

**Trinity Lutheran Church**  
**Church Council Meeting Minutes – April 6, 2022**  
**Reporting: Rita Gibbs**

**Present:** Brian Fell, Cathy Carlson, Scott Fichtner, Kayla Siewert, Meredith Young, Rita Gibbs, Jeff Feder, Jim Timmerman, Pastor Joy Ekstedt,

**Absent:** Alie Hermanson, Sarah Nelson, Nancy Kruger, Pastor Nikoli Falenschek

**Devotions:** Cathy Carlson

**A. Business Discussed:**

**1. Pastor Joy's Report**

- Pastoral care—Resumed Devotions and Holy Communion at Benedictine (assisted living), met with family for funeral plans, and led funeral for Rosella Palmquist-Sexe.
- Created Appreciative Inquiry questions and led that part of the Committee-Council Retreat on March 5. After two years of not having this retreat it was great to be together again. There were many “gifts” in the day – namely the fellowship and reminding each other of the things that are valued at Trinity. The committees are asked to build on those things we value as we move forward in mission and service.
- Led Grace Street Bible study sessions – two per month. We have one more of Harry Wendt's lessons from the *Road to Coronation* (will finish just before Holy Week). Will discuss our next topic to being after Easter.
- Led all four sessions of the First Communion instruction for older youth. We met after the 9:30 worship each Sunday in March. Had a great time with them and their parents/guardians. They will receive their First Communion blessing on Palm Sunday, April 10 at 11:00 am.
- An interview team was put together in February to consider and interview candidates for the Church Administrator position. While we received a number of resumes, we met and interviewed the 3 best qualified candidates. After interviewing Julie Carlson, her references were contacted and then having great reviews, she was invited back for a second interview. The next day, Julie was offered the position and a few days later she called and accepted the position. We are delighted she's joined the staff. Julie began working with Jen for training o Monday, April 4.
- Mid-week Lenten soup suppers are back! It has been great to see people in the fellowship hall again sitting at tables, visiting, and sharing a meal together. Trinity also hosted the first funeral lunch in 2 years for the family of Rosella Palmquist-Sexe. And, Sunday morning coffee fellowship is happening again. Come one, come all!!
- Was able to attend part of an Anti-Racism Team meeting (after an interview for the Church Administrator position) and heard about the start of plans for an event in June.
- Maundy Thursday and Good Friday worship services are happening at 7:00 pm each evening. Please attend and invite family, friends, and neighbors to join you. Easter Sunday worship services are at 8 and 9:30.
- I, along with Sandi Francis are Trinity's representatives to the Circle of Welcome. There's been a “glitch” however – which led one of the congregations opting out of the ministry. Communication will happen with LSS regarding the next step or steps for us. We will continue to move forward in collecting items and most certainly will be able to share those donations with a family in the process of resettling in the USA.
- Planning New member Sunday in May.
- Consider having one worship service on Sunday mornings beginning the Sunday of Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend. There is a “boost” to bringing together people from the 8:00 and 9:30 worship times. Coming together form one worship service on Sunday is a great way for us to re-connect over the summer (and after a long pandemic season).
- Planning to offer Bonfire worship services again 5 Wednesday evenings this summer. Dates to be determined – but one in June, two in July, and two in August.

- Will be using my last week of vacation from 2021 immediately following Easter worship services and will return to the office April 26.

