

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES
April 21, 2020

MEMBERS PRESENT via Webex: Pastor Karri Anderson, Kim Anderson, Colleen Guilfoile, Terry Hogenson, Diane John, Cathy Johnson, David Johnson, Nancy Johnson, Craig Martin, Leroy Mitchell, Pastor Terry Nordheim, Katie Roche, Nicole Smith, Jolene Wille.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Rachel Carlson, Jim Jordal VISITORS: Cass Dennison
CALL to ORDER: Meeting called to order at 7:00 P.M. by David Johnson, President.
DEVOTIONS: Pastor Terry

APPROVAL of the AGENDA: MM by Diane John to approve the agenda, MS by Katie Roche, MP.
APPROVAL of COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES for MARCH: MM by Leroy Mitchell to approve the council meeting minutes for March, MS by Katie Roche, MP.

SENIOR PASTOR REPORT--Staff Activities, etc.: Pastor Terry said he appreciates the creativity and commitment of Trinity's staff to connect with the congregation. Each staff person is an integral part of that mission. So many good things are happening at Trinity. For example, the Phone Tree continues to build deep relationships with those individuals in need, whether that is to connect with someone by having a conversation or to provide needs such as delivering groceries, prescriptions, or joining together in prayer. David also said that because of the Phone Tree, delivery of food and other needs to shut-ins has been successful. Pastor Terry said he has been working Tuesdays through Fridays, and he spends two-three of those days in the office. Tuesdays and Thursdays are spent on staff meetings and videotaping Wednesday and Sunday services, confirmation, and children's ministries. Pastor Terry said last Sunday's taped service had 605 views.

Pastor Karri said she is impressed with the gifts and creativity of the staff, and we will see some new ways of doing ministry that we haven't done before. Snowbirds have said they would like to see the online ministry continue, and Trinity has received lots of cards from the congregation thanking the staff for all their work in keeping us connected. Linda has been reaching out to the housebound, older people with calls and baskets of goodies left on their doorstep. Good things are happening. David asked Pastor Karri if her online Bible study will continue. She said they have had difficulty with connection problems, but will keep trying. He also asked her if she has received any more names of people to complete the MET. She will meet with Pastor Terry to go through the directory to come up with names that could be a good fit. David also encouraged members of the council to come up with some names to help fill the team.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

1. Monthly/Quarterly Update--Diane said we are \$18,000 ahead for the first quarter. RMDs/ANNUAL giving of \$35,280 and regular offering have been a blessing. The first two Sunday offerings totaled \$20,000.+. Expenses are down, and there was a transfer of \$11,558.07 from the Nelson Annuity in early April.
2. Finance Committee Report--Diane talked to Twyla about which committee has what funds, and Twyla gave Diane a printout of that information. The E-account is up and running and

being used. Twyla asked the committee to recommend an account to use to pay the final amount needed on the new office equipment bill.

MM by Diane John that the balance of \$1,560.85 on the furniture invoice be paid from dedicated undesignated funds. MS by Leroy Mitchell, MP.

Diane said Congress has approved more money for small business and Not For Profit (church) loans. She asked the council how it feels about looking into a loan for PPP? Pastor Karri had a meeting with the Bishop, and the Bishop recommended taking advantage of applying for the loan. The synod recommends going to a local bank to apply. There was much discussion on how council members felt about the loan. Some felt we should not apply because we are in good financial shape, and there are other churches or small businesses who need the loan more than Trinity does. There were others who felt that the Pandemic could go on for a long time so we might need the loan to help fund payroll.

MM by Diane John to apply for Paycheck Protection Program. MS by Jolene Wille, MP. Individual vote tally was taken before MP.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Staffing Issues--Organist Position/Matt's Contract/Bonnie's Return, Other?--Pastor Terry said the organist is on hold. The organ is still being repaired, and then we have to wait until the repair person can come into the church to finish the work on the organ. Joann Edress is back and can play when needed.

Pastor Terry said Matt Mitchell's contract is through the end of April. His contract is for twenty hours per week. He worked seventy-five hours in the first two weeks and fifty-six hours in the next two. They are trying to get his hours down to the twenty hours per week. The Endowment Committee approved a grant for \$4,000 to help pay Matt. Pastor Terry said he's been doing a good job. The Endowment Committee approved \$10,000 for tech equipment such as cameras and computers to be able to continue the online videos, DVDs, and CDs that have become so important in continuing church and congregation connections. Matt's skills are needed, and Pastor Terry said Matt is essential. The Executive Committee can decide where the money will come from when his work extends beyond the month. Pastor Terry said there is \$5,000 designated for multi-media service and is available to help. Katie Roche suggested giving Matt an open ended contract.

MM by Katie Roche to extend Matt Mitchell's contract indefinitely, and when the multi-media and endowment funds are gone, authority to continue will go to the Executive Committee to determine future needs of the position and where the funds will come from. MS by Kim Anderson, MP.

