

**TLC Church Council Meeting – November 10, 2020**  
**Transfiguration Lutheran Church**

**Attendees:**

Staff: Pastor Arthur Murray

Council: Melinda Chau, Steve Jorschumb, Allison Lindman, Steve Mattson, Jerry Olson, Gretchen Schroeder, Sandy Stooke, Becky Woll

**Regrets:** none

**Devotions:** Sandy Stooke

**Call to order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:38 pm.

**Approval of Agenda:** Motion by Sandy Stooke with second by Becky Woll to approve the agenda with the letter to council added to New Business. Motion carried and approved.

**Review and Approval of Minutes:** Gretchen Schroeder

Motion by Becky Woll with second by Melinda Chau to approve the October Council meeting minutes. Motion carried and approved.

**Financial Report:** Jerry Olson

- General Fund receipts for November 2020 totaled \$51,075. Disbursements totaled \$67,532, resulting in a deficit of \$16,457 for the month. The YTD balance is a deficit of \$60,853. This YTD balance has been adjusted to reflect the large January 2020 payment not previously included.
- Capital campaign receipts totaled \$17,032 with expenditures of \$15,622. The October surplus is \$1,410, and the YTD deficit is \$562. There remains a surplus of \$9,690 for the entire campaign to date.
- Motion by Gretchen Schroeder with second by Becky Woll to approve the October financial report. Motion carried and approved.

**Pastor's Reports:** Pastor Arthur Murray

Staffing Update

- TLC Pastors and Staff continue to follow the MN Dept. of Health regulations and recommendations. These include working from home whenever possible.
- Because of essential staff in the church office who do come in, those of us who can work from home continue to do so, in part to follow recommendations and in part to ensure the safety of those who must be in the office.
- Staff is struggling to stay connected. Some are tiring greatly of Zoom meetings.
- I am intending to schedule job reviews for all staff, which are overdue, but have not had the bandwidth to do so yet.

Personal Update

- Personally, I have no option but to work from home as long as my children continue to be distance learning.

- I am operating day-in, day-out at the edge of my capacity, as is true with many if not most people in our congregation these days.

#### Pastoral Care

- Pastoral Care during “normal” times typically focusses on those going through a life crisis or health crisis. The large majority of our congregation is not typically in crisis simultaneously.
- These days many of us, if not most of us, are in perpetual crisis. These are not normal times. Pastoral Care is spread thin as we are ministering to people in a huge variety of circumstances, both emotional and physical distress are rampant.

#### Ed’s Farewell

- Will be on Zoom at 11am following the November 22 service. We expect to have representation from the Bishop’s office present for his Farewell and Godspeed. I will miss him greatly.

#### Pastoral Acts

- One baptism (and welcome of 6 new members) postponed due to Covid exposure.
- Four Confirmations took place on October 25 in the snow plus one via Zoom. Many thanks to Pete Erickson for his assistance in making creative arrangements for this service.
- Five deaths in the congregation since our last meeting. A variety of funeral arrangements are being made based on the preferences of each family ranging from in-person, postponement, online, etc.

#### Financial

- Stewardship Sunday is this Sunday. Please plan to attend (online) and submit your pledge! Our ability to move forward with an interim and/or pastoral search is dependent on the results of the pledge drive.
- Nancy Waldack is doing an amazing job as our new Financial Administrator. She is proactively working on exploring cost-savings and greater efficiency in our accounting practices.

#### Membership

- We have had a number of households leave TLC (3) or stop giving (2) recently for a variety of reasons. Some reasons I am aware of: too much politics (1), too much conflict (1), lack of in-person worship possibilities (1), lack of pastoral attention (1).
- We have several families with young children interested in joining the church. We will be scheduling these soon, God willing and Covid permitting.

#### Coverage in the Absence of Intern Pastor Grace and Deacon Renee

- Propose bringing in Melanie Heuser Hill ELCA Pastor and Children’s Author to support Pete with Sunday morning programming for Sunday School age children. See addendum below. Three month basis.
- Propose bringing in TLC member Jordan Zahrte one day per week to assist with social media presence and some Adult Education offerings. See addendum below. Three month basis.
- Both included in contingency budget for replacing Deacon Renee in 2020.

#### Worship

- Outdoor worship will continue as long as weather permits. November 8 was again a good weather day and the drive-in worship was well attended both online and in-person. Many thanks to Council member, Melinda Chau, for a wonderful last-minute Stewardship message.

