Karri

**Approval of the agenda**

Coleen Guilfoile requested that a discussion of the advertising budget be added to the agenda.

- Nancy Johnson moved to approve the agenda.  
Second by Coleen Guilfoile.  
**Motion carried.**

**Approval of minutes**

- Diane John moved to approve the minutes for the April 19 Church Council meeting.  
Second by David Johnson.  
**Motion carried.**

**Pastor's report**

Pastor Karri reports that the book study she is leading is well attended, and includes a couple of people from outside the Trinity Congregation.

Trinity will be focusing on mental health as part of the Worship service this coming Sunday.

Pastor Karri attended the Synod assembly.

Liberating structures for mission: first meeting hoped for in June.

The Executive Committee is proud of Gail Seaver, who will be a delegate to the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly in Columbus, Ohio in August.

## **Membership and giving trends report**

Gail Seaver summarized his membership and giving trends report. He noted that Trinity is *experiencing a declining membership mostly attributable to societal changes. With declining membership comes declining receipts.* A synopsis of his report appears below.

### Membership and weekly worship attendance

For the period from 2017 through 2021 the number of people who joined Trinity declined from 54 people in 2017 to 7 people in 2020.

Trinity saw a 20% decline in Sunday Worship attendance from 2017 to 2019. This follows a 21% decline in Sunday Worship attendance from 2009 to 2016. Although Trinity is listed as a *declining* church in the St. Paul Area Synod, it enjoys a larger weekly worship attendance than the majority of its peer churches in Chisago County.

### Operational budget giving

From 2017 through 2021 the percentage of Trinity membership that contributed to the budget shrank from a high of 85% of members in 2018 to a low of 62% of members in 2021. Significant shrinking occurred from 2019 to 2020, with a leveling off from 2020 to 2021.

From 2017 through 2021 the actual pledged receipts exceeded the amount which was pledged for three of the five years. Compared to budgeted receipts, member giving at Trinity Lutheran Church is exceedingly good.

From 2017 through 2021 pledged receipts fell every year, with the largest decline from 2020 to 2021. When pledged receipts fell, unpledged receipts continued as members continued to give but did not express their intent with a commitment card. Records show that members who express their intent of giving with a commitment card give more than those who give without an expressed intent.

### Designated giving

Designated giving is about 25% of what members give to the operational budget annually. Trinity members give an average of 1.51 times more in designated giving as compared to the average of all 108 churches in the St. Paul Area Synod.

### Age of the givers

85% of giving units in 2021 were age 50 and higher, with most giving units between the ages of 71 and 80.

90% of pledging units in 2021 were age 50 and higher, with most pledging units between the ages of 71 and 80.

79% of non-pledging units were age 50 and higher, with most pledging units between the ages of 71 and 80.

### Other

The average weekly giving of pledging units was \$42.62 per week. The average weekly giving by all giving units was \$33 per week.

In 2021 there 112 units with no record of giving. This is 29% of the total number of giving units at Trinity.

The majority of the 112 non-giving member units live locally in Chisago County, with 50 giving units living in Lindstrom

There is a larger youth adult population at Trinity than is shown in the giving records. Currently there are 40 giving units at Trinity between the ages of 20 and 50.

### Hopes and dreams

Gail offered the following personal opinions

*Churches that are thriving and doing well have a mission that they embrace and support and that is a natural part of their existence*

*Continue to **Do Well** what you **Do Well!***

*Communicate with the congregation at least quarterly about the church's financial status and receipt of members gifts. A congregation that does not know of budget shortfalls, does not take action to eliminate them*

*Reach out to congregation members in the 20-40 age group to let them know Trinity is here to support their spiritual needs and to determine their interest in having a relationship with Trinity. Many of these people appear to be the children of existing members, so they already have a trusting relationship with Trinity that can be rekindled. It is much easier to focus on existing members than to recruit new members. Many of this age group do not get giving envelopes, maybe they should.*

*Trinity supports groups that include non-members who use our building. This is an Evangelism opportunity.*

*Put more emphasis on education in the area of Stewardship for more members to complete the annual Commitment card which supports the operational budget.*

*Use Bequest Task Force fund in the **Program Growth** category (over \$80K as of Dec 2021) to strengthen youth, in-reach, and outreach initiatives that focus on stewardship and evangelism.*

*Re-evaluate Mission Investment funds to provide matching dollars to an operational budget campaign appeal.*

*Encourage dedicated gifts to be directed to the operational budget.*

Gail also provided the following comments:

There is no reason to panic.  
The music program is done well by Trinity.  
The Youth program is done well by Trinity.  
Designated giving is done well by Trinity.  
Communicate better.  
If there is a cause he believes the congregation will step up to support it.

