

**** SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY THE CONGREGATION COUNCIL AT ITS NEXT MEETING ****

Trinity Lutheran Congregation Council

August 12, 2020

The Trinity Lutheran Congregation Council meeting was called to order by Saundy Solum at 7:00 pm on August 12, 2020 via a combination of masked members in the gathering hall and via Zoom conference call.

Members Present: Saundy Solum, Al Lochner, Dean Wiste, Lara Wold Mendez, Willy Leafblad, Barb Arnold, Sheri Allen, Jacque Wennes

Pr. Elizabeth opened the meeting with a prayer.

Secretary's Report for July 8, 2020 was approved with one modification. In the Continuing Business section number 3 Constitution Update, the following statement: 'This will be discussed by constitution and endowment teams' should read as 'This will be discussed by constitution team' MSP (Al, Dean)

Treasurer's Report (placed on file) Highlights listed below. MSP (Dean, Jackie)

- Down 6.4% July-August from 2019
- Expenses July-August increased up 7,200 (1 extra payroll)
- Net income for July -17,554 (profit/loss)
- No rental money received from Barry Patch for July. Barry Patch has also not put in July/August amount for Bethany's salary.
- Printer cost research from July meeting tasked to Barb. Usage package was purchased as same program as in past years. Usage went over allowed for program and Trinity was charged extra. Trinity is billed every quarter for extra usage costs. Package is set at beginning of year. The high amount was charged in June, but usage was from the entire first 6 months. Barb will have Lori Lyn check with company to determine what the overcharge details. She will ask the vendor if there is a portal to verify usage activity and if there can be notifications sent based on over-usage.

STAFF REPORTS:

Pastor Elizabeth

1. I know we all keep saying this, but I never could have imagined 2-1/2 years ago that I'd be leading a church in the middle of a worldwide pandemic. I pray every day for all those affected by COVID-19: The families who've lost loved ones. The people who've been sick. The doctors and nurses treating them. The researchers working on treatments and vaccines. And those who've been affected economically. I pray God brings out the best in us and we find ways to be strong together.

2. Our outdoor services have been a tremendous blessing, and we plan to continue them as long as the weather permits. I think people feel more secure outdoors, and we have the set-up down to an art – though it does take about 45 minutes. I talked to Rick this week, and he is happy to continue being our technology lead, but he does need 3-4 helpers to set up on Sundays. The worship team has pitched in, but maybe other teams would like to take turns?

3. Pastoral acts continue! Pr. Lane has had 6 funerals, and I've had another 5 in the last few months. In addition, I've done 3 baptisms and I have 2 weddings in the next few weeks. Other special services include our Senior Recognition and Baccalaureate services and First Communion for almost 6th graders.

4. It's nice to have some of our "normal" activities back: The newsletter ladies, our Monday offering counters, and the Love Day ladies have all returned with precautions. God be praised!

5. I'm grateful to our staff and volunteers for keeping us running and adapting our services each week.
6. I continue to have a LOT of Zoom meetings (as I'm sure you all have) with the Synod and Root River conference pastors, with my FTCE group, and with Faith + Lead cohorts. Zoom is wonderful, but it's also exhausting. But at least we can all still stay in fellowship and worship, of a sort, with one another, compare notes, trade best practices, etc.
7. The Synod is sending another digital service, complete with bulletin, for us to use on September 6 (Labor Day weekend) or a day that works better. We'll look at it when we receive it to see how much of it we can adapt for our service on that day, but you may have a "guest preacher." It's a ridiculous amount of work to get these services ready for us to use, but it's also great support for stressed-out pastors.
8. I love my new laptop! I'm so grateful we have Spring Grove Communications here in town. All the staff either already have been upgraded to MS365 or soon will be. We have also received a new laptop and camera to enhance or digital worship capabilities.
9. On a couple of personal notes, baseball is finally back, and the Twins seem to have an outstanding team (jinx!)! Also, Andy Allen's team started work on my bathroom project and though my house is a disaster, it's coming along. I'm looking forward to its completion. They're fixing a couple of other little plumbing issues at the same time. I know this project will enhance the parsonage for me and even more for future pastors. The radon and basement water mitigation are also an enhancement.

