

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

**Trinity Lutheran Congregation Council**

November 11, 2020

The Trinity Lutheran Congregation Council meeting was called to order by Saundy Solum at 6:30 pm on November 11, 2020 via Zoom conference call.

**Members Present:** Saundy Solum, Al Lochner, Dean Wiste, Lara Wold Mendez, Willy Leafblad, Barb Arnold, Sheri Allen, Jacque Wennes, Milly Halverson, Dan Alstad, Judy Tollefsrud, Jan Kraabel

Pr. Elizabeth opened the meeting with a prayer.

**Secretary's Report** for October 14, 2020 was approved with the below 3 modifications on wording from Treasurer's Report section. Bold is modified/new content. MSP (Jacque, Milly)

- \$20,400 required to meet the budget **per month**
- First **9** months of 2020 income, down 3.1% compared to 2019
- Expenses for September \$6,438 **more than total income**

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

- Offering for 1<sup>st</sup> 10 months down 10%
- Expenses are 7.9% higher this month

**STAFF REPORTS:**

**Pastor Elizabeth**

1. I attended the Synod's annual Fall Theological November 8-10 via Zoom, and completed a Faith + Lead 4-week series on "Finding Hope in a Divided Country" surrounding the upcoming election, and another on Luther's "The Freedom of a Christian," both via Zoom. I Zoom a lot.
2. The first session (5 weeks) of confirmation classes are complete, and feedback is positive. The next session begins the first Wednesday in January. We will decide in December – together with parents and mentors – about how to meet.
3. Our Reformation Day and confirmation celebrations on October 25 were a real blessing, and even though we could not meet in person, our All Saints celebration on November 1 with a special video tribute and luminaria was wonderful.
4. The Response Team and Worship Team will help us determine how we will celebrate and gather for Advent and Christmas. The Response Team meets November 18. Thanksgiving and Christ the King services will be pre-recorded for Facebook, YouTube and the radio so that we can include some of the wonderful music from last year's services.
5. Pastor Elliott Malm and I did a "pulpit exchange" on November 8. At the time of this writing, that hadn't occurred. I will update verbally. Mabel First is still doing in-person worship.
6. The Facilities Planning Team met and will meet again November 19 to discuss the round #2 proposal for the church building renovation from Wieser/Cashman.
7. Pastoral acts: Pastor Lane and I had 2 more baptisms in October and another 2 are coming up. We do these with immediate family only.
8. On a couple of personal notes, my bathroom work is almost done.
9. Mabel church is having in person services. They are getting 1/3 to 1/2 attendance. They are providing liturgy via a PowerPoint on a screen. Presentation via PowerPoint is run by confirmation students, 1 student per week. Pastor Elizabeth stated that it was a good experience. Singing is done by a cantor. They are also doing communion the traditional way. They are also tracking attendance for contact tracing.

## **Pastor Lane**

1. Home Visits with Holy Communion – 8 @ 10 hours
2. Visits w/out Holy Communion – 3 @ 4 hours
3. Phone calls - 2 hours
4. Services @ Tweeten Apt, Assisted Living and Manor (and Prep) – 2 @ 4 hours
5. Services @ Nursing Home – 0
6. Staff Meeting – 4 @ 2 ½ hours
7. Office Time – 2 hours
8. Sun/Sat Sermon Prep and Service – 1 @ 14 hours
9. Hospital Visits
10. Meetings 0
11. Newsletter – 2 hours
12. Response Team - 2 hour
13. Drive time 8 hours

**Total Hours – 50 ½ hours**

Joan Sherburne Funeral – 9 hours

## **Bekah Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministry Report**

### **Sunday School**

- Sunday School isn't meeting in person for the months of November and December.
- I have sent out packets with activities and supplies to every student (3-year old through 6th grade) so they can have Sunday School at home as a family.
- Our Christmas Program this year will be virtual - I will put together a video of students reading from the Christmas story and singing songs that they have pre-recorded at home.

