

**Trinity Lutheran Church**  
**Church Council Meeting Minutes – December 14, 2021**  
**Reporting: Jennifer Hubrig**

**Present:** Marc Bachman, Cathy Carlson, Brian Fell, Scott Fichtner, Alie Hermanson, Nancy Kruger, Doug Minter, Sarah Nelsen, Pastor Joy Ekstedt, Pastor Nikoli Falenschek, *Jennifer Hubrig*

**Absent:** Andy Elofson, Barbara Simpson

The agenda for the meeting was approved.

**A. Business Discussed:**

**1. Pastor Joy's Report**

- Pastoral care-- Prepared for and led three funerals. Checked in with TLC Companions. A number of conversations with families experiencing health issues. Met with family and presided at a baptism.
- Met with Personnel Committee regarding staff positions that are vacant. Pleased with their decision to re-imagine positions. Their recommendation will be brought to the December Executive Committee meeting.
- Met with Doug Minter (VP and Chair of Personnel Committee) for staff reviews with Jen and Kristie. Kristen's review is postponed. Pastors' reviews will be held with Executive Committee December 9.
- Led confirmation classes for 5th and 6th grades and 7th and 8th grades
- Led Grace Street Bible study
- Led new member orientation.
- Met with Simpson Forum planning team. It looks like a great event once again!
- TLC Christmas letter is behind schedule. Will get it written for Council this week.
- Met with Enough book study. Will meet one more time in December.
- Joined WELCA meeting on topic of continuing or disbanding.
- Participated in Ecumenical Thanksgiving Eve worship service.
- Began mid-week Advent worship services using Henri Nouwen meditations.
- Reminder that Christmas Eve worship services are 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, and 9:00 pm with candlelight and Holy Communion at each service.
- Annual meeting is Sunday, January 30
- Will be using one week of vacation beginning December 28 and returning January 4. I also have one week of vacation remaining for 2021 that will be carried over to 2022.

**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 November were \$344,513. This is down \$15,990 from giving through November 2020
- Total expenses through November have been \$398,517. This is deficit of \$54,004 between income and expenses. *Of note, there was an "excess" of \$108,016 on 1/1/2021. That "excess" is now \$53,956.*
- The budgeted amount through November was \$431,279. Expenses are running \$32,761 below the budgeted amount through November
- The Controlled Savings Balance was \$193,794
- The Bank Balance at the end of November was \$53,956

4. **Endowment Fund Request:** Pastor Nikoli presented an endowment request for \$2,500 for Trinity to become an "LSS Circle of Welcome" for a family of Afghan refugees. **See Action Item 2.**

5. **Personnel Committee Recommendation:** Doug Minter presented a change in staff structure that was recommended by the committee. The recommendation is to combine the duties of 3 current positions: part-time church secretary, full-time financial secretary/administrative assistant and part-time building supervisor into 2 full-time positions, a church secretary and a church administrator. The Personnel Committee believes this will aid us in finding and retaining employees and will help with the transition of Jen leaving. **See Action Item 3.**

6. **2022 Ministry Spending Plan:** The finance and endowment committees have recommended a Ministry Spending Plan for 2022 in the amount of \$490,631. This plan includes the recommended change in staff structure. **See Action Item 4.**

7. **Covid Protocol:** There was discussion regarding a possible worship service that would be a "mask free" service for those who would like that option. This option would be in addition to worship services in which masks are required based on recommendations from the Health Response Team. Council members will submit questions about the criteria needed for that "mask free" option to the council president who will forward the questions to the Health Response Team. Further investigation and discussions are needed and will continue in January.

8. **Child Abuse Prevention Policy Check-out Procedures:** CYF Committee is recommending a change to the *Child & Youth Abuse Prevention Program* procedure. This change would include a sign-in/sign-out opt out waiver for parents of youth in grades 5-9. **See Action Item 5.**

### 9. Committee Reports

- Property Committee: Recommended a snow removal company to hire.
- Community Life: They will be caroling on Sunday, December 19.
- Children, Youth and Family: They are working on baptism bundles, confirmation late-in, and combined youth group.
- Worship, Music and Arts: They are working on getting a plan together for displaying art at Trinity.

- Mission: No report at this time.
- Adult Education: no report at this time.
- Stewardship: They will be supporting another book study of “Enough” with Pastor Joy sometime in February.

**B. Actions Taken:**

1. **Motion M/S/P to approve the minutes of the November Council meeting.**
2. **Motion M/S/P to approve the endowment request of \$2,500 for Trinity to become an “LSS Circle of Welcome” for a family of Afghan refugees. Funds to come from the General Endowment Spendables.**
3. **Motion M/S/P to approve the recommendation of the Personnel Committee to combine the duties of 3 current positions: part-time church secretary, full-time financial secretary/administrative assistant and part-time building supervisor into 2 full-time positions, a church secretary and a church administrator.**
4. **Motion M/S/P to approve the 2022 Ministry Spending Plan in the amount of \$490,631.**
5. **Motion M/S/P to approve to amend the Child & Youth Abuse Prevention Program procedure to include a sign-in/sign-out opt out waiver for parents of youth in grades 5-9.**
6. **Motion M/S/P to approve the Sign-in/Sign-out Opt Out Waiver Form.**

**C. Responsibilities Assigned:**

1. Sarah will forward any questions about Covid Protocols to the Health Response Team.

**D. Next meeting:** January 11, 2022 at 6:30 pm