

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

Trinity Lutheran Congregation Council

October 14, 2020

The Trinity Lutheran Congregation Council meeting was called to order by Saundy Solum at 7:00 pm on October 14, 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, Milly Halverson, Dan Alstad, Judy Tollefsrud

Pr. Elizabeth opened the meeting with a prayer.

Secretary's Report for September 9, 2020 was approved. MSP (Al, Dean)

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

- Sept offering was \$18,360 short of budget
- \$20,400 required to meet the budget
- First 6 months of 2020 income, down 3.1% compared to 2019
- Beary Patch paid \$1,943 which was 10% income for school year
- Balance at bank \$11,356 at end of September
- Expenses for September \$6,438
- Expenses for 9 months are 6% higher than they were in 2019
- Lori Lyn filling out form for PPP to get loan forgiven
- Follow-up from last meeting→Designated donation in special accounts is an accumulation of contributions given to special accounts that came in from January 1st through end of August totaling \$7,727.14.

STAFF REPORTS:

Pastor Elizabeth

1. Our outdoor services continue to a tremendous blessing. Our "blessing of the animals" service on October 4 was awesome! I'm also excited that, even during this extraordinary time, we are welcoming new members to Trinity. And I'm feeling tremendously blessed that our finances are so stable!
2. I continue to have a LOT of Zoom meetings with the Synod and Root River conference pastors, with my FTCE group, and with Faith + Lead cohorts. I attended the Augsburg University Corporate Board meeting remotely on Sept 11 (I'm on the nominating committee), The Craft of Preaching last week, I have Fall Theological in November, and just began a Faith + Lead 4-week series on "Finding Hope in a Divided Country" surrounding the upcoming election. I get Zoomed out, but it's a blessing that technology allows me to have continuing education and pastoral support connections during this time.
3. Confirmation classes began October 7, with mentor groups meeting outside, inside and online, and me Zooming in for the lecture. I'm looking forward to our Reformation Day and confirmation celebrations on October 25 and our All Saints celebration on November 1.
4. Pastor Elliott Malm and I are doing a "pulpit exchange" on November 8. It will give all parties – Pastor Elliott and me, Trinity and Mable First – an opportunity to see and hear different voices.
5. The Facilities Planning Team meets next week to discuss the round #2 proposal for the church building renovation from Wieser/Cashman.

6. The Response Team continues to keep an eye on COVID numbers. We met last week and agreed to continue outdoor services as long as we can. We can now, based on MDH guidelines, sing the last hymn as a congregation.

7. Pastoral acts: Pastor Lane and I have or have had 7 funerals, 2 weddings, and 4 baptisms in September/early October.

8. On a couple of personal notes, my bathroom work continues and my four days of vacation Up North were wonderful. No speed warning on the way back this time. I also volunteered as one of the “walking buses” for the first couple weeks of school, which was fun and rewarding.

Pastor Lane

1. Home Visits with Holy Communion – 8 @ 10 hours
2. Visits W/out Holy Communion – 3 @ 4 hours
3. Services @ Tweeten Apt, Assisted Living, and Manor (and prep) 3 - 6 hours
4. Services @ Nursing Home 0
5. Staff Meeting – 3 @ 1 hour
6. Office Time – 0
7. Sunday Sermon Prep and Service – 1 @ 12 hours
8. Hospital Visits -- 2 sort of, wasn't allowed in
9. Meetings – 0
10. Newsletter – 2 hours
11. Response Team - 1 hour
12. Drive time – 8 hours

Total Hours – 46 hours

3 Funerals - Ron Nerstad, Steve Quinnell, Buzz O'Conner - 32 hours

Bekah Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministry Report

Sunday School

- Sunday School started on October 4. I have split the Sunday School children into two different groups - one group comes the first two Sundays of the month and the other group comes the last two Sundays of the month.
- Those two groups are split even further so that half come before church and half come after. We have about 10 coming in each group.
- Our curriculum for Sunday School goes through some of the biggest stories in the Bible chronologically.
- The results of the Sunday School survey came back and most parents are comfortable having their children come to Sunday School if we adhere to distancing and wearing masks.

Bible Stories with Bekah

- I am now putting two videos out a month to correspond with the Sunday School curriculum. Parents can do Sunday School at home with their children if they aren't comfortable with coming in person.

