

Trinity Lutheran Church
Church Council Meeting Minutes – January 11, 2022
Reporting: Jennifer Hubrig

Present: Cathy Carlson, Andy Elofson, Scott Fichtner, Alie Hermanson, Nancy Kruger, Doug Minter, Sarah Nelsen, Barbara Simpson, Pastor Joy Ekstedt, Pastor Nikoli Falenschek, *Jennifer Hubrig*

Absent: Marc Bachman, Brian Fell

The agenda for the meeting was approved.

A. Business Discussed:

1. Pastor Joy's Report

- Pastoral care-- Delivered TLC Communion packages to home-bound members who do not have a TLC Companion
- Kristen's review was postponed. Will re-schedule in January. Pastors' reviews were held with Executive Committee December 9.
- Led Grace Street Bible study on Harry Wendt's study, Christmas - *The Real Story*. The conversation on December 9 was perfect timing.
- Made contact with Minnesota Valley Conference pastors and other colleagues to share information with them about the 2022 Simpson Forum. They were asked to share information with their congregations.
- Prepared Christmas letter for Council.
- Very grateful for the response from members and friends of TLC in "wrapping up" our 2021 final obligation.
- Met with Nominating Committee.
- Met with *Enough* book study. This was a small group but we had great conversations.
- Christmas Eve worship services were fairly well attended, given we once again celebrated Christmas during a pandemic.
- Will visit with Stewardship Committee about plans for offering a book study again on *Enough* by Adam Hamilton.
- Will attend and participate and serve in any way needed for the Simpson Forum January 18, 20, 25 and 27.
- Will be leading 5-6 and 7-8 grade Confirmation classes in January. (I lead one third of the classes in a confirmation year as Pastor Nikoli has one-third of the home-communion visits.)
- Will visit with Trinity women about the 2022 Thank Offering worship service January 23.
- Annual meeting is Sunday, January 30.

2. Pastor Nikoli's Report

- Queer-Affirming Bible Study: It's hard to believe that this study is almost over! We have only one more study remaining on December 16th. Apart from the first two meetings, we've been solely meeting at Trinity in the fellowship hall and sometimes the sanctuary. With feedback from a mid-term program evaluation, I've gathered very valuable information about what people are finding helpful and interesting, which will help me plan future studies on various topics. After the final study gathering, I will be collecting final program evaluations which will also include some questions about where we might go next for content in the new year. So far, feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.
- Afghan Circle of Welcome: Along with Union Presbyterian and First Lutheran Church—possibly, a few other churches might join this effort—we would like to join LSS's call for Welcome Circles for Afghan refugees. Government programs have challenged LSS to find homes and support systems for about 800 individuals by the end of the year. A Welcome Circle consists of a large financial commitment that will cover rent/utilities and other expenses for 6-months for a refugee family as well as a core group of up-to ten individuals to remain in social contact with a family. The Mission

Committee and Anti-Racism Team will be spearheading Trinity's part of the work, identifying individuals for the core group and supporting the request for funding.

- **Food Shelf:** I'm concluding my second term as SPAM (Saint Peter Area Ministerium) representative on the Food Shelf's Board of Directors. I will not take on a third consecutive term and have found a gifted and service-minded replacement who will begin in February of 2022. We are wrapping up a difficult year with some amazing consultations leading us through some strategic planning. I will attend one more strategy meeting in January and a final board meeting in February. As always, please keep identifying new volunteers for the food shelf. Nancy Krueger, who has been serving as the Board's president, will also be terming out of her call as both the president and Trinity's one-allowed representative on the Board. We have already identified someone to take her place.
- **Lunch With A Pastor:** Kristie has started a new incentive program for our Sunday Schoolers attendance: a couple weeks ago she drew names for the first Lunch With A Pastor winners. Because Covid is so heavy right now, I've decided to forego lunch and do a different fun activity. At my winner's request, I'm going bowling at the Wow!Zone on December 7, which is so exciting and fun!