## 2. Pastor Nikoli's Report

- Covid: I started having symptoms on Friday (4/1) and tested positive for Covid-19 on Saturday (4/2). Subsequently, I am not allowed to leave quarantine until Thursday (4/7/) and will probably work from home that day as well to be safe.
- 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Retreat: With a gigantic thanks to Kristie Olson for planning the 8<sup>th</sup> grade retreat, and another gigantic thanks to Bridget Cooke for chaperoning with us, we had a really great time at Gustavus. In anticipation of their upcoming 9<sup>th</sup> grade Confirming year, we spent some special time apart to have fun, expand our minds, and begin preparing for the big fall event. We attended Africa Night put on by PASO (Pan-African Student Organization), got a tour of the campus.
- Confirmation: During Lent, as Pr. Joy and I focus on a song for our reflections, we're carrying that conversation into the Confirmation small groups. We're requiring worship attendance during Lent for these students and then are asking them to discuss the songs afterwards and also write additional verses for the various songs. The plan is to eventually sing these additional verses in Sunday worship services.
- Plastic Challenge: The Confirmation students recently completed their plastic challenge – Kristie did all the leg work for this and collaborated with the Green Team. We're proud of the students for collecting just over 88 pounds of soft plastics! The Sunday School challenge is just beginning, and we're looking forward to what they can do.
- First Communion: We're set to welcome close to twenty kids to Holy Communion on Sunday (4/10). We'll have a special blessing for them at an eleven o'clock service. While I was planning on offering an additional, optional class time on Saturday (4/9), as well as baking bread together, I'm going to have to reschedule because of my recent Covid diagnosis.
- Baccalaureate: I will be gathering with our graduating families soon to start planning the Baccalaureate service, which will take place on May 22 at 11 am. Originally, I was going to meet with the families on April 10 at 2 pm, but have learned that this is over Spring Break and many families will be out of town. I will reschedule this planning session for April 24 instead.
- Summer Trips and Fundraising: We are so proud of our congregation for getting us so far with fundraising already! We will be in conversation with Scandian Grove to see how they'd like to participate in this exercise as well, as we'll be joining forces with one of our Associate Member families who's membership resides there. We will be beyond our fundraising goal by the time we close this April month, which means all of the proceeds from the upcoming Silent Auction will go towards 2023 trips and beyond. We will be asking all Middle/High School families, therefore, to participate in that event. In the meantime, we'll be getting a list of all the donors that have so far contributed since the fall of 2019 (some of those funds carried over since the 2020 trip was cancelled) and will set our 2022 trip families to write thank-you notes.
- Continuing Education: I have an Enneagram Retreat coming up, beginning at noon on May 15 and concluding in the evening on May 17. I will be able to be present for my regular Sunday morning duties on the 15<sup>th</sup> and will take the next two days from my Continuing Ed allowance. They have still not settled on a location for that retreat.
- Vacation: I will be away from the office beginning April 26 and will return to the office on May 9. In that time, I will be traveling with Maggie back to Champaign, IL (our old stomping grounds) to cheer her on as she returns to long-distance racing, and we'll also be able to attend a family baby shower.

## 3. Treasurer's Report

- Offerings through March were \$84,232. This is down \$9,579 from giving through March 2021.

- Total expenses through March have been \$118,163. This is deficit of \$33,931 between income and expenses. *Of note, there was a beginning balance of \$75,224 on 1/1/2022. That “excess” is now \$38,674.*
- The budgeted amount through March was \$135,104. Expenses are running \$16,941 below the budgeted amount through March.
- The Controlled Savings Balance was \$175,722
- The Bank Balance at the end of February was \$38,674

#### 4. Endowment Request:

- The Library Committee is requesting funds of \$886.53 for two display racks. The funds requested would come from the Library Endowment Fund. **See Action Item 3.**

#### 5. Anti-Racism Team (ART):

Members of the ART team has been working on language to acknowledge that Trinity is situated on ancestral homeland of five Native American tribes. The ART team is planning events to include the congregation. More to come.

#### 6. Welcome & Farewell:

- The Council would like to welcome Julie Carlson as Trinity’s new Church Administrator with a coffee hour on May 1.
- The Council would like to wish a fond farewell to Jennifer Hubrig as she is leaving the Church Administrator position with a coffee hour on May 8 and to give her a gift. **See Action Item 4.**

#### 7. Office Carpet Purchase:

The Executive Committee had a special meeting to approve the purchase of new carpet for the office. This is considered a capital improvement.

#### 8. Committee Reports

- Property Committee: They are getting a few quotes for roofing options. The new office carpet is being installed. They are getting bids for pest control and lawn mowing services.
- Community Life: There will be a volunteer appreciation brunch for all Trinity members on April 24.
- Children, Youth and Family: Sunday School be ending on May 8 for this year. The Silent Auction to help fund youth trips will be moved to next year.
- Worship, Music and Arts: There will be no sunrise Easter service this year. Wednesday summer services will be determined as to how many and when. They propose that Sunday worship services over the summer move to one service instead of two services. **See Action Item 5.**
- Mission: March Food Shelf results are coming. May 5 will be an event to pack welcome kits for Afghan families. A group is looking at providing a community meal in the fall as a sort of re-invention of The Kitchen. Members of the Catholic and Presbyterian churches are interested in assisting with possibility. Jill Gatzke will represent Trinity in this.
- Adult Education: Adult Forum has 5 sessions left for this year. They will be reviewing the survey results to look to refresh and relaunch Adult Education. They are looking at possible book club or integrating with other events.
- Stewardship: They are working with Community Life on the Volunteer Appreciation brunch.

#### B. Actions Taken:

1. **Motion M/S/P to approve the agenda for the April Council meeting.**
2. **Motion M/S/P to approve the minutes of the March Council meeting.**
3. **Motion M/S/P to approve the purchase of library shelves using the Library Endowment Fund.**
4. **Motion M/S/P to approve a gift for Jennifer Hubrig’s farewell.**
5. **Motion M/S/P to approve one summer worship service on Sundays at 9:00 with coffee at 8:30.**

#### C. Next meeting: Tuesday, May 10, 2022, at 6:30 pm