

**Trinity Lutheran Church**  
**Church Council Meeting Minutes – March 7, 2022**  
**Reporting: Rita Gibbs**

**Present:** Sarah Nelson, Brian Fell, Nancy Kruger, Cathy Carlson, Scott Fichtner, Alie Hermanson, Kayla Siewert, Meredith Young, Rita Gibbs, Jeff Feder, Jim Timmerman, Pastor Joy Ekstedt, Pastor Nikoli Falenschek

**Absent:** Alie Hermanson

**Devotions:** Meredith Young

**A. Business Discussed:**

**1. Pastor Joy's Report**

- Pastoral care—contacts with members, home Communion, met with family for funeral plans, and led funeral for Doug Gerke.
- Contacted Trinity's Health Response Team for their insight regarding our next steps as a congregation (masks, coffee, meals). Their insight will be shared with both the Executive Committee and the Council in March.
- Grace Street Bible Studies – two each month. We are working on Harry Wendt's study, *Road to Coronation*.
- Led 5-6 and 7-8 confirmation classes February 9.
- Attended Anti-Racism Team meeting.
- Contacted Personnel Committee and asked for volunteers to serve on an interview team. Those who are available to be on this team are Dave Arpin, Casey Dunker, Deb Fichtner, Kayla Siewert, Jen Hubrig (ex officio), and myself. Candidates selected will, of course, have one interview and the best candidate(s) will have a second interview and Pastor Nikoli will join the team at that time.
- Interview team interviewed two candidates for Church Administrator position. We reposted the position then end of February in order to get more candidates.
- Created questions based on Appreciative Inquiry for the 2022 Committee-Council retreat Saturday, March 5. The anticipated outcome is that our conversation will lead the Council and Committees in creating plans as we serve together in a post-pandemic world. With all that was going on last year, we did not have a Committee-Council retreat. So, this year's gathering is all the more important as we work on building relationships of Committee and Council members and on renewing our congregation. Planning to recognize Council and Committee members by installing them at worship at a TBD date in March.
- Trinity's Ash Wednesday service is March 2 at 7 pm. Worship the following Wednesdays of Lent will be at 6:15. I am excited about the mid-week Lenten sermon series. Pastor Nikoli and I will base our sermons on a hymn of the season – sharing some of the background of the hymn and hymnwriter.
- Council is scheduled for the Tuesday of Holy Week. Do we want to consider shifting the Council meeting a week earlier (perhaps Committee meetings as well)?
- I am one of Trinity's representatives (with members of other congregations) on the Circle of Welcome Contact Team – a group that will get to know and help an Afghan refugee family that recently relocated to the TC area. Our first meeting is March 10.
- Will be leading 4-5 grade First Communion instruction March 6, 13, 20, 27
- Consider dates for Committee-Council Installation – March 27 or April 3. **See Action Item 4.**
- Consider rescheduling Council meeting to April 6 or 7 since our regular meeting date is during Holy Week. **See Action Item 5.**

**2. Pastor Nikoli's Report**

- Confirmation: We will be pivoting for Lent and students will first worship at 6:15 and then discuss the featured hymn in their small groups afterwards.

- First Communion: Pr. Joy and I have planned Communion Instruction for our 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> graders, with a couple of outliers meeting with me one-on-one. Instruction will take place in March (4/5 grades on all Sundays and 1/2/3 grades on the last two Sundays) and the actual blessing will take place on the 10<sup>th</sup> of April at an 11 am service.
- Anti-Racism Team: I have met to deliver IDI Reports to almost all of the AR Team, and we all agree that this will be both important and transformative work. We'll be trying a few a few different arrangements as a smaller group in order to test applicability for the congregation. Our original timeline of inviting TLC into the IDI has been delayed while we continue to explore our relationship(s) with native/indigenous groups in the area. We will be inviting the congregation into some of that work soon.
- Bible Study: I've been waiting to implement a new Bible study – in similar vein to the Queer-Affirming study but with a new topic – until Pr. Joy's Enough study concluded. Now that she's close to beginning those sessions, I'll start exploring a few different themes and decide on one to begin in April. The current topics I'm exploring (identified by parishioners who shared their interests with me) include "Why people read the Bible differently?" "Faith, Sexism, and Justice" (guide to the ELCA's most recent Social Statement), and "Science and/or Religion".
- Food Shelf: I have been elected to a one-year term as the SPAF Board President. While I was looking forward to having a break from the board, I have in prayer decided to accept this position in hopes that this year can be a significant time of formation and reformation at the food shelf.

### 3. Treasurer's Report

- Offerings through February were \$58,338. This is down \$3,276 from giving through February 2021.
- Total expenses through February have been \$81,854. This is deficit of \$23,515 between income and expenses. *Of note, there was a beginning balance of \$75,224 on 1/1/2022. That "excess" is now \$52,248.*
- The budgeted amount through February was \$94,803. Expenses are running \$12,949 below the budgeted amount through February.
- The Controlled Savings Balance was \$173,048
- The Bank Balance at the end of February was \$52,248

### 4. Employee Retention Credit: Al Hewitt and Jen Hubrig have done extensive work to review the Employee Retention Credit (ERC) that could provide funding to qualifying organizations to see if Trinity might be able to receive this. The Finance Committee reviewed this and recommended that the Council approve a motion for them to proceed with filing for ERC. **See Action Item 6.**

### 5. Committee Reports

- Property Committee: Exhaust fans are expected to be installed in the fellowship hall in March. They are getting a few quotes for roofing options.
- Community Life: They had good success with the Valentine's Day kits. All were taken and distributed.
- Children, Youth and Family: The combined youth group is going well. First communion instructions are underway. Sunday School is back to in-person.
- Worship, Music and Arts: They created a team to display and rotate the art. They have placed art back in the Gustafson room.
- Mission: March will be the Food/Share campaign. Completed Trinity Fund Raising form to request approval to collect items for welcome kits for Afghan families, according to the list given by Lutheran Social Services. **See Action Item 7.**
- Adult Education: Adult Forum is continuing. They are looking for feedback on possible topics and other possible meeting times.
- Stewardship: There was not enough interest to do book study of "Enough" with Pastor Joy in March. April is Volunteer Appreciation, and they are scheduling a brunch.

**6. 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 agenda for the March Council meeting.**
- 2. Motion M/S/P to approve the minutes of the February Council meeting.**
- 3. Motion M/S/P to approve the minutes of the March 3 Special Council meeting.**
- 4. Motion M/S/P to approve the Committee/Council Installation on April 3.**
- 5. Motion M/S/P to approve the April Council meeting be changed to Wednesday, April 6 at 7:00 after Lenten Service.**
- 6. Motion M/S/P to approve the motion to move forward applying for Employee Retention Credit.**
- 7. Motion M/S/P to approve the Mission Committee to collect items for the Afghan family Welcome Kits.**

**C. Next meeting:** Wednesday, April 6, 2022, at 7:00 pm (after Lenten service)