### **Confirmation/Trinity U**

- Our first 5-week Confirmation session went really well. Groups were able to meet indoors, outdoors, or on Zoom, however they felt most comfortable.
- Our next session will begin on January 6, so we are on a brief hiatus.
- The Fall Clean-Up and Stars Trinity U classes went well! We did have to postpone the Stars class by one week so we would have a clearer sky.

### **Release Time**

- Release Time is continuing during this month as kids are in their cohorts at school anyway.
- We are up to 95 students in grades K-4 who are receiving Religious Release Time education.

### **3:16s**

- 3:16s is meeting online for the month of November.
- I have a core group of 3 gals that consistently come, but sometimes more show up!
- We have a fun time and have good conversations.

## **MSGN**

- Middle School Game Nights will also be held online for the month of November via Zoom.

## **Houseboat Trip 2021**

- Trinity 9th-12th graders will be floating on the Mississippi River next July 19-25.
- I have an informational meeting set up on Zoom for Sunday, November 15 at 11:00 a.m.
- There is enough room on the houseboat for 10 youth and 2 adults.
- We put down a \$1000 deposit with S&S Boat Rentals out of Lansing, IA. This money came out of the Youth Checking account.

## **Care Ministry (Milly)**

- Care team is getting ready for Christmas cheer. They have 29 names. \$10 gift certificates for each bag.

## **Education (Jacque)**

- Beary Patch actually paid \$2945 rent for the school of 2019-20 because Beary Patch had made a \$1000.00 donation in 2019 which was accepted as credit towards their rent for the 2019-20 school year.
- The youth trip next summer will be July 19-25 2021. The houseboat rental from S & S Boat Rentals in Lansing IA has insurance for the boat available at \$50.00 per day. Dave Selness said we could also add on rider with Trinity's policy for \$100-300. This would cover any damage to the boat. There is enough room for 10 youth and 2 adults. The total cost of the rental is \$5,070 and would be paid by youth attending.

## **Mission in the World (Dean)**

- Team has not met.

## **Outreach (Lara)**

- Team is working on Advent calendar (daily windows that match Bekah's packages to Sunday School children). Also working with Marlene to create an electronic Advent Calendar on the SharePoint site.

## **Support (Al)**

- Staffing (Jan) team is completing annual reviews of staff members, completed 3. Looking at new electronic payroll. Pilot with 2 staff. Met 2 times to discuss praise band and bell choir position. Bringing motion for bell choir position tonight.
- Finance (Judy) team met and will review budget modifications during continuing business.
- Stewardship met last night, and they are working on sending out annual Christmas cards.

## **Worship (Willy)**

- Worship team met on All Saints Sunday to do luminaries outside of church. Planning a praise band for November 15<sup>th</sup>. Planning a virtual Thanksgiving service. Discussing Advent and planning volunteer lists for next year.

## **Book discussion – "Interrupting Silence: God's Command to Speak Out" by Walter Brueggemann**

- This will be pushed back to next meeting due to budget discussion tonight.

## CONTINUING BUSINESS:

1. Response Team updates. Team will meet next Wednesday. No in person worship. Reevaluating next Wednesday.

2. Facility Planning update Meeting on November 19<sup>th</sup>.

3. Staffing Team – Handbell position.

Motion 1: To establish a temporary Handbell Director position at Trinity Lutheran Church. MSP (Al, Milly) Willy abstained

Motion 2: To hire Willy Leafblad as a temporary Handbell Director with responsibilities for worship service and mid-week services, as scheduled. MSP (Al, Milly) Willy abstained

---

### Temporary Bell Choir position

The Handbell Director is responsible for selecting music and rehearsing the choir to provide music at 2 worship services each month and special services, if requested.

Compensation is set at \$70.00 per worship service. In the event the handbell participates in additional mid-week services; total monthly compensation shall not exceed \$350.00/month.

This is a temporary contract in effect from January 1 to May 31 2021. This position is under the supervision of the senior pastor and will be evaluated at the end of the contract period.