Confirmation/Trinity U

- We have 6 mentor groups meeting in person (mostly outdoors) and 2 groups meeting online through Zoom. We had our first meeting on October 7 and it went very well! We will meet four more weeks this fall, then take a break until January.

- Our first two Trinity U classes (Bird Trail and Nine Square) will be on Saturday, October 10. Then Stars on Wednesday, October 21 and Fall Clean-Up on October 24. Every youth in Confirmation is taking one TU class.

Release Time

- Pastor Len and I began teaching Release Time in October!
- We have two classes every Wednesday so that 8 cohorts come to Release Time every month.
- We currently have 91 students signed up for Release Time in grades K-4.

3:16s

- Our high school youth group started meeting in October and will continue to meet every Wednesday at 8:00 p.m.
- We had a bonfire last week, but with the small amount of youth attending, we decided to meet in the new youth room! We will be able to distance, and we will wear masks.

Middle School Game Night

- A fellowship night for 7th and 8th graders will meet every other week on Fridays at 7:30 in my backyard. We will sit around a bonfire, chat, and play games!

Trinity Center Youth Room

- The youth room is shaping up! We painted, received furniture from a few members in our congregation, and moved the ping pong and air hockey tables out of my basement to the new room

Care Ministry (Milly)

- Care team is continuing HIP, Christmas Cheer, congregation calls, and keeping the pantry stocked. Team is seeking names of individuals in need.

Education (Jacque)

- Confirmation program is organized with mentors, instruction time by Pastor Elizabeth via Zoom and mentor groups meeting in person on Wednesday evenings.
- Sunday School has started with some kids coming the first two Sundays and others coming the second two Sundays. One of the two groups meeting before Sunday service and one group meeting after Sunday service. The groups are similar to the cohort groups from school. Group divisions are Mathew, Mark, Luke and John.
- Peggy Landsom has agreed to help youth with Thanksgiving pies. This of course is dependent on COVID.
- Bekah has organized Release Time with Pastor Liptack and they will have two groups on Wednesdays with keeping cohort kids together so this will extend the Release Time program into 4th and 5th grades.

Mission in the World (Dean)

- Missions did not meet this month, but on Friday evening, October 9th, we helped load the boxes of layettes, quilts, and school kits on the trailer for Lutheran World Relief. There was:
 - 253 Layettes
 - 60 Quilts
 - 356 School Kits
- Saturday morning, October 10th, Gary Wilhelmson brought the trailer to La Crosse to meet the train. There was lots of help and they unloaded the trailer in about 15 minutes. They were also very impressed and appreciative of the volume of Trinity's donation.

Outreach (Lara)

- Outreach team did not meet but are working on new member items. Janice made nice boxes for new members. Barb is working with Bekah and task takers trying to find in people need fall yardwork.

Support (Al)

- Judy Tollefsrud from Finance team is here to review budget with council members, see notes in continuing business. Nothing from stewardship. Dan and Property team met last Sunday and discussed fire inspections, cement work at parsonage and church. A leak was found over the door in the sanctuary and Spring Grove lumber has fixed the leak. Additional property information will be presented by Dan in continuing business.

Worship (Willy)

- Worship team met on October 4th, highlights include appropriate and safe practices for music as weather gets colder. Plans for All Saints, luminaria outside of church on Sunday evening November 1st. Choir sang at church last Sunday. Praise band is looking to do a service on November 15th.

CONTINUING BUSINESS:

