

## **HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**July 20, 2020**

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

**Absent:** Pastor Mork

We say his name: George Floyd.

### **Devotions:**

Katelyn shared a prayer and all council members joined in.

### **Council Member of the Month:**

Amy Froiland-Parada shared that she grew up in Wisconsin, her parents are Lutheran pastors, and some of her grandparents were Lutheran pastors. She is a clinical social worker now and enjoys working with teens. She provides therapy at the Como Park High School and at Minnesota Community Care. She is married to Carlos and has two children: Isaac and Elsa, who are 8 and 6. Amy loves the focus on social justice at Holy Trinity and hearing the pastors preach. Right now, she sometimes feels overwhelmed by the darkness in the world, but she is able to “find the light at Holy Trinity.” What is she looking forward to most in a post-pandemic world? Hugging her parents and her grandpa (her grandmother died a week ago).

### **Minutes:**

*A motion was made and seconded to approve the June Church Council minutes and the April 26<sup>th</sup> Congregational Meeting minutes. Motion carried.*

### **Reports/Updates**

Stepping Out in Faith survey:

We received 124 responses out of 350 (35%+). This is about average for survey responses at HT. The Stepping Out in Faith Team is now analyzing the responses.

Food Distribution next steps:

We will continue food distribution until end of summer (end of Aug/Labor Day). We will start to go down to two days per week in August. The team will determine which two days. We all feel it is important to be committed to this work because many people are coming due to COVID19 impacts on employment, financial, etc. The need is wider than the neighborhood, and our desire is to stay involved until end of 2020, but we will need to figure out the plan for the rest of this year.

We have been enjoying our partnerships in distribution, like Second Harvest, etc. Pastor Ingrid is planning on getting all the partners together to work on a more permanent solution, especially cold weather plans. During August, some staff will be gathering helpful information about people who are

coming so that we might better know where there are other resources for these people and possibly direct them there.

Scott Cole commented that Second Harvest's new estimate shows 1 in 8 people are going to be food insecure through 2021. Therefore, collaboration across all sectors will be necessary to figure this out.

Pastor Angela commented that we are trying to get help closer to where people are living. Also, that Liberians, Somalians, and others need more culturally appropriate food. She welcomes your ideas.

We are grateful that the food distribution operation is expertly run with a strong team of people managing the system. We feed approximately 200-400 per day we are open, but this varies widely. We are certainly looking to be more COVID-conscious moving forward.

### **Committee Reports:**

Racial justice workgroup: Alicia Sojourner will be offering a Zoom presentation open to the congregation on July 28<sup>th</sup>. All Council members are encouraged to attend, even though it is the same presentation that she gave to us.

Financial reports: Regular offerings were very strong. Special gifts were very high to HTLC. Admin fees were an error; these were issued out of habit, but they will be refunded. We discussed the amazing donations to the Justice Fund: over \$350K from 8000 donors. Expenses are down. Pastors discretionary fund is being used to attend to COVID unemployment needs. Personnel expenses are higher due to contractors needed for food distribution site.

Balance sheet: There was discussion about how to account for the Justice Fund on our financial statements, whether we show them on the balance sheet or the income/expense sheet. This also raised the question of the appropriateness of how we are reporting all of our designated funds (currently on the balance sheet). Moving forward the Justice Fund will be on the income/expense sheet, with expenses specific to the food distribution work attributed to a Justice fund expense (for example, personnel costs). Ingrid will consult with our auditor about appropriate accounting practices for other designated funds and will propose changes if needed.

We discussed the need to decide how we want to communicate with broader supporters about this story of the Justice Fund donations and the incredible outpouring of support, what are our next steps, etc. But right now, our primary work is thanking the 8000 people who donated. There is a group of HTLC members who are writing hand written thank you notes.

- *A motion was made and seconded to accept the financial reports with notes as presented. Motion carried.*

### **Pastor Angela's reflections:**

- Food distribution: appreciate Alex Cahoy's and Josie Hines's participation. We are so grateful for Deacon David, Jennifer, and many great volunteers and contract workers.
- Pastoral needs: Assistance requests are coming in from many different directions, which can be overwhelming. But they are being managed.

**Pastor Ingrid's reflections:**

- Grateful for leaders of food distribution
- Doing admin work from home
- Working on coalition of downtown Longfellow leaders, neighboring orgs and businesses. She has invited all of them to discuss ways we can organize together to make suggestions, demands to political leadership of the city. There is some dissatisfaction with the Mayor's group of leaders. They want to provide good feedback, also deal with grief together, and think about how our area can reflect a better tomorrow. She will be starting with nearest neighbors (Gandhi Mahal, etc.) but could expand this group later.

**Old Business**

Update on audit: In the August Church Council meeting we will have recording of auditors comments to share.

Eagle Scout (Ethan Townsend) Project to build new benches in the rain garden. We want to do this this summer, and there has been discussion by the Property Committee. The Church Council already approved doing this in May last year. The estimated cost was \$1100 – \$2800 and there could be 2, 3, or 5 benches. It will take one day to install. There is enough money in property budget to do this.

**Motion**

*Motion was made and seconded for the council to direct the Property Committee to proceed with installing two to five benches, even if it means exceeding property budget for 2020. Motion carried.*

Nicki will send map to council members outlining where the benches will be installed.

**New Business**

Council discussed support for the Minnesota State Sanctuary Coalition Statement. It aligns with our values, and we previously agreed to be a sanctuary church. Who is audience? How will this be shared? What commitments does it imply for HTLC? We will table this until we get more information. Will revisit this in next month's meeting.

Justice Fund: Council reviewed the Justice Fund Draft of Purpose. Council will have ultimate oversight of the fund and will appoint a subcommittee to provide immediate feedback on substantive questions or issues as needed. The subcommittee is Nicki Hines (Council president), Scott Cole (Council member), John Sulzbach (Finance & Stewardship committee member), Steve Murray (Treasurer) and Pastor Ingrid. Priorities are to support food distribution and rebuilding. Discussed idea of depositing the funds in a minority-owned bank to help their balance sheet. We will tweak and finalize the draft, then move forward with it.

This type of fund agreement document would be good for other funds we have as well. Could serve as a template for future.

## **Conclusion**

Next meeting is August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020. We will have the church reopening discussion as planned, and Aric will do devotions.

Meeting adjourned 8:45 pm.