

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH OF STILLWATER, MINNESOTA
Congregational Council Meeting Minutes
Held September 19, 2022

Voting Council members present: Lead Pastor Chris Bellefeuille; William Bjorum; Krista Gossai; Thomas Haugrud; Jill Longnecker; Carol Straka; and Andrew Thelander.

Non-voting Council members present: Parish Administrator Robert Eiselt, and Pastor of Lifelong Faith Formation Peter Weston Miller.

Absent: None.

Guests: None.

Location: In-person at Trinity Lutheran Church.

Meeting called to order at 6:35 p.m. by President Andrew Thelander.

1. Welcome.
2. Christ Care Prayers.
3. Dwelling in the Word.
Pastor Chris led the devotional.
Council Learning and Growth: Council discussed the introduction and Chapters 1 and 2 of the book "Tempered Resilience".
4. Pre-distributed items:
 - a. Draft Minutes from the August 22, 2022 council meeting were distributed electronically to Council for review.
M/S/P to accept and approve the Minutes from the August 22, 2022 council meeting.
 - b. The Pastor reports from Pastor Chris and Pastor Peter were distributed electronically to Council for review.
 - c. No written administrator report was submitted but Bob provided a verbal update on the financials, including the fiscal year deficit, the outstanding line of credit, and the Council Directed Reserves. After discussions:

M/S/P not to apply the Council Directed Reserves to fiscal year ending August 31, 2022, and not at this time to apply any of the Council Directed Reserves to the line of credit. Council will again review at subsequent council meetings whether to apply the Council Directed Reserves to the line of credit.
 - d. The Re-Entry Team did not submit a report.

5. Old Business or Follow Up.

a. Council again discussed the existing loan/mortgage with Thrivent and how to best apply a pre-payment on the loan if the Capital Campaign proceeds.

Mortgage loan option 1 is to request that Thrivent re-amortize the loan upon pre-payment, thereby reducing the monthly payments and keeping the maturity date of May 1, 2043 the same. Thrivent upon Trinity's request will re-amortize the loan one time per year. Thrivent also re-amortizes the loan upon a rate adjustment, which is re-set every 3 years (with the last rate adjustment done in June 2021 at which time the rate was reduced from 4.25% to the current 3.50%).

Mortgage loan option 2 is for Trinity to continue to make the same monthly payments upon pre-payment, thereby advancing the maturity date of the loan.

M/S/P to adopt mortgage loan option 1 above.

b. Council discussed how best to utilize the monthly savings resulting from the re-amortization of the mortgage loan.

M/S/P to apply the monthly savings resulting from the re-amortization of the mortgage loan to the Financial Accompaniment component of the Capital Campaign utilization plan.

c. Council discussed that Trinity has been and remains committed to Missions, but Missions has not been and is not a part of Trinity's annual budget. Rather, Missions has been funded through separate donations and charitable events such as the golf tournament and the lutefisk/meatball dinner, averaging around \$60,000/annually. The annual budget cannot absorb an immediate increase of \$60,000 for Missions, but the goal is to integrate Missions into the annual budget for the fiscal year commencing September 2026. In the four years until then, dedicating to Missions a portion of the Financial Accompaniment component of the Capital Campaign utilization plan, which includes the monthly savings resulting from the re-amortization of the mortgage loan, can serve as a transition to integrating Missions into the annual budget.

M/S/P to integrate Missions into the annual budget starting with the fiscal year commencing September 2026, and to use a portion of the Financial Accompaniment component of the Capital Campaign utilization plan to fund Missions until integrated into the annual budget.

d. Council again discussed that TLC's books and records undergo a "review" each year and not an "audit". The last full audit was conducted at least 9 years ago. Council was advised that the cost difference of an audit over a review was estimated at \$8,000 to \$14,000 annually, and that neither the Finance Team nor TLC's CPAs recommend incurring the extra costs for an audit. Council without motion determined to remain with a review of its books and records and not an audit.

e. Council briefly again discussed the issue of whether to maintain a fiscal year or elect to revert back to a calendar year. The September 1, 2022 fiscal year has already started and there will be no immediate change. The matter will be further reviewed at subsequent Council meetings.

f. The Capital Campaign will be placed to a vote at the upcoming Congregational Annual Meeting. Rather than passage by a simply majority vote, Council will set a "super-majority" requirement for approval of the Capital Campaign. The Constitution requires a supermajority

for certain matters -- such as terminating relationship with the ELCA, calling a pastor, ratification of an amendment of the Constitution, and amendment of the Bylaws – and sets the supermajority as two-thirds of voting members present.

M/S/P that passage of the Capital Campaign shall require the affirmative vote of two-thirds of voting members present at the annual meeting.

g. Council members were requested to send names to Pastor Chris of proposed individuals to serve on the Capital Campaign Leadership Team.

h. The matter of trespassing on the drive-in property was again briefly addressed. Parish Administrator Bob advised that signage has been made but no other action taken in sending a letter to Aamodts Hot Air Balloon Rides, or posting both the entrance and the gate to the drive-in with a prominent “Private Property” sign, or installing a locking mechanism on the entrance gate. Council reminded Bob that these actions need to be taken.

i. An update was provided on the proposed apartment development across the street from Trinity.

j. An update was provided on recognition of service to the video/sound both builder volunteers – God’s Work our Hammers award; and Claudia Swenseid and the Stewardship Team.

6. New Business:

a. Council discussed the concerns over the unsafe conditions of the sidewalk and entrance on the 4th Street main entrance. Parish Administrator Bob advised that the sidewalk repair is a city matter and the entrance repair is a Trinity matter. Bob was requested to escalate the matter with the City and reach an agreement as to how best to make the repairs to the sidewalk and the entrance before winter arrives.

b. At the annual congregational meeting, Council will seek authorization for Council to elect representatives to the 2023 SPAS Synod Assembly that is being held in May 2023.

c. The nomination committee has begun to solicit possible names for an upcoming 3 year seat opening on Council. Council was asked to share the names of any possible candidates.

d. Council expressed its gratitude to Carol and thanked her for serving on Council this past year.

e. Shout Outs; Gratitude moments. Council acknowledged and expressed gratitude to: Trinity staff for putting together Trinity Fest; Krista for the gifts for the Re-Entry Team; and Jill and her family for helping the make the summer drive in season another big success.

7. Next Council meetings.

a. A Council connections-huddle meeting is tentatively set for Wednesday, October 5, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. to be held virtually via Microsoft Teams, and President Andrew will subsequently advise whether it is needed.

- b. The next regular Council meeting is set for Tuesday, October 25, 2022 at 6:30 p.m., to be held in person at TLC.
 - c. A brief Council connections-huddle meeting will be held following the annual congregational meeting on November 20, 2022.
 - d. The November 2022 Council meeting is set for Monday, November 21, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. to be held in person at TLC.
 - e. The December 2022 Council meeting is set for Monday, December 19, 2022 to be held in conjunction with a Council Christmas party at Pastor Chris' house.
8. Other Important Dates.
- a. Pastor Chris with make a presentation on her sabbatical on Sunday, November 6, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.
 - b. The Annual Budget forum is set for Sunday, November 13, 2022.
 - c. The Annual Congregational meeting is set for Sunday, November 20, 2022 at noon.
9. Reflection/Prayer.
10. Adjournment.
The council meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

s/Thomas Haugrud
Thomas Haugrud
Congregational/Council Secretary
Electronically signed