

Trinity Lutheran Church
Church Council Meeting Minutes – April 13 2021
Reporting: Jennifer Hubrig

Present: Marc Bachman, Cathy Carlson, Andy Elofson, Brian Fell, Scott Fichtner, Alie Hermanson, Nancy Kruger, Doug Minter, Sarah Nelsen, Barbara Simpson, Pastor Nikoli Falenschek

Absent: Pastor Joy Ekstedt

The agenda for the meeting was accepted by unanimous consent.

A. Business Discussed:

1. Pastor Joy's Report

- Attended Minnesota Valley Conference Annual meeting.
- Along with the Property Committee will be creating opportunities for members and other groups to have conversation about building usage and possible improvements to the building.
- Leading First Communion instruction with 4-6 graders. It's great to be back with them!
- Having conversations with Pastor Nikoli regarding milestone blessings this spring (First Communion, Affirmation of Baptism, and Baccalaureate).
- Grace Street Bible Study Revved Up continues to meet. Great conversations. We are planning to meet in person beginning April 22, 10:30 am at TLC. You are welcome to join the group!
- Health Response Team continues to meet monthly. Most likely will schedule one more meeting (end of April) and then rely on those who are in healthcare to let us know if there are issues in the county and then we'd schedule a meeting to discuss. Very grateful for all their time and efforts this past year.
- Having conversation with the faithful group of folks who have been part of the "What Can I Do?" study group that began last June. Will determine if they want to continue their conversations.
- The Anti-racism Team meets monthly. Their work is especially important given an increase of attacks on people of Asian descent and the increase of anti-Semitism.
- The process for Endowment requests has been re-worked. Al Hewitt, Scott Fichtner, Jen Hubrig, Pastor Nikoli and I meet to make changes.
- Mid-week Lenten worship services, Holy Week worship services, and Easter worship services were all held in-person and also offered on FB, YouTube and the local cable channel. All went fine.
- Led memorial service for Ken Douglas and participated in Celebration of Life for Lena Lo.
- On vacation April 13 and will return April 20. This is my final week of vacation from 2020 which was able to be carried over for use this year.
- Will be taking sabbatical (postponed from 2020) beginning June 1 and will return August 17. This time will also include a few weeks of vacation.
- Seeking members to become a TLC Companion. I began "Companions" the spring of 2020, early in the pandemic. It has been a great way to connect our homebound members with other members for a visits and perhaps for errands. I am planning to expand this ministry so that lay members are part of a Home Communion schedule. This will offer support to Pastor Nikoli while I am on sabbatical. It would be great to continue this ministry even beyond my sabbatical.
- The fellowship hall is ready any given Sunday if needed for overflow capacity for worship. Having conversation about continuing one Sunday morning worship service while I am on sabbatical this summer.
- Will have conversations with Pastor Nikoli, the Executive Committee and others regarding pulpit supply or lay members offering sermons every other week while I am on sabbatical. It's important that Pastor Nikoli has that "usual" preaching schedule as he will have CYF events this summer and also needs time for vacation.
- A big THANK YOU to Nancy Hanson, Al Behrends, and all who were part of the virtual choir this past year. They did so much to make worship a reality for people at home or in-person during a very challenging year. Thank you!

2. Pastor Nikoli's Report

- New Prayer Practice: Every week, I use a numerical randomizer to select names from our membership directory. I select five people or households this way and then get in touch with each of them. I pray for each person/household daily for a week. I'm usually able to get in touch with about half of them to get an idea of what specifically to pray for. If I don't get through to them, I leave a message asking them to get in touch with me or just to enjoy the general prayers I'm sending their way. I have a journal in which I'm keeping track of my prayers.
- Continuing Ed: I'm going to be unavailable May 17-21, as I will be attending the Festival of Homiletics (i.e. preaching). Normally, this annual event costs thousands of dollars once you add in meals, travel, registration, and lodging. This year, it's all remote and even registration is free! This festival is touted as one of the most consistently excellent education opportunities for clergy. I'll get to hear from some of the world's best preachers and reinvigorate my preaching style, preparation, and content.
- Easter: Well, Lent and Holy Week happened! It went really well, I thought, with only a couple of glitches and some burnout here and there. I'm grateful to everyone who helped make it a success, especially our tech people (as always) and our ushers who encountered more people than maybe they were expecting. Our ushers welcomed people graciously and gently but firmly reminded folks of our Covid policies when necessary. They rocked it!
- Funeral Services: Marge Robeck's funeral and graveside service were on Saturday March 27 and Lena Lo's memorial was on April 6.
- Confirmation: Confirmation Sunday is coming up on May 2! The 9th graders have completed their Confirmation stoles and are finishing up their Confirmation Projects this month. The other Confirmation students looked at stories of Unravelling in the Bible during Lent and helped create an artistic weaving (see Maundy Thursday sermon). Now, the 5th-8th graders are getting back to the old schedule and curricula, and they'll be spread out on Wednesday nights to fit everyone in. The Groups will be staggered in the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall between 4:30-8pm depending on the group and groups' availabilities.
- Sunday School: We'll be continuing Sunday school on April 11 in the Fellowship Hall. The Adult Ed committee has claimed the Sanctuary after worship starting that day. We may need to re-evaluate this setup, though, because of all of the tech needs Sunday School has and how many people that program serves, especially online.
- Luminary Event: Thanks to the Sunday School families, we had nearly 30 bags decorated for Palm Sunday evening, out of 88. Kaeden Guida helped me set up the bags in the shape of a fish for people to process through with their palm fronds. Overall, the event was a success! We want to do it again next year with more bags and in a different location—just when it was getting dark enough to see the candles' glow, the parking lot lights turned on and ruined the ambiance. We'll have to find a better, darker place next year.
- First Communion: Classes will be Sundays (April 11-May 2) for the 4-6th graders, using the "Fed and Forgiven" curriculum, at 2pm on Sundays. Classes will be Sundays April 25 and May 2 for the 1-3rd graders, using the "A Place For You" curriculum, during the Sunday School hour. The various participants will spread out their First Communion Blessing over May 9, May 23, May 30, and June 13.