1. EDA Grant Received \$2,585,52 to be used for fogger, 2 channel power amp, wireless system with bodypack, additional zoom account, etc. Items for modern media services. Items required to be COVID related, Trinity chose to use the funds to provide outdoor and remote services as well as additional capacity into more presentation space in building.
2. Response Team met and decided the entire month of October will be outside services unless it rains/snows. Team will meet again October 27th to determine November structure for services. Funerals will go back to family only funerals in the church due to numbers going above state allowed guidelines. Masks are required.
3. Dan presented Trinity Center improvements update. Trinity center updates \$2,100 replaced cement, fixed water draining problem. Grass areas were seeded down. New card key lock \$2,640 installed at Trinity Center. Bethany has issues with people waiting at the door that she is unable to see. Consider getting an electronic doorbell/notification system. Fire inspections have been completed and repairs done. Compressor for heating system needs repair in Trinity center. Meyer concrete will be starting on parsonage this week.
4. Constitution and Bylaws for Endowments C5.05.01, C5.05.02, and C5.05.03
 - Saundy stated that Endowment team approved bi-laws and will be creating team guidelines. Motion to approve bylaws by council. MSP (Al, Jacque)
 - A question was raised on Mission Endowment committee duties. Council cannot change the bylaws for Endowment Committee. We will add a line item to agenda to deal with accountability and request Endowment Committee to provide reports prior to annual meeting.
5. Team Guidelines –all teams need to provide team guidelines to Saundy, she will collaborate them into the documents. Saundy will bring back to review in November council meeting.
6. Facility Planning update meeting next Thursday a week from tomorrow.
7. 2021 budget discussion presented by Judy Tollefsrud. Highlights and discussion follow:
 - Judy is asking for suggestions to take back to next budget meeting
 - 5% to synod up to \$100K, then 6% up to \$200k, then up to 7% up to \$250k, 8% up to \$300K
 - Pastors will stay at same salary
 - Jacque has a suggestion regarding Sunrise North move \$1040, move to funeral expense.
 - Jacque question to Willy for copyright license. \$881 was spent in 2020 but only \$225 was budgeted. Should the budgeted amount be increased? Can this be increased to \$900.

- \$200 sermon supplies, \$792 was spent. Should this be increased in budget for next year. Discussion between Willy and Pr. Elizabeth stated that this line item can be left at \$200.
 - Outreach misc. should be \$500 instead of \$200. Lara had stated that this has been discussed with LoriLyn
 - WELCA pays \$270 each student, parents would be asked to pay more if there is confirmation camp this year.
 - Judy will research phone/ISP charges to verify if there are possible savings or modifications.
 - Need to increase custodial fees for 2021 budget. Budget \$16K for Gary.
 - Add 4k for choir director wages.
 - Retiree support remove \$428
 - Mileage down to \$1200 from \$2400
 - Pastor Elizabeth is asking and increase to \$1800 HSA increase \$50 per month. Current deductible is \$4100.
 - Increase budget on funerals up to 7 for Pastor Lane
 - Add bells line item and praise band item, Elizabeth will take to staffing meeting tomorrow night to decide on the amount.
8. Discussion to create an additional team yet to be named – Equity Team, Congregation Climate Team, Diversity Team, Social and Racial Awareness Team, etc.
- Education, research, discussion, setup forums. Trinity's goal is to bring attention to diversity in our community and the world. Newly formed team would recommend action items.
 - Suggest a new permanent team during annual meeting.
 - It was suggested that we could build via volunteers an ad hoc committee that would write the guidelines and suggest a budget. Pr. Elizabeth will write an article for the newsletter. Motion to start an ad hoc 'Diversity Committee' was approved by all. MSP (Milly, Jacque)
9. Pr. Elizabeth will write an article for the newsletter on the Diversity book we read titled "Dear Church: A Love Letter from a Black Preacher to the Whitest Denomination in the US"

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Approve Confirmands. 11 members, 2 services. MSP (AI, Dean)
2. Approve New Members 7 new members. MSP (AI, Dean)
3. 2021 Youth Trip on Houseboat. Jacque stated that Education team would plan for a 1-week trip on a houseboat out of Lansing Iowa. This trip will be considered for next summer 2021.
4. Use of Gathering Room by AA on Tuesdays and Saturdays at 5pm and 10:30am on Saturdays.
5. Meeting times 6:30pm November 11th and December meetings.
6. Annual meeting and new procedures. Discussion for options. Possible representative at Manor, consider Outreach Team to represent if Manor residents don't feel comfortable coming to Annual Meeting. Will add this to be discussed at next meeting.
7. November 8th pulpit exchange with Pastor Malm from Mabel First. Pr. Elizabeth will preach in Mabel and he will preach here.
8. Willy, Jacque, Milly will go off council after 2020.

Pr. Elizabeth closed the meeting with prayer.

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

Next Meeting: November 11, 2020 at 6:30pm via Zoom and Gathering Room with restrictions based on COVID-19 status.

In HIS Service,

Sheri Allen