

MINUTES FROM 113TH ANNUAL MEETING, JANUARY 29, 2017

Cantor David Sims led those present in the song, "God Welcomes All." President Sara Jensen welcomed members, gave a brief invocation and called the meeting to order at 12:48 p.m.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Melanie Townsend presented the 2016 annual meeting minutes which had been approved by the Church Council. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the Annual Meeting, January 31, 2016. Motion carried. She then called attention to the parish statistics on page 7 of the report which showed an increase of baptized membership from 1,194 to 1,222 during the year. Average worship attendance at the end of the year was 211, which was a drop from 216 the previous year.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Sara Jensen provided a brief commentary about change—the tremendous changes happening in the world outside our walls, within our walls, and the actual walls that were reconstructed this year at Holy Trinity. She encouraged us to allow one another to have space to be where we are, support and encourage each other, and come together, ready to move forward as we embrace the new changes before us as a congregation.

PASTORS' REPORTS

Pastor Carlson expressed his gratitude for being a part of the ministry of Holy Trinity during the past nine years. He is proud of our accomplishments and all that we have shared together. He has seen leaders in the congregation rise up to several challenges, and he truly believes in the mission of this congregation. He is grateful for what we have done together and feels the spirit will continue to lead this church. Pastor Rasmussen shared the way things look from her viewpoint right now in response to the change upon us as we prepare for Pastor Carlson's departure. She sees us as a community that is grieving, took the risk of loving a leader, is well suited for change, is passionate about many things, and is listening to the Holy Spirit's whisperings about where we ought to go next.

UPDATE ON PASTORAL TRANSITION

President Sara Jensen shared a synopsis of the timeline for the transition process.

- January 4 – Pastor John Hulden from the synod office met with the Executive Board and Personnel Committee to discuss best practices for the process.
- January 4-17 – Per Pastor Hulden's recommendation, a transition team comprised of a current council member and five members of the community was formed and approved by the Church Council. Those team members are: Cathy Alpizar, Tom Kleven, Theresa Rian, Deb Sodt, and Sara Jensen. This team will be charged with creating the MSP (Ministry Site Profile), a document that describes who we are as a community and what we envision the role of our next pastor will look like.
- January 18-29 – The interim pastor placement process began. The Personnel Committee, along with Pastor Rasmussen interviewed two pastors and will meet next week to discuss and take the next steps.

The floor was opened for questions and discussion.

- The interim period (typically 9-18 months) is important to give us time to say good-bye in our hearts and at the institutional level and offers time for the discernment of all parties involved.
- The interim position will be titled "Interim Lead Pastor."
- It is possible that at the end of the interim period, Pastor Rasmussen could be called as Lead Pastor. Decisions are made by the Call Committee, Council, and a congregational vote.
- The transition team will reach out to congregants in many different ways: email, suggestion box, meetings, small groups, etc.
- There are many variations of how pastoral responsibilities and titles can be arranged. Currently, the difference between Lead and Associate Pastor in our congregation is that the Lead Pastor has a supervisory responsibility for most of the staff and leads a congregational visioning process every 5-7 years.
- The Interim Lead Pastor will also serve on the transition team.

REFLECTION ON 2016 CONGREGATIONAL GOALS

Katelyn Hollaway reflected on goal #1: Nurture faith, life, and relationships in worship experiences, small groups, and meaningful volunteer opportunities. She described her experience of becoming a new member and quickly getting involved in a variety of groups and activities such as choir, racial justice, the 20s, 30s, and 40s group and kinship meals. She feels the congregation is invested in the goals that are set and excited to be a part of this vibrant community.

Ann Schrooten reflected on goal #2: Grow in ministry with children, youth, and family. She is thrilled to be serving in the role of Coordinator of Youth and Family Ministry. This year a new education suite was created in the old office space, which reflects the enthusiasm of the students who gather there weekly. She produces a regular weekly communication to indicate what's happening in church, leads training sessions using Safeguarding God' Children for Sunday School teachers and Confirmation sponsors, and launched a Faith and Family Matters series in November. She also indicated that there are many opportunities coming up this summer for youth to get involved in activities at church.

Theresa Rian reflected on goal #3: Grow in intercultural understanding and competence. She highlighted the steps the racial justice working group has taken this year, among them: forming introductory racial justice discussion groups, leading adult forums, taking trips to art exhibits, presenting a workshop at an Overcoming Racism event at Metro State, strengthening ties with St. James AME, going on tours of first nation sacred sites, involving Confirmation youth in conversations, and hosting a racial justice conference at the church. They will continue to work in this area in the coming year by making use of videos, establishing a listening group for Holy Trinity members of color, having book study discussion groups, provide reflections during Lent, promoting cultural events, having institutional racism conversations, and offering support as we are able to the Sanctuary movement in Minneapolis.

Martha Mueller reflected on goal #4: Advocate for alternative energy sources and payday lending regulations. Holy Trinity has continued to lay the groundwork for reform to occur in both of these areas. In our congregation, we have 35 subscribers to the local community solar garden and 130 households who have signed up for wind source power. We are getting closer to our goal of becoming 100% carbon neutral as a facility, meaning the church will receive its electricity from community solar and wind power sources. Exodus Lending provides fair loans and financial counseling and is the only organization of its kind in the country. To date, 100 individuals have utilized the service and many of them are becoming advocates themselves. We have a lot of work left to do, and are making a big impact on the community.

