

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH of STILLWATER, MINNESOTA
Congregational Council Meeting Minutes
Held September 18, 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 member present: Pastor of Lifelong Faith Formation Peter Winston Miller.

Non-voting Council member absent: Parish Administrator Sarah Kinsman.

Guest: Noah Schumacher, Trinity Lutheran Church Stewardship Team Lead

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

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

1. Pastor Chris led Christ Care prayers.
2. Devotions-Dwelling in the Word.
Jeff Anderson led a discussion that evaluated selected scripture verses' contributions to understanding how the Good News (Gospel) is proclaimed.
3. TLC Ministry team update – Stewardship.
Noah Schumacher, Stewardship Team Lead, discussed the Stewardship team's plans for this fall's Stewardship campaign whose theme is *"In Grace we Live; In Love we Give!"* The campaign's launch is October 8th. The team established these campaign goals: 1. Increase pledges by 25 to 300, 2. Realize \$1,100,000 in pledges for 2024 fiscal year, and 3. Increase automated giving units by 25 to 200 units. Noah shared the Stewardship team's intent to work on Stewardship year-round, focusing on educating non-pledgers/givers on what a pledge means commitment wise and assisting individuals to believe they have the capacity to give on a regular basis. The Council and Noah had a robust discussion of the many ideas the Stewardship team may employ during the campaign and coming fiscal year.
4. **M/S/P** approve the August 21, 2023, Council Meeting minutes and the September 18, 2023, Council Meeting agenda.
5. Pastor Chris' and Pastor Peter's reports were electronically distributed to the Council for review prior to the meeting.

6. Lead Pastor verbal report – Executive Session.
The Bylaws provide the Congregation Council members shall serve as the Executive Committee. President Andrew Thelander moved the Council into Executive Session for Lead Pastor Chris's confidential report and discussion. Upon completion of the report the President moved the council back into regular meeting form.
7. Administrator and Treasurer reports.
 - a. The Parish Administrator's report was distributed electronically to the council for review prior to the meeting.
 - b. The preliminary August 2023, Fiscal Year End Financial Summary Report, Trinity Financial Update, and Comprehensive Campaign reports were distributed electronically to the council for review prior to the meeting. YTD General Contribution Income is below the 2023 fiscal year budget by almost \$100,000 but only \$14,000 below 2022 fiscal Year end. YTD expenses are \$9,000 over 2023 Fiscal year's budget and \$69,000 over 2022 Fiscal year end.
 - c. Financial reports reconfiguration: Jeff Anderson prepared a reconfigured Trinity Financial Update report that separates non-budgeted financial activity, i.e., Comprehensive Campaign income and expense from the budgeted Operating income and expense items. This format eliminates congregants' confusion regarding the status of the Congregation's financial status. In 2024, the Capital Summary Section of the YTD Financial Summary Report will be removed and replaced as follows: Funds donated for mortgage reduction, other than Comprehensive Campaign funds will be captured in the 'Contributions-General' Income line, and the 'Mortgage Principal' line item, which records principal paid as part of the annual operating plan, will be moved to the Expense directly below the 'Loan interest' line item.
 - d. Budget workshop: The finance team and council will meet October 9th for a 2024 Fiscal year budget workshop. The Council will review and vote on the budget produced by the workshop at the October Council meeting.
 - e. Employee Retention Credit: The Employee Retention Credit (ERC) is a refundable payroll tax credit for small businesses that continued to pay employees while normal operations were disrupted due to the COVID-19 pandemic and Trinity is eligible for an estimated credit of \$154,000. \$71,000 was received in late August 2023. The remaining ERC payout will take several months to receive.
 - f. Audit vs. Review of Trinity's Financials: Foley Kalseim and Co., LTD, Trinity's CPA Firm, are committed to competing the Audit by November 1, 2023.
8. Benevolence Giving Budget.
The 'ELCA Mission Support' line item directs funds to the ELCA. The 'Other Benevolence' line item provides funds that can be distributed to organizations, such as the Iringa Diocese, Valley Outreach, UMN Lutheran Campus Ministry and or Lutheran Social Services. Pastor Peter will discuss with the Mission's Team if they will commit to a \$250/month donation to Valley Outreach. This approach frees up funds for the other suggested recipients. Pastor

Chris will inform the Council of the actual recipients of the 'Other Benevolence' once the recipients are selected.

9. Adjournment.

The council meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:50 PM.

Meetings:

Budget workshop (Finance Team & Council):

6:00 PM, Monday, October 9th

Next Council meetings.

6:30 PM, Monday, October 21st

6:30 PM, Monday, November 20

Annual Congregational meeting – Sunday, November 19th

Respectfully Submitted,

s/John W Hodler

John W. Hodler

Congregational Council Secretary

Electronically signed