

Trinity Lutheran Church
Church Council Meeting Minutes – February 8, 2022
Reporting: Rita Gibbs

Present: Cathy Carlson, Scott Fichtner, Alie Hermanson, Kayla Siewert, Meredith Young, Rita Gibbs, Jeff Feder, Jim Timmerman, Pastor Joy Ekstedt, Pastor Nikoli Falenschek, *Jennifer Hubrig*

Absent: Sarah Nelsen, Brian Fell, Nancy Kruger

Additions to the agenda were appointing Finance and Personnel Committee members. Also added was the sign-up for responsible council person for services and devotions.

A. Business Discussed:

1. Pastor Joy's Report

- Pastoral care—contact with homebound members. Devotions at Benedictine (assisted living) were cancelled given active cases of Covid.
- Began Grace Street Bible Study for the new year with Harry Wendt's study, *Road to Coronation*. Harry created solid Bible studies and I've loved leading his studies. From what I can tell, those who participate also enjoy his work.
- Attended and served at all four sessions of the 2022 Simpson Forum (January 20, 25, 27 and February 3). The speakers have done a fantastic job!
- Led 5-6 and 7-8 confirmation classes January 12, January 26 and will lead both groups February 9.
- Attended Simpson Forum Planning Team meeting.
- Attended Personnel Committee meetings (2x).
- Visited with Kristie Olson regarding her role in the women's Thank Offering service. She did a fabulous job!
- Made a number of calls to members on behalf of Nominating Committee. Filled a number of remaining openings on the ballot for the annual meeting.
- Contacted new and returning committee and council members regarding the 2022 Committee-Council retreat Saturday, March 5. Planning to recognize these leaders by installing them at worship Sunday, March 6.
- Made contact with Southwestern Minnesota, Southeastern Minnesota, and Minneapolis Area synod offices with the Church Administrator position description. The position is also included in TLCs announcements.
- Thanks to all who attended the annual meeting – either in person or via Zoom!
- Creating ideas/plans for *Enough* Study in March.
- Considered options for mid-week Lenten worship services and shared a possibility with Judy and Pastor Nikoli. Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, March 2.
- Considered options for mid-week Lenten sermon series and shared ideas with Pastor Nikoli. We decided to focus each Wednesday night on a hymn of the season – sharing the story of the hymn writer and background of the hymn.

2. Pastor Nikoli's Report

- Confirmation: At an early January staff meeting, I was encouraged to update the Confirmation schedule by continuing the program later into May. While distributing the new, updated schedule we also distributed the new sign-out waiver. We have received a number of those waivers returned and think that its rollout has gone very well.
- Covid and CYF: We have seen the Omicron variant greatly impact attendance for our CYF programs. We were still able to bring our middle schoolers to WOWZone for bowling and laser tag, but only seven students were able to come because of a confluence of Covid cases and families choosing to limit exposure. Sunday School attendance has taken a large plunge, as well - we are hearing directly from families that limiting their families' exposure to the virus has played the dominant role in this drop. In order to meet the needs of our families during this spike, we have decided to offer Sunday School in hybrid form. If families would like to forego the Covid exposure,

they can tune in Zoom for a shortened SS experience – in person Sunday Schoolers will be entertained for the remainder of the hour until their families can pick them up after worship. We will also be surveying our families in this time to find out more about their feelings, preferences, and situations. If our families come back predominantly virtual participation, we may ask council for permission to take the program online completely for a few weeks.

