

HTLC CHURCH COUNCIL VIRTUAL MEETING

MINUTES 3/16/2020

Attending: Pastor Angela Khabeb, Pastor Ingrid Rasmussen, Nicki Hines, Aric Sorenson, Kathy Ohler, Tom Cahoy, Connie Adams, Katelyn Hollaway, Scott Cole, Donna Scott, David Broberg, Amy Froiland-Parada

Not attending: Steve Murray, Ben Martinez

**Devotions:** For devotions, Nicki read the prayer that was in the Community Church for this week, *A Litany for the Coronavirus.*

**Council Member of the Month:** David Broberg grew up in Wisconsin, one of seven children, and went to college in Texas. He received several degrees, including a Masters in Theology and Masters in Divinity. He was a pastor of an American Lutheran Church for six and a half years. At that point, he felt it was time for a change because, as a gay man, he did not feel very safe, so he began working in support of people with developmental disabilities. He went back to school at Augsburg College (now Augsburg University), and currently works for Hennepin County. The movie that had a big impact on him was *Brokeback Mountain*, and he is inspired to drive all the way from his home in Plymouth to Holy Trinity because of the theological integrity, wonderful music, and the people. He feels that Holy Trinity has been his “home” for many years. We are so glad to have your wisdom and perspectives on the Council, David!

**Minutes**

*A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the February Church Council Meeting. Motion carried.*

*A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the Special Council Meeting on March 1. Motion carried.*

**Updates**

The April Church Council meeting will need to be rescheduled for April 27<sup>th</sup> so we can hear the report from Alicia Sojourner which was sponsored by the Racial Justice Committee. David will do the devotions.

Nicki thanked the Pastors and Staff for being so thoughtful, communicative, and caring through this difficult time.

**Committee Reports**

David summarized the Committee Reports. Many events have been put on hold or cancelled/postponed due to the need for social distancing. The Civil Rights Movement Trip has been cancelled. Sunday

August 9th is the date for the Annual Picnic. Two recommendations from Finance and Stewardship Committee will be addressed later in this meeting.

### **Financial Reports**

Ingrid provided a summary on the financial reports. We are exceeding our YTD budget for income, but the numbers are inflated due to usual first-of-year giving. We also expect that COVID-19 will impact giving this year. Balance sheet showed that (1) we had hoped to make up the Community Food negative balance during Lent, but this will not happen now, and (2) the negative balance on Trinity Housing Corp will be discussed later in agenda. Auditors are still working on our accounting review, which is very in depth.

*A motion was made and seconded to accept the financial reports for February as provided.  
Motion carried.*

### **Pastor Angela's Report**

- Focus on filling position of Community Engagement and Education coordinator. Interviewed 6 people and decided on top three candidates. Now checking references so that we can make an offer. Fortunately, our top candidates have the combined skills that we were looking for, so Pastor Angela is very optimistic.

### **Pastor Ingrid's Report**

- Her updates will be covered in later agenda items.

### **Old Business**

Trinity Apartments closing is scheduled for Wednesday March 18<sup>th</sup>. All paperwork has been completed and signed. Funds distribution will be on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> as well.

Opening Doors Mortgage: We had previously agreed to use the funds from the Vi Ladwig estate and the developers fee from Trinity Apartments for whatever might be remaining. The recommendation from Finance and Stewardship Committee is that we use the Reserves and Surplus Cash Fee until the developers fee is available to pay off the mortgage.

*Affirmation that we want to pay off the mortgage as soon as possible in accordance with the recommendation from the Finance and Stewardship Committee.*

### **New Business**

New Trinity Apartments Advisory Board member for the 1 year term, 2 year term, and 3 year term are:

- Alison Johnson Heist – 1 year
- Laura Bolstad Grafstrom – 2 year
- Pastor Ingrid Rasmussen – 3 year

Stepping out in Faith Task Force – After consideration of all the applications, we now have a recommendation for members of this task force. The recommendation is as follows:

- Pastors Ingrid/Angela
- Nicki Hines
- ZoeAna Martinez
- Randy Nelson
- Mike Nevergall
- Libby Olsted
- Tina Russell
- Mark Symchych

*Motion was made and seconded that the Council support the recommendation of these people for the Stepping Out in Faith Task Force. Motion carried.*

Annual Congregational Meeting Suggestions: Nicki organized these under four goal areas and the Council discussed these briefly. At this point, the congregational suggestions will be sent to committee leaders and/or staff for appropriate action.