## Youth and Family

- Youth program has met outside several times but will be back online for the foreseeable future.
- There is concern that we may be at risk of losing youth and families due to lack of indoor programming. There is concern from other families that even outdoor gatherings are too dangerous.

## **Addendum 1**

Proposal from Pastor and Author Melanie Heuser Hill

<https://www.melanieheuserhill.com/>

- Melanie does a liturgical season-based 30 minute family storytime each Sunday
  - Light a Candle/Ring a Bell, Sing a welcome Song, Biblical story told in Godly Play-esque manner, Wiggle song/activity as needed, Storybook Song, Closing Prayer, *Special blessing for the season, and one other suggestion for carrying things through at home (Example: Wandering Nativity at home)*
- Families are equipped to live out the liturgical season at home—i.e. home Advent Wreaths given (or made in a family friendly workshop), Star Hunts set up during Epiphany, Purple Prayer Chains in Lent etc.
- Melanie builds relationships *with* families and *between* families—mail, calls/zooms, dropping things off, maybe a “Secret Snowflake” program,
- Brief family email newsletter each season including things like: a very short “column” about faith-filled parenting, a couple of easy ideas to do at home, a book/website recommendation, TLC announcements etc.

## **Addendum 2**

*Social Media and Adult Ed  
Short-Term Position  
November 1 - January 31*

### Role

To collaborate with and support the TLC leadership in creating and implementing a strategic social media plan. To work jointly with existing adult groups to fulfill existing adult education commitments and create new opportunities for adult education for the TLC community.

### Required Skills

Social media acumen, project management, initiative, spoken and written communications, facilitation, organization, and problem solving skills.

### Responsibilities

- Social Media Management
  - Evaluate current social media use
  - Create mission, vision and strategic plan for TLC social media presence and engagement
  - Collaborate with TLC leadership team to identify content sources and streamline content generation
  - Responsible for day-to-day management of social media posts and engagement
- Adult Education
  - Identify outstanding adult education commitments (example: My Grandmother's Hands book study)
  - Create and implement follow-through plan for outstanding adult education commitments
  - Work with existing adult ministry groups to identify additional adult education needs

- Create plan for fulfilling adult education needs
  - Build 2021 adult education calendar
  - Identify staff or volunteer leadership for each adult education activity, depending on skills, interests and abilities

#### **Old Business:**

- **Covid-19 Response Team Update:** Pete Erickson and Jeanine Brown
  - Pete Erickson presented data from the November 9<sup>th</sup> Bloomington School Board meeting (see attached)
  - The next steps for the team are regular weekly communication and developing a decision tree/matrix based on facts and case numbers. There will be only virtual programming until cases drop.
  - Council discussed thoughts on having youth activities inside.
  - Communication is key to help congregation understand why decisions are being made.
  - Redirect focus of Covid-19 response team to youth programming, mainly confirmation age. Covid team to prepare a survey for confirmation families regarding planning for the future.
- **Racial Justice Statement:** Jerry Olson
  - The Racial Justice Team will discuss the change to racial justice statement at their next meeting on Thursday, November 12<sup>th</sup>.
  - Jerry Olson shared the Synod racial justice statement, focusing on the resolutions.
- **Interim Pastor:** Steve Jorschumb
  - Yesterday Craig Pederson said he was hoping to have a couple of candidates by the end of the week. Steve Jorschumb will send out an e-mail to council members once the interviews are set up to see who is available to help interview.
- **Council Staffing:**
  - Steve Jorschumb to discuss open council position with Kim Smits for possible contacts.
  - Allison Lindman is leaning toward not pursuing another term on Council, but is not confirmed.

#### **New Business:**

- **Annual meeting minutes and council minutes**
  - Annual meeting minutes are not posted on website, but council approved at the February Council meeting. Confirmed that annual meeting minutes are not posted until they are approved by the congregation at the next Annual meeting.
- **Pastor Ed farewell Nov 22**
  - Council to coordinate with Beth Rahn on planning Pastor Ed's farewell.
  - Pastor Arthur to reach out to a few other possible contacts to see if they're interested in helping.

- **Letter to Council**

- The Council received a letter from a member expressing their concerns about church and office functions.
- Pastor Arthur shared his thoughts, and has since talked to that member. He agrees with many of the points raised.
- Council further discussed the letter after Pastor Arthur was excused from the meeting. The letter raises great questions to be considered during the upcoming discernment process.

**Next Meeting Date:** December 8, 2020

**Devotions:** Becky Woll

**Adjourn:** Motion to adjourn by Becky Woll with second by Steve Mattson. Motion carried and approved. Meeting adjourned at 9:02 pm.