3. Treasurer's Report

- Offerings through December were \$399,195. This is down \$10,188 from giving through December 2020
- Total expenses through December have been \$433,770. This is deficit of \$34,029 between income and expenses. Of note, there was an "excess" of \$108,016 on 1/1/2021. That "excess" is now \$71,782.
- The budgeted amount through December was \$467,799. Expenses are running \$34,029 below the budgeted amount through December
- The Controlled Savings Balance was \$193,794
- The Bank Balance at the end of December was \$71,782

*Please note, this information is through December 30, 2021. The final year-end report will include information through December 31, 2021 when it becomes available.

4. **Endowment Fund Request:** There was a request by Darrell Jodock on behalf of the Simpson Memorial Education Team for \$1,250 to be used for the 2022 Simpson Forum. **See Action Item 2.**
5. **Annual Meeting:** The time is being changed to 10:30 am due to the 9:30 worship service currently ending at around 10:15 am.
6. **Update on *The Kitchen*:** The executive committee received a note from Sandy Parks (treasurer of The Kitchen's board of directors) regretfully informing us that, under its current leadership, "The Kitchen" will no longer continue. We are deeply grateful for their leadership and guidance of this very important ministry of TLC. We will look at ways to continue the hard work of this devoted group by "Feeding the Need" in our community.
7. **Personnel Committee Recommendation:** Pastor Nikoli requested that the personnel committee review the current hourly wage for the Children and Youth Program Director position. The Personnel Committee recommended an increase to the currently hourly wage. **See Action Item 3.**
8. **2022 Ministry Spending Plan:** The approval of Personnel Committees recommendation requires an increase in the Ministry Spending Plan. The Finance Committee recommends that the Church Council approve an increase. **See Action Item 4.**
9. **Resolution to convey and purchase real estate by trade:** Over the years we have become aware that the property ownership for Trinity and Estate Apartments are not correctly recorded with the county. Attorney and Trinity member Jim Brandt was asked to look into this and draw up any paperwork needed to resolve the issue. That paperwork is ready and requires a congregational vote to move forward. The congregation has been notified and the vote will take place at the annual meeting of the congregation on January 30, 2022.

10. Health Response Team Information: Sarah received responses from the Health Response Team regarding the possibility of having an un-masked service. Their response was that this is clearly not the time to make any changes regarding our masking policy. Stay the course.

11. Committee Reports

- Property Committee: Exhaust fans are expected to be installed in the fellowship hall near the end of January. They are getting a few more quotes for the replacement of the carpet in the main offices.
- Community Life: They evaluated their activities over the past year. They are working on something for Valentine's Day.
- Children, Youth and Family: They are working on baptism bundles, confirmation late-in, and reassessing the interest in the Frolic programming.
- Worship, Music and Arts: They created a team to display and rotate the art.
- Mission: They had conversations about community, our congregation, and the future. Looking forward to working with the Afghan refugee family.
- Adult Education: Adult Forum continues, they may cancel from time to time based on weather and the Covid situation.
- Stewardship: They will be supporting another book study of "Enough" with Pastor Joy sometime in March.

12. Thank you: Appreciation was offered to Doug Minter, Andy Elofson, Marc Bachman and Barb Simpson for their service on Church Council as their terms are ending.

13. Committee/Council Retreat: The retreat will be in March this year. Pastor Joy and Sarah will meet to discuss possible dates. More information to follow.

B. Actions Taken:

1. **Motion M/S/P to approve the minutes of the December Council meeting.**
2. **Motion M/S/P to approve the endowment request of \$1,250 for the 2022 Simpson Forum. Funds to come from the Simpson Forum Endowment Spendables.**
3. **Motion M/S/P to approve the personnel committee's recommendation to increase the Children and Youth Program Director hourly rate.**
4. **Motion M/S/P to approve the revised 2022 Ministry Spending Plan in the amount of \$496,035.**

C. Responsibilities Assigned:

1. Pastor Joy and Sarah will meet to discuss possible dates and plans for the Committee/Council retreat.

D. Next meeting: February 8, 2022 at 6:30 pm