### Responsibilities

1. Select, prepare, and provide appropriate handbell music for worship services and special services.
2. Plan, schedule, and arrange details for rehearsals and musical offerings for worship services.
3. Conduct all rehearsals and performances of the handbell choir.
4. Supervise movement of any handbell equipment on church property.
5. Oversee maintenance of handbells and related equipment.
6. Confer with Pastor and person coordinating worship music on a regular basis to integrate the handbells in planning Sunday worship services and special services during Advent or Lent, if handbells participate in additional services.

---

4. Jan suggested that Finance, Worship, staffing build a team, also reach out to congregation and get 3 more ad hoc volunteers. Allow all music people to be a resource (Willy, Scott, Mark, organists, pianists). This team would gather to discuss music position changes to Trinity. Praise Band likely won't participate until after May 31<sup>st</sup>. Get volunteers from each team for a team of representatives to determine future of Trinity music program. Motion to create a task force to explore the music ministry within Trinity. Jan will call first meeting and determine who will chair after the first meeting. Hopefully start in January. Elizabeth/Jan (one of them) write a letter for the newsletter. MSP (Al, Milly)

5. 2021 Budget discussion. Judy presented updated budget. This version will be brought to annual meeting. Budget team would like to start earlier next year, in July preferably. MSP (Al, Milly)

6. Team Guidelines. Saundy will put into standardized format and we will revisit again in December.

7. Equity ad hoc committee Discussion. Pastor Elizabeth wrote an article for newsletter, no volunteers at this time. Suggested that we could collaborate with the school as they already discussed Equity topics in SG School newsletter. Mentors from confirmation students want to hear about George Floyd. 'Preaching in the

Purple Zone' book about data regarding what people want to hear from the pulpit. Church's job is to build empathy. Our world is losing empathy due to the age of technology and social media. Pr. Elizabeth will write another letter for newsletter this month promoting this idea and attempt to recruit volunteers for Equity Committee.

8. Use of trinity center. Little Gnomes came forward to use the community center. Beary patch is paying 10% of their gross income of registration for space when Little Gnomes is paying a daily rate of \$5. Bethany estimated \$23.94 per school day they are paying Trinity. Little Gnomes is only paying 3.8% of their tuition according to estimates. Note, Little Gnome is not using the facility a full day, it is a pre and after school usage. 3.5-5.5 hours per day. Barry patch is T/Th all day, older kids are there M/W/F for school day. Council agrees to readdress cost post COVID.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Annual meeting discussion. Planning for annual meeting. Elizabeth 6:30pm on the 24<sup>th</sup> to collaborate on ideas how to accommodate an annual meeting.
2. Houston County Cares grant. 3 rounds of applications. We submitted in recent round. COVID related. Application for \$5,000 to pay for new computer and technology, trinity center, etc. Hoping to receive this soon.
3. Gift for Bishop Arends. He went to be a Bishop after moving from Trinity to La Crescent first, then Bishop. Ideas were suggested as Spring Grove related, or Opera House related. There is a picture at the gallery of the old water tower. Or a picture of the church. Guidelines \$100-\$200 gift basket of Spring Grove items. Church ornaments. Motion to pull moneys from celebration accounts in special accounts up to \$200. MSP (Milly, Willy)
4. Gift Policy brochure should be updated. Stewardship team is responsible for updates. Brochures are distributed to funeral homes. Steve Kemp from Stewardship will update. Pr. Elizabeth will talk to Steve.
5. Nominating committee has the following members: Jesse Strinmoen and Lori Wilhelmson. Milly, Willy, Jacque going off council. Milly as VP for council will take the lead of starting the nominating committee proceedings.
6. A request has come in to use the church for a parent/child meeting. Sunday afternoon from 3-5 or 3-6 with a state social worker present. Meeting times must be on the calendar for sanitization purposes and to know when people are in the building.

Pr. Elizabeth closed the meeting with prayer.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20pm. MSP (Dean, AI)

**Next Meeting: December 9, 2020 at 6:30pm via Zoom due to restrictions based on COVID-19 status.**

In HIS Service,

*Sheri Allen*