

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church

September 16, 2013

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

NEXT REGULAR MEETING: Monday, October 21, 2013

Devotions: Mary Engen Refreshments: Anna Brelje

Present: Council members: Jay Carlson, Drew Lindorfer, Dennis Nordholm, Laura Bolstad, Ingrid Rasmussen, Kari Kleven, Sara Jensen, Bruce Johnson, Joyce Peterson, Mary Engen, Bruce Martens, Josh Becker, Mark Holm, Jeff Olsen Biebighauser, Korla Masters

Absent: Pam Blomgren, Anna Brelje, Randy Nelson

Call to Order: Jeff Olsen Biebighauser called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. He noted that there will be some changes to the agenda.

Devotions: Korla Masters played the song "I Do Not Know Its Name" by Carrie Newcomer, a Quaker singer songwriter. She then shared some thoughts about the meaning of "holy" and letting it be sensory enough, especially in the face of upheaval.

Check in: Members shared important events from the past month.

Minutes: A motion was made and seconded to approve the August 19, 2013 Council minutes. Motion carried.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the August 18, 2013 Congregational minutes as amended. Motion carried.

Reports

Pastor:

- Recent outdoor service was a successful use of the space.
- Recap of ordination service last Sunday.
- Next Sunday during the 11:00 service will be Heather Olson and Jess Myhre's wedding ceremony. They have attended Holy Trinity for a while. They had a ceremony several years ago, but this will legalize their marriage. Lots of guests are expected. There will be a potluck afterwards.
- Pastor Carlson and the church staff are excited to start work with Pastor Rasmussen.

Pastor Rasmussen will begin reporting next month at council.

Treasurer:

- YTD Comparison: 2012 receipts included \$12,000 for future staffing that were not used. Boiler funds still need to be raised; an appeal letter will go out at the end of the year.

- Income Statement: Property and Worship and Fine Arts may be over budget for the year due to the plow bill and guest musicians, respectively. Interest from the endowment fund are higher than anticipated.
- Dedicated accounts: Large receipt from Trudy Ladwig's estate; the first installment has been received. Discussion followed regarding the tithe amount from estate.
- The council briefly discussed the endowment fund and interest income from it.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the financial report. Motion carried.

Secretary:

- Devotions and refreshments reminder. October and November assignments will be swapped.

Vice President:

- Committee chairs meeting will take place September 30. The agenda will include:
 - Information sharing
 - Check-in on green congregations process
 - Follow-up on Abundant Life project – inventory of volunteer opportunities and database to match volunteers to opportunities

President:

- No report

Committee Goals: Property

Dennis presented the following tasks and goals for the current year:

Responsibilities:

1. Maintenance of property
- 2.
3. Short and long range plans

Goals:

1. Remove unused solar panel covers
2. Explore adding solar electric to church building
3. Paint and repair siding on garage
4. Install service door on garage
5. Plex on stained glass
6. Replace cul-de-sac doors and add door opener; this will be part of Phase 1
7. Improved security

A number of items not on the list of goals have also been accomplished this year:

1. Lift in Bartsch Room
2. Paint gym
3. Sky Room cleanup
4. Cleared out storage room in gym for theater
5. Installed pergola outside
6. Painted Pastor Rasmussen's office

Non-church related church building uses include: Metro Works; Bright Prospects (preschool); Healthy Seniors; Fare for All; voting; Swahili congregation; community meetings; Seward Community Band has stored music here. Overall the building is well used.

Dennis Nordholm answered questions about the committee's goals and responsibilities, including stained glass maintenance issues, and how the community is being considered as Holy Trinity moves forward with strategic building plans. Pastor Carlson talked about how most spaces were set up to be multiple-use meeting spaces, with the exception of the sanctuary. Metro Works and Bright Prospects are the only groups that pay to rent space.

The Nurturing Committee will present its goals at the October meeting.

Standing Committees: Committee reports were sent out ahead of the Council meeting (see appendix). Jeff Olsen Biebighauser called for a brief discussion of specific items committees would like to draw attention to.

Finance

- The theme for stewardship this year is “make it simple.” Volunteers are being sought from outside of the committee for some events.

Peace with Justice

- September 19 is the annual Minnesota Meal, which will be followed by Paul Douglas' presentation on climate change
- A forum will be held soon on community solar
- Pastor Carlson is getting information on Bread for the World. Holy Trinity does a letter campaign for them each spring; there will be information on what they will be focused on this year in the community room.

Worship and Fine Arts

- Mosaic project. Holy Trinity will be working with Greta McLain. The project will begin soon.
- There will be a devotional book again for Advent. Let Pastor Carlson know if you'd like to help him and Mary Ellen Olson.

Christian Education

- Reminder – the Johnson Symposium will take place November 8 and 9
- There is still room for the Tanzania Trip. Pastor Carlson told the history of Holy Trinity's relationship with Tanzania and gave details of the trip.

The annual meeting of the congregation will be January 19.

