

**TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH OF STILLWATER, MINNESOTA**  
**Congregational Council Meeting Minutes**  
**Held March 20, 2023**

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

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

Absent: William Bjorum and John Hodler.

Guests: None.

Location: Remote via Teams.

Congregational/Council Secretary John Hodler was absent from the meeting and Thomas Haugrud agreed to serve as temporary Council Secretary for the meeting and was so designated.

I. Call to Order.

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. by President Andrew Thelander.

II. Christ Care Prayers.

III. No devotions were conducted this meeting.

IV. Approval of Minutes/Agenda.

a. Draft Minutes from the February 20, 2023 council meeting were distributed electronically to Council for review.

**M/S/P** to accept and approve the Minutes from the February 20, 2023 council meeting as submitted.

b. Andrew proposed amending the pre-printed agenda for the meeting to add: (i) the subject of an “audit” of Trinity’s financial records for the fiscal year ending in 2023, as compared to a “review” thereof; and (ii) a closed executive session.

**M/S/P** to approve the agenda for the meeting as so amended.

V. Pastor Reports.

The Pastor reports from Pastor Chris and Pastor Peter were distributed electronically to Council for review. Pastor Chris provided a verbal update on the interviewing process for the position of Parish Administrator.

VI. Administrator Reports.

The Administrator’s Report and February 2023 financials were distributed electronically to Council for review.

The matter of Trinity being perhaps eligible and applying for the Employee Retention Credit (ERC) was discussed. The application deadline for the eligible quarters of 2020 is April 15, 2024.

The matter will be reviewed more thoroughly by Trinity's tax advisors once their workload lessens after April 15, 2023.

The expenses to date for fiscal year 2023 have closely followed the budgeted amount in the approved budget. However, revenue receipts in fiscal year 2023 to date continue to lag.

A verbal stewardship update was provided; personal calls are being made to members who pledged in 2022 but did not do so in 2023.

VII. Comprehensive Campaign Update.

Council discussed the timing and distribution of Capital Campaign funds, including consideration of when to request the re-amortization of the mortgage loan, which can be done only once every 12 months.

**M/S/P:** Council authorizes and directs the Finance Committee in consultation with the Capital Campaign Cabinet to determine the timing and amount of distributions out of the Capital Campaign funds, including the timing of the re-amortization request to Thrivent, with the overall distributions to be made in the percentages set forth in the Capital Campaign guidelines. Further, the Parish Administrator is authorized to disburse the Capital Campaign funds in accordance with the written directions of the Finance Committee.

VIII. Audit of Trinity's financial records for the 2023 fiscal year.

Council discussed whether an audit as opposed to a review of Trinity's financial records should be conducted for the fiscal year ending 2023. Trinity's current practice is for a review of its financial records on an annual basis. The review, being less thorough and less time consuming, is thus less expensive than an audit. An audit was last conducted in approximately 2014. Council concluded that best fiscal practices dictate that an audit should be periodically conducted.

**M/S/P:** An audit rather than a review of Trinity's financial records shall be conducted for the 2023 fiscal year. A written quote from Trinity's CPA's shall be obtained detailing the scope of the audit, the cost, the needed lead time, and expected time frame.

IX. Closed Executive Session.

A confidential closed executive session was held with only voting council members present.

X. Council Growth and Learning.

Council was requested to read through Chapter 6 of the *Tempered Resilience* book prior to the next Council meeting.

XI. Closing prayer.

XII. Next Council meetings.

a. The next Council meeting is set for Monday, April 17, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. in person at Trinity.

b. The next Council connections-huddle meeting is tentatively set for Wednesday, April 5, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. to be held remotely via Teams. Andrew will advise closer to April 5 whether this connections-huddle is needed.

XIII. Adjournment.

The council meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*s/ Thomas Haugrud*

Thomas Haugrud

Temporary Council Secretary

*Electronically signed*