Pastor Lane (no report presented)

Bekah Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministry Report

Bible Stories with Bekah

- I have still been putting out a weekly YouTube video of me reading a Bible story with a lesson, song, or challenge for our younger youth.

Sunday School

- I will be working on what our Sunday School for the fall will look like this month. Education Team decided we would group children up in their cohorts from school and then those groups will meet twice a month. I can report a more in-depth plan at the next council meeting.

Trinity U/Confirmation

- We are planning to adapt our confirmation model for this year. Instead of meeting once a month with mentor groups, we will meet 5 weeks in a row 3 times a year (so 5 weeks in October/November, 5 weeks in January/February, and 5 weeks in April/May). In between those meetings, we will offer electives for youth to take.
- We plan on having mentor groups meet in person and they will each attend a Zoom meeting to hear from Pastor Elizabeth.

Trinity Letter Project

- I delivered a letter to each youth age 3 through 5th graders. They decorated and returned them to the south side of Trinity. They will eventually spell out a phrase. Can you guess what it is with the letters we have already?
- THE_E_S_O_E_B_D__T_M__Y PA_T_. YO_ ARE THE B_D_O_ CHRIST.
EA_H_NE OF Y_U IS A PAR_OF __.

Release Time

- We are waiting to hear from school what their plan is to decide on what Release Time will look like this fall. It will likely be taught in the school's cohort groups, so multi-age groups.
- We are going to try to add 4th graders to Release Time this fall.

Trip for 2021

- The ELCA Youth Gathering originally planned for the summer of 2021 has been postponed to July 24-July 28, 2022.
- The Education Team discussed possible trip ideas for 2021 and like the idea of going on a houseboat. Bekah is going to research some possible locations/companies for this trip.

Care Ministry (Milly)

- Not present. Care team is continuing HIP, congregation calls, and keeping the pantry stocked. This was presented by Pastor Elizabeth.

Education (Jacque)

- The Ed Team decided to regroup kids into two rotations. The first group will attend the first two weeks of the month, the second group will attend the last two weeks of the month. With this plan we will have two Rally Sunday's October 4th and October 8th. This will allow for each Sunday School group to have their first day of Sunday School and for the 3-year old and 3rd graders in each group to get their Bible.
- For confirmation this year Pastor Elizabeth would give a 10-15-minute lecture (Zoom), then the mentor groups would meet for the rest of the hour. Some electives (on-line or outdoors) will be offered in between large group sessions.
- Release time: We will wait to hear from school how the cohort's students are assigned.
- Youth group will continue to meet outside as long as possible.
- The ELCA Youth Gathering to Minneapolis has been postponed from 2021 to 2022.

Mission in the World (Dean)

- Team guidelines were sent to all team members.

Outreach (Lara)

- Team has been volunteering packing backpacks full of school supply and hygiene items. \$500 donations so far. 10 boxes have been delivered.

Support (Al)

- Property committee has met. Lee is checking on rebate for insulation put in church ceiling last year. If rebate is available, the team would like it to be available for custom made air system filters.
- Staffing Team has met. Pastor Lane has resumed service at the manor 6 funerals, and visitations. Recommending staff salaries remain the same in 2021 as 2020. Gary is helping with Sunday morning services. Job evaluation of Gary completed. Bekah's bonfires have started. Senior recognition Sunday completed. Scott is continuing to research choir options for safely performing musical selections at worship services.
- Stewardship met last month and yesterday to work on giving statements.
- Finance update is stated in continuing business on printer.
- Communications, Rick has new sound system installed and it is portable and can be used outdoors. Exploring idea of having 2 screens in the sanctuary.

Worship (Willy)

- Worship Team is providing auxiliary support for ushering and worship service support.

CONTINUING BUSINESS:

1. COVID Preparedness Plan Update

- Plan to continue seating outside. Response team continues to meet.