Old Business:

Long-range building plan

Financial considerations – Projected estimates we now have come from a contractor Dawn Wiczorek has worked with. The executive committee has done some research on how such renovations are funded. Pastor Carlson presented some information about Partners for Sacred Places, a national nonprofit devoted to consulting on ways for congregations to keep their buildings up. Their emphasis is on the impacts that congregations and their buildings have in their communities. They use a community organizing model—one-on-ones with neighborhood residents as well as congregation members. They offer financial feasibility studies, which would help the Council decide if Holy Trinity is ready to make a significant investment in the church building. The study would cost \$12,000 to \$15,000. Discussion followed about whether the Council believes this would be worth some resources, including additional details about Partners for Sacred Places. Additional discussion followed about the Ladwig estates. Pastor Carlson suggested that Financial Stewardship consider having the feasibility study done. The Council will revisit this issue at its next meeting after Financial Stewardship has taken it under consideration.

Review proposed building phases:

1. First floor – Move offices to old nursery; conference room in old latch key room
2. Second floor and third floor choir space
3. Vestibule, community room
4. Worship space
5. Lower floor
6. Sky room

General discussion followed. The Council decided to revisit in October, including fine tuning the long-range plan without dates.

Exodus Lending request

The Exodus Lending group has asked for three members of the congregation who could go to two Wednesday evening meetings in partnership with Exodus' steering committee to discuss the ongoing relationship between Exodus and Holy Trinity. Executive committee put together a list of seven names it suggests the Council pass on to Exodus (in order of preference): Joyce Peterson, Tom Kleven, Roberta Shaw, Gary Johnson, Nicholas Ellison, Sue Roberts, Alan Libra.

A motion was made and seconded to submit those names to Meghan Olsen Biebighauser. Motion carried.

New Business:

Housing allowance

Pastor Rasmussen's housing allowance was not determined in her compensation package. A housing allowance is standard now as it has taken the place of providing a parsonage. Pastor Rasmussen is requesting that her housing allowance for 2013 be \$28,000 (pro rated). Discussion followed about how the housing allowance works.

A motion was made and seconded to designate \$28,000 for Pastor Rasmussen's housing allowance. Motion carried.

Health insurance

Changes are being made to the health insurance Holy Trinity gets through the ELCA (Portico) due to the Affordable Care Act. In the past there has been one plan; now there will be four. The Minneapolis Synod is recommending congregations choose the "gold" level as it is most comparable to the former plan. Employees who work at least 30 hours are eligible for coverage. Currently two employees use the coverage. Pastor Rasmussen will also join the plan. Pastor Carlson answered questions from Council. He advised leaving the decision to Personnel.

A motion was made and seconded to refer to Personnel for decision in consultation with the affected employees. Discussion followed. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Drew Lindorfer, Secretary

END OF MEETING NOTES

APPENDIX

COMMITTEE REPORTS – September 2013

EDUCATION

- Adult forums - Theme: "What's Growing at Holy Trinity"
 - Sunday, September 22 - Open forum with Pastor Ingrid Arneson Rasmussen
 - September 29 - "Holy Trinity's Music Ministry"
 - October 6 - "Facilities, Buildings, and Grounds"
 - October 13 - "The Exodus Lending Project"
 - October 20 - "Minnesota Community Solar" - Dustin Denison. Sponsored by Peace with Justice Committee.
- Fall Symposium
 - November 8-9 - "The Reformation and the Fate of the Earth"
 - Presenter: Dr. Larry Rasmussen
- There is still room for additional participants in the trip to Tanzania in January 2014. Contact the church office if interested.

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

- Did not meet.

HOUSING

- We had a quiet 2nd annual BBQ in the back yard, right before the end-of-summer music evening in the rain garden. Several TOL residents came over for music.

NURTURING

- Saturday October 12 is the next Progressive Dinner. Mark your calendars! A sign up sheet will be out soon.
- There are several things we are looking forward to connecting with the new pastor about, once she has had time to "get her feet on the ground." Included are Fellowship Dinners, New Member Welcome, and follow up on mental illness/addiction.
- We will plan to resume evening informal discussion gatherings at neighborhood restaurants in the fall. Thursday October 17 will be the first date, and the theme will be Prayer. Meagan McLaughlin and Meghan Olsen Biebighauser are working on planning, and hope to involve Ingrid in this event to the extent that she is able to participate.

ORGANIZING

No report received.

OUTREACH

Outreach did not meet in September.

PERSONNEL

Nothing to report.

PROPERTY

No report received.

PEACE WITH JUSTICE

No report received.

YOUTH

The new "Children, Youth and Family" (CYF) group met for the first time last week. We met first as a large group in the sky room, then broke into work groups: Sunday school teachers, confirmation teachers, youth activities, family activities. We hope this will improve coordination and allow people to get involved in CYF issues/activities that they are most interested in, without necessarily identifying themselves with one committee. We still need to figure out how we will do reporting to the council from these groups!

WORSHIP & FINE ARTS

- We had planned on our Mosaic Project being our sort of main effort this year, but in light of the project being stalled, we are looking into seeking guidance with the project from professional mosaic artist Greta McLain-the project will proceed, but will not be completed this year as planned.
- Jay and Mary Ellen will lead in the making/compiling of a devotional book for Advent, comprised of writings from the congregation.
- Dennis presented a few options for the sanctuary renovation that were recently drawn up by an architect from our congregation and Rick was present to give his comments on the pros and cons of each design.