Bonnie was back and on payroll the 1st of April and was in a fourteen day, self imposed quarantine. She worked from home during that time and has been in contact

with Path to Home. She will be in the office on Wednesday, the 22nd. David Groettum and Mike Savold were paid through March. They are salaried, so if the PPP loan comes through, they will be paid through April and May. Contract employees are not covered under PPP.

2. Elevator/Organ Repair Status--Pastor Terry said elevator repairs are scheduled for July. Repair people could still come in when the "stay at home" orders are lifted. Organ repair is addressed under #1--Old Business.
3. Issues on Hold: Info. Meetings of Bequest TF, Annual Council Retreat, and Creation of Building Committee.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Discussion of Reopening of Church Building--Dr. Nicole Smith talked about safety issues and what consequences we face in opening the church too soon. She said that Minnesota has some of the lowest per-capita infections in the country. What Minnesota is doing is working. The team of epidemiologists at the U. of M. are currently predicting that the peak of Covid 19 will be the last week of June into the first week of July. We are still seeing rising rates of infections, so we need to keep doing what we are doing. Dr. Nicole said the epidemiologists from the U. of M. will have numbers out at the end of April concerning Covid, and she said the church should not open by May 1st. The elderly and people with high blood pressure are more vulnerable. David asked what the trend is for the next ninety days, and Dr. Nicole said she would have to wait to see the U of M numbers coming out at the end of the month.

Pastor Terry said we may have to be creative about the way we worship. Maybe we can worship outside and spaced apart. Pastor Karri said we need to protect the staff as well. Jolene said we need to keep the church closed according to state guidelines, but as a church we also need to assess those guidelines.

MM by David Johnson to send a letter to the congregation that the church will be closed until June 1st, then the council will reassess the situation and get back to the congregation. At the same time, we will continue our mission and look for new ways to fulfill that mission. MS by Jolene Wills, MP.

2. Discussion of Community for Creation Care Committee--Cass Dennison, Co-Chair, (and Cathy Johnson, Co-Chair) talked about the Vision and Mission statement of CCC. There was a letter of explanation and purpose of CCC sent to all of the council members. CCC's Vision Statement is, " Act to protect God's Creation for Us and Future Generations", and its Mission Statement is, " Participate in Creating a Healthy, Sustainable, Livable Planet by Promoting Education and Developing Action Plans to Address Issues Relating to the Climate Crisis". Cass explained when and how we formed as a committee of eight, and before the Pandemic, we were on our way with creating our first project.

David asked what is CCC's purpose? What are we looking for? The committee applied for Endowment funds, and it is coming to the council for recognition as a committee under the umbrella of FISA, a social justice committee formed and recognized by Trinity and council. As part of FISA, we can bring our needs to the council, and FISA also has funds CCC can use for future projects. The Endowment Committee is also giving \$1,000. towards CCC projects. Pastor Terry explained that it is important to have a committee within the church for various social justice issues and provide education and actions that can be taken to reconcile those within the framework of our church and God's teachings. Several council members gave their support and applauded our leadership and vision. That is much appreciated.

MM by Diane John that CCC be under the auspices of FISA. MS by Coleen Guilfoile, MP.

3. Update on Endowment Committee Activities--Pastor Terry said that out of the \$180,000 of Endowment funds, the committee received requests for \$160,000. They have given awards of \$130,000, leaving \$50,000 to be held to meet additional needs. The funds awarded are: 1) Local Outreach--\$47,000 2) Global Outreach--\$21,000 3) Education--\$16,000 4) Capital Improvements--\$28,000 5) Discretionary--\$19,400 Money will be set aside for youth camps because fund raising won't happen during social separation. There is \$10,000 set aside for college scholarships, and \$5,000 will go to Helping Hands. The Pastors will disperse funds for Helping Hands as they see fit and in the form of gift cards or paying bills directly.

Leroy said the committee will have a meeting in May and will work on the remaining funds left from the \$180,000. They will put remaining money into the Mission Investment Fund. Pastor Terry said that Rachel Carlson is the council liaison and is not a voting member on Endowment.

4. Policy Discussion on Funerals and Baptisms--Pastor Terry said there needs to be a clear policy in place for funerals and baptisms and backed by the council. The current guidelines are no more than ten people for a graveside funeral, and there will be no funeral services at church while social distancing is still in place. A celebration of life can be planned once the church reopens. Pastor Terry has also had four baptism requests, but can't perform a baptism in person at the church while it is closed. He performed one virtual baptism.

MM by Nicole Smith to hold graveside services of ten or less and baptisms are on hold with exceptions made only on a case by case basis. MS by Katie Roche, MP.

CLOSING PRAYER: Pastor Karri

Submitted by Cathy Johnson, Secretary