2. COVID grant from the SEMN synod

- Plan to redo Trinity website. Use SharePoint. Marlene is currently taking training. Grant was received.

3. Update from Finance and printer cost update

- As stated in treasurer's report. Printer cost research from July meeting tasked to Barb. Usage package was purchased as same program as in past years. Usage went over allowed for program and Trinity was charged extra. Trinity is billed every quarter for extra usage costs. Package is set at beginning of year. The high amount was charged in June, but usage was from the entire first 6 months. Barb will have Lori Lyn check with company to determine what the overcharge details. She will ask the vendor if there is a portal to verify usage activity and if there can be notifications sent based on over-usage.
- PPP fund update. Lori Lyn doing the paperwork to get the PPP forgiven. Researching government reporting requirements.

4. Continuing resolution question

- Changing from continuing resolutions to team guidelines for each team. Barb has provided the latest document (June 2019) and Pastor will provide documentation to continuing resolution updated document.

5. Yearly synod gift (Lutheran Campus Ministries or alternative initiative)

- Money will go to Lutheran campus ministries. Motion to give \$1300 to Campus Ministry collection (check made out to Campus Ministry Support). MSP (AI, Dean)

6. Team Guidelines

- Existing guidelines in packet for discussion at Council before bringing to your teams. Reviewed attached (sample) team guidelines. Each team must update their guidelines during budget annually. Each team will write their own and bring to council to review by October meeting.

7. Staffing

- Council team questioned how Scott's role will be handled in the future. Scott is collecting information regarding choir in upcoming services. Pastor will follow up with Scott.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Response team – Cub Scout meeting in Fellowship Hall

- Cub scouts will be allowed to meet from 3:30 to 5:15 on Tuesday nights at Trinity fellowship Hall. Jacque made a note to tell scout team that they should bring items and take them with them when they leave. Items cannot be stored at fellowship hall. Pastor Elizabeth will pass on this information to them.

2. Spring Grove Assisted Living – wondering about temporary shelter for evacuation

- Pastor will get more details about how many, transportation specifics. Also, what are the clarifications of a "disaster". Council will table and review information at September meeting.

3. WELCA meatball dinner

- Cancelled for 2020 fall. Pastor suggested that the community needs a morale booster. Council feels like you can't plan events due to possible outbreaks.

4. Book discussion – "Dear Church: A Love Letter from a Black Preacher to the Whitest Denomination in the US"

- Council will spend 15 minutes at beginning of September meeting for book discussion.
- Also, suggestion to order "Interrupting Silence". Walter Brueggemann

5. 2021 budget

- Budget from Pastor was passed out. Electronic will be emailed tomorrow to attach to notes. Distributed to team leads. They will bring back for September meeting or send to Lori Lyn to add to full budget.

6. Monday morning budget counters

- Steve Morken heads team to count Monday. We need to find a replacement. Judy Tolufsrud said she would do it, but there is a conflict with her being the head of finance. Finance has been assigning the person (they cannot be the counter) but they will find the person.

7. Helpers for Sunday morning.

- Trinity needs a system of 4 or 5 volunteers to help on Sunday mornings. 45-minute setup, help with handing out bulletin, offering, also put things away after service is completed. A signup must be created. Pastor will ask Have Marlene to send out an email to all families and use a google form to sign up. Rick will continue to setup the recording equipment.

8. Constitution

- Constitution team met and is bringing modified constitution to council. All underlined and highlighted new. Asterix with number items come from the Synod required changes. Crossed out and highlighted is removed. Council must approve first. Finance team suggested that treasurer vote on council with finance team lead, same as recommended by constitution team. See highlights from Saundy's email regarding synopsis of changes. (3 endowment committees) Endowment teams will also provide team guidelines. Council will review and team leads will take to their team and review. Vote during September meeting. Bi-law changes will be in there. Team guidelines are due in October.

Pr. Elizabeth closed the meeting with prayer.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10pm. MSP (Dean, Jackie)

Next Meeting: September 9, 2020 at 6:30pm via Zoom and Gathering Room with restrictions based on COVID-19 status.

In HIS Service,

Sheri Allen