

# Trinity Lutheran Council Meeting Minutes

**Date:** December 16, 2018

**Attendees:** Ron Jones, Christie Tietjen, Steve Paquette, Richard Leimgruber, Nancy Buffum, Becky Luethy, Claudia Pico, Mike Sharitz, Andrew Sobey, Kim Stewart, Elisa Thelen, Pastor Chris Naig, Morris Larson.

Ron called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. He presented the agenda and the list of staff and team reports. Pastor Chris led with an opening devotion that discussed how we should receive gifts graciously and why we are reluctant receivers.

**Member Comments** – Many members commented how much they enjoyed the 10:00 worship service today, The Journey to Bethlehem. Other members have commented that it is exciting to see the increase in attendance at both worship services the past few weeks. Two members have raised questions regarding the required constitution amendments mailed to the congregation members on December 10. Pastor Chris has met individually with those members to understand fully their concerns. Morris Larson commented that he has received positive comments from the American Association of University Women, a non-profit group that meets at Trinity twice each month. They appreciate Trinity's service to the community to allow them to use our facilities for a fee.

**Pastor's Report** – The joint Thanksgiving ecumenical service at St. Anselm on November 20 was well attended. The staff and volunteers have been busy planning for the Advent, Christmas and Epiphany services. A wedding service is being planned for January. Pastor Chris said he will be attending a continuing education course in February called Exposing the Rapture (Revelations).

**Treasurer's Report** – Member giving in November was improved. Expenses were roughly \$7,000 below budget, resulting in net income for the month being \$8,000 better than budget. Year-to date net income less debt payment is \$28,000 favorable to budget. Member giving in the first two Sundays of December has been strong, consistent with prior-year seasonal levels, and we are hopeful that trend continues for the balance of the month. Steve Paquette reviewed the Audit Committee final report and his proposed responses to that report, which Council approved. It was moved and seconded that a group of dedicated memorial funds (inactive for two or more years and totaling \$5,028) be transferred to the Trinity Endowment Fund. Council approved the motion (two dissenting votes).

## **Discussion of reports received from Staff and Teams:**

**Mission Team:** The Mission Team has recommended to the Endowment Fund Committee various missions that should receive the annual distribution (this year's amount will be \$6,000 for missions) from the Endowment Fund. The Endowment Fund Committee will make its recommendation to Council at its January 20 meeting. The full Mission Team report is available on the Trinity website.

**Children's Ministries:** The month was spent principally on planning and practicing for the Christmas program, which was a resounding success.

**Music Ministry:** The Choir received many thanks and accolades from sharing their musical gifts at the joint Thanksgiving ecumenical service with St. Anselm. The choir has grown to nineteen members, and other members or prospective members have expressed interest in joining the choir. Brian Parrish has invited the praise band, which performed on November 4 at the 11:15 service, to join us on a regular basis (every month to six-weeks, depending on availability).

**Preschool:** The Preschool had a busy month making special gifts for parents and decorations for Christmas. They also learned their songs for their program “Happy Birthday, Jesus”, which will be performed December 18 and 19. Registration for the 2019-2020 school year will begin in January.

**Worship:** The Worship Team asked that the row of chairs in the first couple of rows be adjusted to accommodate better the use of wheelchairs or other walking assistance. The OSC will evaluate, including possible alignment of the platform at the communion table.

**Operation Services Committee (OSC):** Mike Sharitz reported that the retrofit of all fluorescent light fixtures throughout the church with LED lamps has made substantial progress. This LED replacement significantly reduces the ongoing cost of electricity, and the brightness of the lighting is noticeably improved. Snow guards for safety have been installed on the slanted roof at the rear entrance of the church. The hand railing by the steps leading to the lower-level parking lot has been repaired. Continued problems of vandalism and repair have occurred to the back gate of the parking lot and are under investigation. Improved procedures for periodic cleaning of the kitchen by the janitor and an outside firm are under review. Mike has worked with an outside expert to improve Trinity’s wi-fi system. He proposed that Trinity spend up to \$3,500 to improve the security, effectiveness and speed of Trinity’s system. The \$3,500 cost will be paid out of dedicated funds (\$2,500 by the Preschool fund and the balance by the Council discretionary fund). Council unanimously approved the proposal. Morris reported that the church insurance program has been renewed with the same coverages and deductibles. The insurance carrier requires that Trinity implement policies and procedures by February 2019 to prevent child abuse, which includes training and background checks. The staff will evaluate these required changes to our policies and procedures and will report to Council at its January 20 meeting for implementation in February 2019.

Other written staff and committee reports were reviewed with no additional discussion.

**2019 Budget –** Council unanimously approved the 2019 Budget. This budget is a “balanced budget” with anticipated receipts roughly the same as anticipated expenses. Steve had reviewed this budget with interested members of Trinity at the Adult Forum held November 18. Another review will be held with interested members of Trinity at the January 13 Adult Forum. The final budget will be submitted for congregational approval at the January 27, 2019 annual meeting.

**2019 Annual Congregation Meeting Agenda** – Ron Jones reviewed the tentative agenda for the January 27, 2019 annual congregation meeting and the slates of candidates proposed by the Nominating Committee. Those slates were included in today's church bulletin and will be mailed or emailed to church members on December 17. Two positions on the Nominating still need to be filled. Council also discussed its report to be included in the annual meeting materials.

**Council and Staff Retreat Agenda and Attendees** – Christie Tietjen asked for thoughts on the agenda for the retreat to be held Feb. 1 and 2. The attendees will be Council members, Congregational Vitality Committee members and invited staff. The main focus for the agenda will be relationship building and discussion of the results of the Congregational Vitality survey to be completed by congregation members. The Rev. Susan Candea, Bishop's Associate of the Central States Synod, will attend the retreat to discuss those results.

**January Council Meeting Agenda** – Among the items on the January 20 Council Agenda will be the final review of the agenda for the Feb. 1-2, 2019 Council and Staff Retreat and the recommendation for implementing the insurance carrier's recommendation for improved policies and procedures to prevent child abuse.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.