Scott Cole reflected on goal #5: Launch a capital campaign for building renovation. The Opening Doors campaign was intended to dramatically improve the hospitality and accessibility of our building. So far, the renovations are meeting our expectations. The preschoolers, Metro Works, seniors, members, and non-members are able to enter the easy to locate, access, and open doors. Overall, the campaign was a huge success, as we raised \$856,000 to fund the project.

2017 CONGREGATIONAL GOALS AND TABLE CONVERSATION

President Sara Jensen shared the working goals for next year. Time was given to discuss hopes and questions about the goals among table groups. The goals are as follows:

1. Deepen our commitment to creative, inspiring, inclusive, and culturally competent worship services and the accompanying music program for all ages.
2. Grow in competence related to issues of race, class, and gender in our congregational life, and join with community partners working at these intersections.
3. Together with the whole church seek to build the commonwealth of God through welcoming the stranger, accompanying the vulnerable, and caring for creation.
4. Assist members of all ages in connecting Christian faith with life in the public square.
5. Create space for new members to share their gifts and build relationships.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Laura Bolstad directed the congregation's attention to the financial statements on pages 10-12. We are financially strong, with over \$1.6 million in assets. Perusing the Balance Sheet, we now have a \$615,00 mortgage, which Opening Doors pledges will cover over the course of time. An independent accountant report reviewed and certified our financial books this year. The statement of receipts and expenditures shows that we ended the year \$3100 in the red; we spend \$10,000 more than we budgeted and revenues were \$13,000 less than anticipated. Our regular offerings were less than what we budgeted. We incurred some savings from the new energy efficient boiler and in personnel by lending Meghan Olsen Biebighauser to Exodus Lending. We used Pafko funds, which are dedicated to help us enrich our ministry by covering additional staffing, to go towards personnel costs. Our special funds were well supported this past year and our endowment has just over \$1 million. A motion was made and seconded to accept treasurer's report. Motion carried.

ELECTION OF CHURCH COUNCIL

President Sara Jensen presented the slate of candidates as prepared by the Nominating Committee: John Sulzbach, Juliann Breting Rohn, Michael Douglas, Bryan Kuzel, and Andrea Martin. Sara called three times for additional nominations from the floor and, receiving none, declared the nominations closed. A motion was made and seconded that the slate of four candidates for the 2017 Church Council be elected by acclamation. Motion carried.

The slate for the 2017 Nominating Committee was presented: Connie Adams, Liz Blood, David Kohlstedt, and Lynda Nordholm, in addition to outgoing council members Cliff Brown, Andrea Martin, Theresa Rian, and Melanie Townsend. A motion was made and seconded to approve the Nominating Committee. Motion carried.

PROPOSED BUDGET AND SPECIAL APPEALS FOR 2017

Treasurer Laura Bolstad called the congregation's attention to the proposed 2017 budget on page 15. The budget includes a 2% increase from last year to \$765,700. At last year's annual meeting the congregation indicated their desire to compensate pastors and staff more commensurate with synod guidelines. The Personnel Committee was tasked with this, reviewed what was feasible, and proposed a \$52,000 increase, which is included in the budget proposal. To compensate for this area, we needed to have a significant reduction in our mission support to the synod as well as deplete the Pafko estate and use a portion of the Wilkins estate. Laura cautioned that this is not a sustainable model—funding ongoing costs with one-time funds.

There was a vigorous discussion during the Adult Forum earlier in the day surrounding reducing our support of mission funding to the synod. This is still an important priority for our congregation, and we will still be a leader in synod giving. The resources we have available to us now do not allow us to give up to the level we have been in the past, if we also want to increase our commitment to compensate our staff. This reduction in mission support is not necessarily permanent and members can give to the synod more directly. A question was raised as to whether mission funds could be given to the church and then funneled to the synod so that we can track involvement and interest. This is something that could be pursued.

A few other items for consideration were mentioned. The 2017 budget includes compensation for the interim pastor. The 2018 budget will need to be revised for the new pastor. It was also recommended that projections for the next 3-4 years should be kept in mind when developing the current year's budget for future planning. We also need to improve how we communicate with the congregation about personnel needs and funding so that pledges can be made with all information at the forefront. To that end, pledges can always be amended at any point during the year.

For an inner city church, we are very strong; there is some magic here. We're trying to match our goals and aspirations, while many nearby churches are just trying to keep the lights on. We have so much energy in this church; we will carry through and move on. The endowment fund will not be used to balance the budget; it was established to make this congregation strong financially. A motion was made and seconded to approve the 2017 budget. Motion carried.

Laura reported that the Financial Stewardship Committee and Council have authorized appeals for the following special funds in 2017: ELCA World Hunger and CTUL (Centro de Trabajadores Unidos en Lucha). A motion was made and, seconded to approve the special appeals for 2017. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE GOALS AND TASKS FOR 2017

President Sara Jensen encouraged the congregation to read through the various committee goals and tasks for the coming year.

OLD BUSINESS (Phil Jury on behalf of the Personnel Committee)

Phil suggested a sub-committee form to research and serve as an external reality check to compare our staff's salaries with others e.g., synod levels, ELCA salary survey, American Guild of Organists, and congregations similar to ours. We should have salary schedules in place so that we can project the ranges prior to December, so that they can be used to guide our budget process. This would be a change in the process that would take the pressure off the pastoral staff.

NEW BUSINESS

As there was no further business, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 3:08pm.