

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH of STILLWATER, MINNESOTA  
Congregational Council Meeting Minutes  
Held May 15, 2023

Voting Council members present: Lead Pastor Chris Bellefeuille, Jeff Anderson, Thomas Haugrud, John Hodler, Jill Longnecker, and Andrew Thelander.

Voting Council member absent: Krista Gossai

Non-voting Council members present: Pastor of Lifelong Faith Formation Peter Weston Miller.

Guests: Former Council Presidents - Gail Olson and Doug Johnson, only attended the Executive session.

Location: Room 108B, Trinity Lutheran Church, Stillwater, MN

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

1. Welcome. The new Parish Administrator, Sarah Kinsman, was welcomed. Sarah and each council member introduced themselves with a very brief bio. Sarah's official start date is May 17, 2023. Jeff Anderson, a longtime Trinity member, was welcomed as the new Treasurer.
2. Christ Care prayers.
3. Devotions-Dwelling in the Word. Pastor Chris used Deuteronomy in the council devotions. Andrew will lead devotions in June. Each council member will have the opportunity to lead a devotion session during the coming year. Pastor Chris asked that the devotion study include a scripture passage and suggested one approach is to seek answers to "What do I notice?" and "What do I wonder?" as part of the monthly devotion.
4. Council Learning and Growth. Chapter 7 of *Tempered Resilience: How Leaders Are Formed in the Crucible of Change* by Tod Bolsinger, will be discussed at the June 19<sup>th</sup> Council meeting.
5. Consent agenda.  
M/S/P to accept and approve the previously distributed April 17, 2023, and May 3, 2023, Congregational Council meeting minutes and the May 15, 2023, Council meeting agenda.
6. Pre-distributed items.
  - a. The Pastor report from Pastor Peter was distributed electronically to the Council for review and he confirmed that his last Sunday is May 21<sup>st</sup> prior to leaving on his Sabbatical at Holden Village, Washington. He will complete his sabbatical on July 31, 2023.
  - b. The Pastor report from Pastor Chris was distributed electronically to the Council for review. Pastor Chris highlighted that she is scheduled for Cataract surgery on for June 20 and 27<sup>th</sup>.

- c. The Parish Administrator report from Bob was distributed electronically to the Council for review. This was Bob's final report prior to retirement.
- 7. Treasurer's report.
  - a. The April 2023, Fiscal YTD Financial Summary Report was distributed electronically to the council for review prior to the meeting. Jeff pointed out that April results represent 66% of the fiscal year; Expenses are on budget and Income is below budget. To date, Trinity has used \$90,000 of its line of credit.
  - b. The April 30, 2023, Capital Campaign Pledge Summary and Campaign Allocation calculations reports were distributed electronically to the Council for review prior to the meeting. Jeff emphasized that 181 pledges resulted in almost \$1,900,000 as of April 30th; and 53% of the pledges were in amounts up to \$5,000 indicating that people understand every pledge is important. Also, 29% of the three-year pledged amount has been received, and if all pledge commitment dates are met, 48% of the total three-year campaign pledged amount will be received in the first twelve months of the three-year pledge period. \$312,000 of the campaign pledges received plus \$32,600 of designated mortgage reduction donations were applied to the mortgage principle in April. The mortgage principle is now \$2,721,142!!
- 8. Old Business.
  - a. Stewardship update: Steve Olson will provide guidance to improve results for the next stewardship drive. Pastor Chris indicated that several Trinity members were being recruited to add capacity for contact with Trinity members during stewardship drives.
  - b. Quiet Title: Tom informed the council that the summons and complaint for the 'quiet title' lawsuit to resolve a title issue for the property at 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and Myrtle has not yet been served.
  - c. Employee Retention Credit. The Employee Retention Credit (ERC) is a refundable payroll tax credit for small businesses that continued to pay employees while operations were disrupted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Trinity's accounting firm has determined that Trinity is eligible for these credits. The actual amount of the credit will take six to nine months to determine and receive.
- 9. New Business.
  - a. M/S/P to pass the council resolution that approves the amendment to Trinity's Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) Plan that was implemented on September 9, 2022.
  - b. M/S/P to approve Parish Administrator, Sarah Kinsman; Jeff Anderson, Treasurer; and Pastor Chris Bellefeuille, Lead Pastor as authorized signers on Trinity's banking accounts.
  - c. Church building security: Pastor Chris updated the Council on potential steps being considered to increase security.

10. Executive Committee.

The Bylaws provide that the Congregation Council shall serve as the Executive Committee. A confidential closed Executive Committee meeting was convened to discuss a confidential matter.

11. Next Council meetings.

Council Meeting: 6:30 PM, Monday, June 18 (Room 108b – Trinity)

Council connections-huddle meeting, if needed: 5:30 PM, Wednesday, June 7 (remotely via Teams).

12. Another important date: Drive-In Services will start on Memorial Day. The service time for the drive-in service is 10:00AM.

13. Adjournment.

The council meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:10PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

*s/John W Hodler*

**John W. Hodler**

**Congregational Council Secretary**

*Electronically signed*