3. Treasurer's Report

- Offerings through March were \$93,811. This is down \$11,322 from giving through March 2020.
- Total expenses through March have been \$107,505. This is deficit of \$13,694 between income and expenses.
- The budgeted amount through March was \$124,332. So our expenses are running \$16,827 below the budgeted amount through March.
- The Controlled Savings Balance was \$136,503
- The Bank Balance at the end of March was \$94,124

4. Endowment Request: The endowment request from Stewardship Committee for \$600 to recognize volunteers was reduced to \$300 therefore, no action was needed.

- 5. Note to Congregation:** There have been some issues for the ushers on Sundays regarding people not following Covid protocols. Sarah drafted a note to the congregation reminding them why it is important to follow these protocols and to thank the ushers. Sarah would like this note to be included in the May newsletter from the church council. A few changes were made and there was unanimous consent to publish the note.

Some issues noted by the ushers included visiting in the narthex and people sitting where they wanted rather than following the usher to a seat. This prompted discussion about possibly changing the way the sanctuary is filled and what it would take to make the narthex usable. The Health Response Team will be meeting next week and will provide further guidance on the seating and Marc Bachman reported that the Property Committee determined that the narthex can be used now if the 5th street and parking lot doors are open.

6. Committee Reports

- Property Committee: The group got a tour of the heating/cooling systems at the church. They are looking into portable air exchange units for areas that do not have fresh air exchange. They determined the narthex can be occupied if both the 5th street and parking lot entrance doors are open. They are going to pursue repair of the 3 pendent lights in the sanctuary.
- Community Life: They are working on drive-by events for mother’s and father’s day, gift bags for 2021 graduates, and Moon Dog baseball game attendance.
- Children, Youth and Family: They are working on plans for Confirmation service, Baccalaureate service, GLLM camp, VBS, Shetek Day Camp, and Mission Week. The Luminary Event on Palm Sunday was well received and they would like to continue this event annually. Care packages for college students are being sent out tomorrow.
- Worship, Music and Arts: They would like to keep offering 1 service at 9:30 am on Sundays until there is a consistent increase in attendance over several weeks. The congregation is singing live now and the committee is so grateful to the virtual choir for singing the hymns while we couldn’t. They are also working on incorporating some contemporary music into the services.
- Mission: They are working on doing a highway cleanup with the youth during mission week. They continue to serve hot meals 2 Mondays per month for residents at Estate apartments. They will begin collaborating with “The Kitchen” folks on how to meet the need for food during the pandemic.
- Adult Education: Adult Forum resumed on April 11 with 8-10 people in attendance.
- Stewardship: They are planning to distribute \$5 gift cards to volunteers next week. Approximately 75 will be mailed and 45 will be at the church for pick-up. The committee asks that each of the 6 committees distribute 5 cards to volunteers of their choosing.

B. Actions Taken:

1. **Motion M/S/P to approve the minutes of the March Council meeting.**

C. Responsibilities Assigned:

1. Sarah will send the note to the congregation to Jen for publication.
2. Jen will inform the Health Response Team about the change to narthex use and request that they review the protocol for seating in the sanctuary.

D. Next meeting: May 11, 2021 at 6:30 pm.

30-60-90

April		22	Funeral for Vern Olmanson
			Funeral for Carl Satrom (at the park)
24	GACAC Business Meeting	23	1 st Communion Worship Service 11 am
May			Baccalaureate Service 2 pm
2	Affirmation of Baptism Service 2pm		
	Last Day of HS Youth Group	June	
	Last day of Sunday school	1	Pastor Joy on sabbatical
9	Mother’s Day	7-11	VBS
	1 st Communion Worship Service 11 am	19	Memorial Service for Donna Wick
12	Last Day of Confirmation Class		