### **COVID-19**

We announced we were closing the church building until April 1, but CDC now says no groups over 10 for 8 weeks so we know we will not open on April 1. Therefore, we will change closing date to “until further notice.” We will likely not celebrate Holy Week in person. It may be May before we open again. All other building partners have agreed they will cease work in the building by Wednesday this week. Staff are choosing to work at home or at church.

Communications: We sent an email on Saturday night with link to Sunday service on Vimeo. We will do this each week. We will move to online delivery of Community Church starting next week and this week’s edition will ask for information if recipients want to be included in the email.

We need to discuss our approach for funerals and gravesite services. Based on CDC guidelines, we cannot have 10 or more people. Other churches are saying no or a very small gravesite service of a few people. Ingrid drafted a statement about this, and the council approved the statement.

Statement about funerals, baptisms, or weddings:

“Last night, the Council made the difficult decision that Holy Trinity Lutheran Church will not host any funerals, baptisms, or weddings until the COVID-19 situation changes. We know this is difficult news to digest. Be assured that Pastor Angela and I will find faithful ways to walk with congregants and their families at these important moments.”

*Motion was made and seconded to issue the drafted statement on funerals and gravesite services. We then amended the motion to include baptisms and weddings in addition to funerals and gravesite services. Motion carried.*

We have some volunteers for people who need help during the COVID-19 crisis. We have set up a request form for those who need help or they can call the church office. We have five members willing

to do some errand running, etc. Home communion will cease for now. Sick and shut ins will receive cards weekly during this time.

Deb Sodt and Carol Berg:

According to National Institute of Health (NIH), 64 people have tested positive in Minnesota, mostly in the metro area, with none north of St. Cloud. There are 22 tested positive in Hennepin County. Only three are community transmission (not overseas travel), but this could increase. There are no deaths yet in Minnesota and those with the virus are between ages of 21 and 71 years old. The Health department does all the interviews with people who test positive, working to identify locations, people contacted, quarantine needs.

IF we get an active positive diagnosis of a member of Holy Trinity, the scenario is that the health department would know about it and would notify us. Then, we would get recommendations based on the individual case or situation. We suggest that people let Ingrid know if you have tested positive.

We discussed cleaning of the building with a special disinfecting plan after Nolan is back from his vacation.

We established an Ad Hoc COVID-19 Working Group, which will consist of Ginny Jordan, Deb Sodt, Carol Berg, and Connie Adams.

We are so grateful for efforts to establish a new form of community connection. Suggestion: include a link or two for sites that offer support for stress, loneliness, etc. in a Community Church.

### **Baptismal Font**

\$1000 deposit is needed for the model.

*Motion made and seconded to approve \$1000 be paid as deposit for baptismal font which will go toward the total payment. Finance and Stewardship committee to identify funds from which to pay this. Motion carried.*

Insurance motion: Finance and Stewardship Committee has recommended we renew our policy with GuideOne Insurance and increase coverage to \$3 million. Total premium for the policy is \$13,700 for annual renewal (which is actually less than we have been paying for the \$1 million).

*Motion was made and seconded to accept the recommendation of the Finance and Stewardship Committee to renew the policy with GuideOne Insurance and increase coverage to \$3 million from \$1 million due to Trinity Apartments transaction. Motion carried.*

### **Closing Question**

Closing question: How can we be “the church” in this new virtual world: We discussed letter writing, phone calls, be intentional, have discipline, Facetime more, etc.

*A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 pm. Motion carried.*