

## **HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**September 21, 2020**

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

**Devotions:** Connie Adams shared a moving story about her relative who lived during the polio pandemic. Her relative was stricken with polio and had to be in an iron lung. She became paralyzed in both legs and one arm, so she had to be in a wheelchair. She lived on her own, loved to knit, worked at the Lutheran Bible Institute, and regularly wrote content for Lutheran publications. She was a marvelous soul and Connie's favorite. She talked about "so daily" being the main problem with a physical handicap. In other words, that the daily struggle was still there every day when you wake up. But that the same struggles also have rewards. With a physical handicap, there are more opportunities to test the strength of God because they must draw on God daily. "My grace is sufficient in thee. Every day I am amazed by his goodness."

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

Ben Martinez has been at HTLC many years. Ben works in retail, and is very happy being at home, calling himself a "home body." Because of school and distance learning, Ben's days off are spent doing home learning with his kids. He's filled with hope just being surrounded by great people, our church's activism in the community, and the opportunity to rebuild the Longfellow community. To answer the Council's question what is your greatest achievement, Ben talked about being a man of color and the "achievement" of having a weapon pulled on him by a police officer only one time, and he has never been arrested. He feels very blessed to have a wonderful healthy family all live near him. We are so grateful to Ben for his presence and work in our church community!

### **Motions:**

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

*A motion was made and seconded to approve the COVID-19 Preparedness Plan as it is today, but that the plan is a living document with Connie Adams serving as liaison to communicate with Council regarding any significant changes if needed. Motion carried.*

### **Reports/Updates**

David reviewed some key points from the committee reports, which were provided to all Council members before the meeting. Personnel committee approved bonuses for nearly all staff, custodial, office, and pastors for their work during the pandemic, uprising, and ongoing new work.

### **Committee Reports:**

Financial reports: Steve provided comments on the reports.

Regular offerings are over budget for the year. Special gifts are still coming in, and we are grateful for that support. Financial Review expense has been paid. COVID-19 Emergency Response and Justice Fund are now in two separate lines on the report. On the balance sheet, there is a high amount in checking, but a portion will be moved to Mission Plus where there will be higher interest. There will be a note added to discuss the adjustment related to Depreciation of Buildings based on financial review.

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

Stewardship campaign for 2020 was discussed: (1) Temple talks beginning in October (2) Adult Forum on Oct 25<sup>th</sup> (3) Letter to congregation. Recommendation was to keep it simple this year.

**Pastor Doug's reflections:**

- Two weeks away from public kickoff of BDC
- New virtual world work: he is working on a project to enable meaningful funerals, i.e. bring in elegies from family members, record instrumental music, plan to create safety plan for those present, have equipment to project and live stream all of this. The first one is Robert Peterson's funeral.
- Grateful to work with this incredible team at HTLC.

**Pastor Ingrid's reflections:**

- Robert Peterson funeral will be Sunday, and it will be a physical funeral in sanctuary. Niece and nephew live far away and both are choosing to participate through live stream. They see this virtual ability as a gift.
- Doing the Intercultural Development Inventory with several staff members. This is a priority for staff. Joe Davis is giving results and coaching.
- Welcoming new members October 4<sup>th</sup>! This will be on zoom. Over 20 people joining our community. Clearly, people are still feeling a connection with HTLC even without physical connection. She requested that we all start praying for new members. We will devote the forum to them introducing themselves. Join forum on October 4<sup>th</sup>.
- Confirmation for one confirmand, Kristen Townsend in October. We will meet in sanctuary with loved ones, record it, and include in worship video. We are trying to honor life milestones, just in creative new ways.
- Longfellow Rising – HTLC is serving a “fiscal sponsor.” She has included an RFP in council folder; please review. Subcommittee overseeing the Justice Fund at HTLC considering large investment from this fund to this group as seed money for its first year. We are building a good case for what this work will look like going forward. There are other partners in this work as well and this is complicated work.
- Two students from Luther Seminary will join us as student learners this year. Molly and Karlie. Will be with us a few hours a week.

## **Old Business**

Nominating committee update: we will have first meeting tomorrow night. We will consider ways to conduct nominating process virtually. We will plan for an update next council meeting. Thank you to Ben for leading this.

## **New Business**

### **Discussion about the “spirit of money”**

Scott Cole led discussion with council. Council discussed our reactions to the two-page document provided. How do we think about money? It's not the end. It's the means to the end. We discussed thinking of money as a transaction, and going back to the source. We talked about history and a time when there was a relationship currency before there was a financial currency, when transactions were relationship based. This required people to more meaningfully evaluate the “worth” of things. Now, we are so far removed from the source (the person producing something). Food is purchased at grocery store, but we have to explain to children that the food we buy there does not come from the store. We never see money any more – it's just a number on a report. We discussed the food distribution ministry at HTLC: we agreed that it felt so good to make actual transactions with 100s of people, being able to see them eye to eye. We like being able to see where the money goes and how it helps people. There is an energy infusion in money. There are broader concepts around storing up the energy, having money in motion, and keeping a flow of that energy increases our leverage and potency. Money in motion helps us resist despair. Our church needs to know that investing money behind the recovery of our Longfellow community gives all of us confidence. It can become a way to be able to pull neighbors out of despair. It's very healthy to think of money as “energy.” The question for HTLC is: Where do we want to put our energy? How might we include the broader community in our decision-making process in sifting through what communities need? (Waldorf schools example).

### **Plan for Future Social Unrest**

Public Voice and Organizing Committee has put together a draft plan for council to read. No motion or approval needed, but had discussion. This is a crisis response plan and it includes a Rapid Response Team. Other churches are doing similar planning. We are in conversation with Calvary Lutheran, Central Lutheran, other churches in downtown Minneapolis.

The committee will continue to move forward with this work.

### **Sound System and Tech Support**

Trying to outfit sanctuary for the COVID-oriented tech situation, including microphones, projector, upgrading internet. We are doing lots of virtual recording and need supplies. (1) We need better internet in all parts of the building; (2) microphones in sanctuary have expired and need upgrade for 8 wireless mics (handheld and earsets); (3) need projector and portable screen; and (4) laptop for streaming with camera/audio.

## **Motion**

*Motion was made and seconded to approve up to \$25,000 to spend on technology-related needs for HTLC. Motion carried.*

Intent is to build a team of volunteers to operate this technology in the future.

**Closing question:**

The council discussed some Stepping Out in Faith Focus Group questions.

**Conclusion**

Next meeting is October 19, 2020.

Meeting adjourned 8:50 pm.