- Covid Spike: Also, due to the covid spike, I have begun participating in weekly PCR test (Tuesdays) and am myself greatly limiting my own exposure outside of my home and workplace.
- Continuing Education: I have completed a four-week Emotional Intelligence training (Zoom) and am looking forward to the second gathering of the Colledgeville Rural Fellows. This gathering was supposed to take place in St. Joseph on February 7 and 8, but will instead be held over Zoom, due to the spike in Covid cases. I have also attended a colleague group retreat at Green Lake and an Enneagram workshop about dreams over Zoom.
- MLK Sunday: If you haven't watched it, I crafted a special liturgy for the day, featuring videos of the duo Joe Davis and David Scherer in the Confession/Forgiveness and Sending, and also a video of Joel Edward Goza, who's book was then featured in a TLC Giveaway. Mary Coffey and Michelle Westre won these copies, and I'll be ordering one for the library as well.
- Anti-Racism Team: Many of you will remember that I was certified to administer the Intercultural Development Inventory in January of 2021. The ART would like to make this tool available for the wider congregation beginning in Lent. In order to acquire a common experience to speak from, all of the ART team (excepting Pr Joy) decided to take the IDI themselves and begin that journey. I have since begun IDI Reporting, which entails one-on-one meetings with folks to introduce the IDI system, interpret results, and deliver a development plan. We have also recently welcomed Kristie Olson as a member of the ART, and I'll be debriefing her on the IDI decision from December and hopefully hook her up with her own inventory.
- Technology: If you worshipped with us in-person on MLK Sunday, you will have witnessed some really annoying latency issues in the Sanctuary. When we stream videos to the internet or record on a DVD, we don't experience any latency; however, lips and voices don't match up in the sanctuary through the projectors and speakers. After a number of consultations and hours in the sanctuary, I purchased new fiber optic HDMI cables, hardwiring our projectors to the system and then also created a sub-mixer in the A/V closet so that I could isolate the in-house output and delay that signal. The combined effect corrected the latency issues. We can now watch videos in-house – including Confirmation videos; without breaking our brains.
- Simpson Forum: Though I do little to lead this group, I have been functioning as the Zoom chatbox facilitator this year. I get to manage questions that come through the Zoom feed, though these questions have been very few in number.

3. Treasurer's Report

- Offerings through January were \$29,340. This is down \$1,706 from giving through January 2021.
- Total expenses through January have been \$41,679. This is deficit of \$12,399 between income and expenses. *Of note, there was a beginning balance of \$75,224 on 1/1/2022. That "excess" is now \$62,871.*
- The budgeted amount through January was \$49,087. Expenses are running \$7,408 below the budgeted amount through January.
- The Controlled Savings Balance was \$190,975
- The Bank Balance at the end of January was \$62,871

4. Endowment Request: There was a request by the Endowment Committee for the 2022 year to award a \$1,000 scholarship to a graduating senior who meets the criteria previously set for receiving the Trinity Scholarship. **See Action Item 3.**

5. Endowment Addition: Barb Simpson would like to add an additional amount of \$40,472 to the Justin and Barbara Simpson Endowment Fund. 50% of the annual spendable amount should go to the Simpson Forum Fund and 50% to Adult Education Fund. **See Action Item 4.**

6. **Appointment of Personnel Committee & Finance Committee Members:** Nominees for Personnel Committee are Jennifer Lammert, Dave Detlefson and Casey Dunker. Nominees for Finance Committee are John Lammert and Mikkel Haugen. **See Action Item 5.**
7. **Lenten Offering Designation:** After discussion, it was decided to choose CADA to receive Trinity's Lenten offerings. **See Action Item 6.**
8. **Committee Reports**
 - **Property Committee:** Exhaust fans are expected to be installed in the fellowship hall in early February. 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 teacher appreciation baskets. The Frolic may need a change to scheduled dates.
 - **Worship, Music and Arts:** They created a team to display and rotate the art. They have place art back in the Gustafson room. Requested to put some chairs back in the narthex.
 - **Mission:** They are brainstorming ideas and will select some to put into action. March will be the Food/Share campaign
 - **Adult Education:** Adult Forum continues, they may cancel from time to time based on weather and the Covid situation. They are looking for possible topics.
 - **Stewardship:** They will be supporting another book study of "Enough" with Pastor Joy sometime in March.
9. **Committee/Council Retreat:** The retreat will be March 5 from 9:00 to noon. More information to follow.

B. Actions Taken:

1. **Motion M/S/P to approve the amended agenda for the February Council meeting.**
2. **Motion M/S/P to approve the minutes of the January Council meeting.**
3. **Motion M/S/P to approve the endowment request of \$1,000 for the 2022 Trinity Scholarship. Funds to come from the General Endowment Spendables.**
4. **Motion M/S/P to approve the endowment request to add \$40,472 to Justin and Barbara Simpson Endowment Fund with funds distributed as requested.**
5. **Motion M/S/P to approve the nominees to Personnel and Finance Committees.**
6. **Motion M/S/P to approve Lenten offerings to be given to Committee Against Domestic Abuse (CADA).**

C. Responsibilities Assigned:

1. Council and Committee members should try to attend the Committee/Council retreat.

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