### **Building Renovation Committee**

The Building Renovation Committee has met 14 times  
An Enterchange report was issued on April 24.  
*Setback thermostats* have been received and will be installed to save energy.  
A work order for \$9,000 for the architect was signed on May 3.  
Solar is being explored. No decisions have been made.  
The committee met with the architect and interior designer. Courtyard expansion is off the table.  
Office space layout is being looked at.  
Construction prices are high.  
Heating and cooling cost has gone up \$25,000 since 2019.  
HVAC renovation is being considered for this year.  
Ventilation is being looked at for the downstairs.  
Information sessions are being pushed out to June or July.

### **Committee liaison report round table**

The Adult Education Advisory team is having a meeting on May 18.

Worship and music: Russ Morris is actively looking for candidates for the organist position.  
The committee wants to acknowledge our 80+ year old seniors during a Sunday Morning service. The Committee discussed when we may go to two services.

- Linda Popa moved to accept the committee reports.  
Second by Nancy Johnson.  
**Motion carried.**

### **Treasurer's report**

Total April budgeted income: \$47,613  
Total April actual income: \$34,061

Total budgeted income through April: \$180,570  
Total actual income through April: \$164,909

Total April budgeted expenses: \$48,833  
Total April actual expenses: \$44,433  
Total budgeted expenses through April: \$183,779  
Total actual expenses through April: \$184,006

### **Old business**

Jackie Otte reported that a couple of people have expressed interest in the organist position. Both live a long way away. One has declined, but expressed interest in being an alternate. The other is no longer responding to inquiries. Russ Morris is actively working on recruiting an organist. Trinity's job posting to remain active during this process.

Green space: A presentation was made by Coleen Guilfoile. There will be an information session this coming Sunday, and again the following Tuesday at 7:00 PM. A diagram has been made of the space. The survey will be reviewed. Ideas from the congregation will be solicited.

### **New Business**

Communion assistants: Trinity needs five people to assist with communion beginning May 29. Colleen Guilfoile circulated a signup sheet.

The church building's Southwest exterior door is not closing well. Leroy Mitchell obtained estimates to fix it. The first bid was for \$6,950 to remove the adjacent window and replace the flooring. The second bid was \$6,850 to replace the window and the door and fix the wood that has rotted underneath the window and door access. \$29,342 in the Nelson Bequest money is available to use for property issues at Trinity. Endowment has given \$1,000 towards it. Spit and Shine has given \$3,000 toward it. The remainder will come out of the Nelson bequest money. It was noted that Council must approve any money taken out of the bequest.

- Leroy Mitchell moved to replace the door into the Fellowship Hall from the parking lot for a total of \$6,850. Funds to be taken from the following: \$1,000 from Endowment. \$3,000 from the Spit and Shine dedicated account. \$2,850 from the Nelson Bequest fund. Indianhead Glass to do the work.

Second by Nancy Johnson.

**Motion carried with one dissent.**

Council thanked Pastor Karri for being willing work additional hours as needed during Pastor Terry's medical leave.

- Sherry Holt moved to pay Pastor Karri out of the staffing portion of the Pearl Nelson bequest for any overage of hours worked during Pastor Terry's medical absence. Overage of hours should be recorded and given to the bookkeeper each pay period.

Second by David Johnson.

**Motion carried.**

Advertising budget: Colleen Guilfoile noted that Trinity does not have an advertising budget. At the current time advertising is paid for by the matching committee. The bill for an Easter Sunday advertisement was \$190. Witness and Outreach would like Council to consider putting money into an appropriate budget for advertisement. David Johnson commented that advertising is an administrative cost, and we should plan to put it under administration in next year's budget. Sherry Holt will bring this up with the Finance Committee.

### **Adjournment**

- Motion to adjourn made by Diane John.  
Second by Nancy Johnson.

**Motion carried.**

*Submitted by Gary L. Peterson (Secretary)*