

Trinity Lutheran Church Council Minutes – March 3, 2021

Grow Faith, Serve God, Love Others

Welcome and Introductions by President Brian McNeill at 7:15 PM. Members present in person were Jason Anderson, Adam Kolander, Toni Lindstrom, Robert Neuman, Diane Schuerman, Maureen Erdman, Jodee Erickson with Jason Heinzig via Zoom. Also present in person were Pastor Art, Treasurer Bill Hoberg with guest Synod Pastor Kathryn Skoglund via Zoom. Brian welcomed Pastor Skoglund and council members introduced themselves to her.

Devotions by Pastor Art were the Lenten service.

Pastor's Report – Pastor Art made thirteen parish visits by phone, computer or in person plus many texts and emails. There were no hospital visits. Pastor Art held four in-person confirmation classes, led four worship services on Zoom with four services posted to Facebook and four radio broadcasts, three midweek services with three posted to Facebook. There was one baptism for Laurel Everly Anderson on February 14, 2021. There were no confirmations, weddings, funerals or counseling sessions. He took two days of vacation and no sick leave.

The SWMN Synod is planning an all online assembly to be held on two successive weekends (June 6 and 11, 12). Because we will be electing the first new bishop for our synod in 18 years, this will allow for the nominating and first elimination ballots to take place the first weekend, time to collect information, video speeches and plan further voting, with the final elimination ballots on the second weekend. Individuals can still be pre-identified by our Glacial Ridge Conference on March 7.

The annual meeting of Green Lake Lutheran Ministries took place on Zoom on Tuesday, February 9 at 1:00 PM. Trinity was represented by Pastor Art and Byron Giese.

Our Lenten Preaching Series for this year, "God's Word in Our Great Heritage!" a study of God's Word for our time, continues on Wednesdays through March 24 and then in Holy Week on April 1 and 2. Confirmation students will be taking part as readers and acolytes.

Glacial Ridge Conference Assembly will take place on Zoom on March 7 at 3:00 PM. We may be represented by six lay people (three male/three female). There will be discussion of the upcoming election of a new bishop, as well as other elections and approval of this year's budget.

Pastor Art handed out a Bishop Election Feedback form that should be completed by council members by March 17.

Call Process – Pastor Kathryn Skoglund works most of her time with the call process. This is her sixth year with the synod office.

At this point, we need to find an interim pastor, whether that person is full time or less than full time. To find the right person, it may not be right away. We may need to contact a neighboring pastor who would help with emergency needs such as funerals and with basic coverage. Finding an interim pastor

depends on who is available. Things to consider would be if he/she would be commuting or staying in the parsonage. He/she would have 2 or 2 1/2 days away from the congregation to be with family. The contract can be ended with a thirty day notice on either side. In hiring an interim pastor, it does not require a vote by the congregation. It is a council decision. Compensation is at the same level as the pastor who is leaving.

Pastor Skoglund recommends that we not form a call committee right away. Instead, a transition team would be made up of council members to do the pre-work of gathering information from the congregation. The council can decide how many members to have on the transition team. We need to get as much information as we possibly can. That will make it easier for the synod to find a good fit. She emphasized not to rush the process. Take your time and be calm. She offered that she could come to our congregation to preach and to explain the process to the congregation.

After the transition team's work is complete, it is time to form a call committee. She asks that we be very prayerful about this mix of people, finding people of varying ages and gender and people who have been with the congregation a long time and a short time. We need to find those who are thinking of what is best for our congregation. At this point we need to start a heavy search for a new pastor. Every Wednesday, the synod office meets to discuss congregations looking for a pastor.

There are three ways that they find good candidates.

1. The synod office gets notified of pastors willing to come to southwestern Minnesota. They try to find gifts of pastors that meet the needs of the congregation. The synod will send them our paper work. The synod will contact the pastor's own synod to verify that he/she qualifies to be called.
2. Identify pastors who are interested in being called.
3. Members in our congregation can nominate a pastor. They would go through the synod office. There is a form on the website. In order to be called, a new pastor needs to stay with his/her congregation for at least three years.

Be willing to think outside the box when considering a new pastor. The synod won't force us to take someone who we don't think would be a good fit. Be prayerful through this process. Keep people posted and know that God is at work.

Additions to the Agenda - Donation to Brody Solomon's family as he undergoes cancer treatment.

Reports:

Secretary Jodee Erickson - The February minutes were reviewed and approved by email.

Financial Secretary Pam Anderson - Motion to approve by Toni with a second by Maureen. Motion carried.

Treasurer Bill Hoberg - February income was \$9,432.00 and expenses were \$10,925.16. Checking account balance as of 2-28-21 was \$20,982.03. Motion to approve by Diane with a second by Adam. Motion carried.

Committee Reports:

Board of Education and Youth - Met briefly following Lenten service. In person Sunday School will be on the following Sundays: March 14 and 28, April 11 and 25. Will meet in the fellowship hall following guidelines.

Outreach and Community Relations (B.A.C.K.) - Did not meet. Back packs are continuing to be filled on a weekly basis.

Property and Grounds - Jason A. checked on what may need to be updated at the parsonage. It will need a good cleaning and freshening up with paint. Upper bedroom carpeting looks good. The main level carpeting should probably be replaced as well as the washer and dryer.

Stewardship and Finance - Did not meet.

Worship and Music – On Easter Sunday, the committee recommends one service at 9 am. People will need to call the church office by Wednesday, March 31 to make a reservation to attend. Attendance will be limited to approximately 100. Pastor Art said that up to 25 people could be in the fellowship hall using the screen to view the service.

Live music from the balcony will be reintroduced at the Easter service with singing and brass. The congregation will not be singing.

Live music from the balcony with three to four people singing the hymns will continue after Easter Sunday. The congregation will not be singing.

Communion during church and drive-by communion will continue every Sunday. Pastor Art will bless the wine and wafer cups for people to take home during the week and commune from home if attending church by Zoom.

Mailed Newsletters - Letters have been mailed to parishioners who have moved away or for whom we do not have email addresses asking for their email. If no response is received, newsletters will not be mailed to them in April.

Volunteers are needed to help with Zoom and in-person greeters, lectors and camera and computer operators. Council members could fill these roles.

Shout Out - Carolyn Rear, who has been doing altar guild duties as well as setting out communion packets.

Old Business - Volunteers needed for church services – Technicians, sign in and getting people seated. Adam will be able to help with technical support as well as Laura Rear.

New Business - The quilters would like to start meeting again. They will be able to as long as they wear masks and follow guidelines. Hand sanitizer will be available for them to use.

We would like to recognize Brenda Wiese for all of her hard work as technical support for worship on Zoom and in-person services.

A motion was made by Toni with a second by Adam to donate \$500.00 to Brody Solomon's family as he undergoes cancer treatment. Motion carried.

Announcements: April Newsletter articles are due March 22. The next council meeting is April 7, 2021 at 7:00 PM.

Adjourned by President Brian at 8:40 PM

Closed with the Lord's Prayer

Respectfully submitted,

Jodee Erickson, Council Secretary